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AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
Old Testament

BY

John Gill D.D.

IN SIX VOLUMES

VOL. III.

LONDON
Printed for Mathews & Leigh Strand.
1810.

AN

EXPOSITION

OF

The Old Testament;

IN WHICH ARE RECORDED

THE ORIGIN OF MANKIND, OF THE SEVERAL NATIONS OF THE WORLD,

AND OF

THE JEWISH NATION IN PARTICULAR:

THE LIVES OF THE PATRIARCHS OF ISRAEL:

THE JOURNEY OF THAT PEOPLE FROM EGYPT THROUGH THE WILDERNESS TO THE LAND OF CANAAN, AND THEIR SETTLEMENT IN THAT LAND;

THEIR LAWS,

MORAL, CEREMONIAL, AND JUDICIAL;

THEIR GOVERNMENT AND STATE UNDER JUDGES AND KINGS;

THEIR SEVERAL CAPTIVITIES;

AND THEIR SACRED BOOKS OF DEVOTION:

IN THE EXPOSITION OF WHICH

IT IS ATTEMPTED TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF THE SEVERAL BOOKS, AND THE WRITERS OF THEM; A SUMMARY OF EACH CHAPTER, AND THE GENUINE SENSE OF EVERY VERSE; AND, THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE, THE ORIGINAL TEXT, AND THE VERSIONS OF IT, ARE INSPECTED AND COMPARED; INTERPRETERS OF THE BEST NOTE, BOTH JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN, CONSULTED; DIFFICULT PLACES AT LARGE EXPLAINED; SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS RECONCILED, AND VARIOUS PASSAGES ILLUSTRATED AND CONFIRMED BY TESTIMONIES OF WRITERS, AS WELL GENTILE AS JEWISH.

BY JOHN GILL, D. D.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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AN EXPOSITI

OF

THE OLD TESTAM

THE FIRST BOOK

OF

THE CHRONICLES.

THIS and the following book were reckoned by the Jews as one book, as appears by the Masoretic note at the end of the second book, and as is affirmed by Origen [a] and Jerom [b]; and they were by the ancients [c] called Chronicles, as they are by us; but they are different from the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel and Judah, so often mentioned in the preceding books, seeing several things there referred to, as in them, are not to be found here; though no doubt many things here recorded were taken from thence under a divine direction. In the Greek version, and so in the Vulgate Latin version after that, they are called *Paralipomena*, that is, things passed over or omitted, because they contain several anecdotes which are not to be found in the books of Samuel and Kings. The Hebrew title of them is, *Dibre Hayamim*, words of days, day-books or diaries, and what the Greeks call *Ephemerides*; though, as *yamim* sometimes signifies *years*, they may be named *annals*; and so the Arabic inscription is, "the Books of Annals;" and because they chiefly respect the kings of Judah, the Syriac inscription is, "the Book of the Things that were done "in the Times of the Kings of Judah." The Targum is, "the Book of Genealogies, the Words of Days, "which were from the Days of the World;" because the first 10 chapters consist of genealogies beginning from Adam. The inspired penman of these books must live after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, since he carries down the genealogy of the kings and princes of Judah beyond that time, 1 Chron. iii. 17—19. see ch. ix. 1. It is generally thought by the Jews and Christians that Ezra was the writer of them, with which agrees the age in which he lived; and as it may seem, from the last of these books ending with the same words with which that under his name begins: so the Talmudists [d] say, that Ezra wrote his own book, and the genealogy of the chronicles unto his own, or unto Velo, *and he had brethren*, 2 Chron. xxi. 2, and Jarchi affirms that he wrote them by the hand or means of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, inspired prophets; though some Jewish writers [e] suppose they were written partly by him, and partly by Nehemiah; that all to 2 Chron. xxi. 2. were written by Ezra, and the rest by Nehemiah. Kimchi thinks that Ezra was not the first author and writer of these books, but that the books of Chronicles and Annals of the kings of Judah, and of the kings of Israel, were separately written before him; but that he only revised them, and with the men of the great synagogue added the genealogies, and put them into the canon of the Scriptures [f]. Spinosa [g] fancies they were written after Judas Maccabaeus had restored the temple, since the historian tells what families dwelt in Jerusalem in the times of Ezra, 1 Chron. ix. and

[a] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 6. c. 25.
[b] Ad Domnionem, tom. 3. fol. 7. C.
[c] Hieron. Praefat. in lib. Reg. tom. 3. fol. 6. B.
[d] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 1.
[e] Shalshalet Hakabala, Abarbinel in Josuam, fol. 2. 3.
[f] Vid. Buxtorf. de Punct. Antiqu. par. 1. p. 182.
[g] Tract. Theolog. Politic. c. 10. p. 184.

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... d by David, 1 Chron. xxix.
... passages in Acts vii. 48. and xvii. 24.
... sense of what is expressed in 2 Chron. ii. 5, 6. and vi. 18. The use and design of these books are chiefly to give a larger account of the kingdom of Judah, especially after the division of it from the ten tribes, and of the kings thereof, than what is given in the preceding books, as in the last of these books; and particularly they ascertain the genealogy of Christ, that it might be clear and plain of what tribe and family the Messiah came, that he descended from the tribe of Judah, and from the kings of the house of David, as in this first book. They both contain an history from Adam, to the deliverance of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. The first of these books reaches, according to Hottinger[k], to A. M. 2985, and the latter is an history of 472 years. According to Bishop Usher[l], the former contains a course of 2,990 years, and the latter of 478.

C H A P. I.

... hapter gives us the genealogy of the patriarchs ... am to Noah, ver. 1—4. of the sons of Noah, ... their posterity, to Abraham, ver. 5—27. of the sons of Abraham and their posterity, ver. 28—34. and of the sons of Esau, ver. 35—42. and of the kings and dukes that reigned in Edom, ver. 43—54.

Ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Adam, Seth, &c.*] These first four verses exactly agree with the account of the antediluvian patriarchs in Gen. v. the first letter in Adam is larger than usual, as a memorial, as Buxtorf[m] observes, of the first and only man, from whence mankind had their beginning, and whose history the author had undertaken to write.

Ver. 5. *The sons of Japhet, Gomer, &c.*] Here begins the genealogy of the sons of Noah after the flood, of the sons of Japhet the elder, in this and the two following verses; next of the sons of Ham, the younger brother, ver. 8—16. then of Shem, whose posterity are mentioned last, because from him, in the line of Heber, sprang Abraham, the ancestor of the Jewish nation, of whom the Messiah was to come, for whose sake this genealogy is given, ver. 17—27. The whole is the same with the account in Gen. x. and xi.

Ver. 28. *The sons of Abraham, &c.*] The famous and well-known ancestor of the Jews; of Ishmael his first-born, and his posterity; of his sons by Keturah, and of Isaac and his sons, an account is given from hence to the end of ver. 34. entirely agreeing with that in Gen. xxv.

Ver. 35. *The sons of Esau, &c.*] The first-born of Isaac; his posterity are named in this and the two following verses, as in Gen. xxxvi. only it should be observed, that Timna, ver. 36. is not the name of a man, but was the concubine of Eliphaz, the eldest son of Esau, and the mother of Amalek, Gen. xxxvi. 12. and so in the Arabic version it is read, "and Timna, "which was the concubine of Eliphaz, the son of Esau, "bare him Amalek;" and so the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint.

Ver. 38. *And the sons of Seir, &c.*] This man and his posterity were not of the race of Esau, but are mentioned because they were a family into which Esau, and a son of his, married, and whose possessions he and his obtained. The account from hence, to the end of ver. 42. is the same with Gen. xxxvi. 20—28. with some little variation of names.

Ver. 43. *Now these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, &c.*] Which had its name from Esau, who was so called, Gen. xxv. 30. From hence, to the end of the chapter, an account is given of the kings and dukes of Edom, in the same order as in Gen. xxx. 31—43.

C H A P. II.

THIS chapter begins with the twelve sons of Israel or Jacob, ver. 1, 2. then reckons the sons of Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, ver. 3, 4. then the posterity of Pharez and Zerah, sons of Judah, ver. 5—8. next the sons of Hezron, a son of Pharez, ver. 9. particularly the posterity of Ram, a son of Hezron, from whom sprang Jesse and his family, ver. 10—17. then of Caleb, another son of Hezron, ver. 18—24. and next of Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, ver. 25—33. and particularly the posterity of Sheshan, a descendant of his, ver. 34—41. and then other sons of Caleb, with their posterity, are reckoned, ver. 42—54. and the chapter is closed with the families of the Scribes in Jabesh, the same with the Kenites, ver. 55.

Ver. 1, 2. *These are the sons of Israel, &c.*] Or

[x] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 26.
[y] Apud Ib. l. 6. c. 25.
[z] Thesaur. Philolog. l. 2. c. 1. p. 314, 315.
[k] [illegible]
[l] Annal. Vet. Test. p. 80.
[m] Tiberias, c. 14.

Jacob, the other son of Isaac, who had the name of Israel given him, because of his power with God, Gen. xxxii. 28. whose twelve sons are here mentioned by name: the first four according to their birth of Leah, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; then the two sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, Issachar and Zebulun; and between Dan and Naphtali, the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, are placed Joseph and Benjamin, the sons of Rachel.

Ver. 3. *The sons of Judah, &c.*] The genealogy begins with him, though the fourth son of Jacob; because, as Kimchi says, this book treats chiefly of the kings of Judah; but rather not only because Jesse and David sprang from him, but also the King Messiah: *Er, and Onan, and Shelah, which three were born unto him of the daughter of Shua the Canaanitess:* see Gen. xxxviii. 2, 12. *and Er, the first-born of Judah, was evil in the sight of the Lord;* because he did that which was evil: *and he slew him;* he died by the immediate hand of God, and so his brother Onan, being wicked also, Gen. xxxviii. 7, 10.

Ver. 4. *And Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him Pharez and Zerah, &c.*] Through incest; they were twins, Gen. xxxviii. 27—30. *all the sons of Judah were five;* who are before mentioned by name.

Ver. 5. *The sons of Pharez, &c.*] One of the above twins, born to Judah: *Hezron and Hamul;* see Gen. xlvi. 12.

Ver. 6. *And the sons of Zerah, &c.*] The other twin of Judah: *Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all;* the Targum calls them governors, and adds, on whom the spirit of prophecy dwelt; and in the Jewish chronology [a] they are said to prophesy in Egypt; and the four last are supposed to be the same with those in 1 Kings iv. 31. see the note there.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Carmi, &c.*] The Targum adds, this is Zimri; but in Josh. vii. 1. Carmi is said to be the son of Zabdi, who seems to be the same with Zimri; and some supply the word here, and read [b], the sons of Zimri, Carmi, Achar, who was the grandson of Zimri; his proper name was Achan, Josh. vii. 1. but called Achar here by way of reproach, as Jarchi and others observe; being, as it follows, *the troubler of Israel,* as *Achar* signifies: *who transgressed in the thing accursed;* devoted to the Lord, by taking it away for his own use, see Josh. vi. 17. and vii. 21. hence the valley in which he was put to death was called Achor, ver. 26.

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Ethan: Azariah.*] Including his posterity, see Gen. xlvi. 23. and ver. 31. the posterity of the other three sons of Zerah are not mentioned, either because the writer could not find the genealogy of them, as Kimchi; or rather, as he thinks, he cuts short the genealogy of Zerah, because the kingdom did not proceed from him, and returns to the genealogy of Hezron, from whence it did, or perhaps they had no children.

Ver. 9. *The sons also of Hezron, that were born unto him, &c.*] The Targum adds, in Timnath; but most likely in Egypt: *Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai;* afterwards called Caleb.

Ver. 10, 11, 12. *And Ram begat Amminadab, &c.*] Ram is the sa[illegible] with Aram, Matt. i. 3. [illegible] the genealogy is carried d[illegible]wn from him to Jesse in the same order as there, and in Ru[illegible] iv. 19—22. only here Nahshon the son of Am[illegible] *the prince of the children of Judah,* [illegible]ich K[illegible] Jarchi say is written for the [illegible]our of Da[illegible], who descended from him; and Salmon his son is here called Salma.

Ver. 13, 14, 15. *And Jesse begat his first-born Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third, Nathaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, Ozem the sixth, David the seventh.*] But Jesse had eight sons, 1 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. and xvii. 12. one of them therefore is not reckoned, either because he was by another woman, and the writer only mentions those that were of the same mother with David; this is the opinion of Aben Ezra and Kimchi; some say he was dead before David came to the kingdom; Kimchi mentions a Midrash, or exposition of theirs, according to which his name was Elihu, and was younger than David, who is mentioned in ch. xxvii. 18. and Jarchi observes, that the writer, having found the pearl (David), reckons not the 8th son Elihu, though the Syriac and Arabic versions have inserted him in this order, *Elihu the 7th, David the 8th;* some take the 8th to be a grandson of Jesse, Jonathan the son of Shimea, 2 Sam. xxi. 21. the third son of Jesse, here called Shimma, as he is Shammah, 1 Sam. xvi. 9. and xvii. 13.

Ver. 16. *Whose sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail, &c.*] That is, sisters of David: *and the sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, three;* all valiant men, and captains in David's army; their father's name is nowhere mentioned.

Ver. 17. *And Abigail bare Amasa, &c.*] Who was Absalom's general, afterwards reconciled to David, and designed to be made general of his army, but was slain by Joab, see 2 Sam. xvii. 25. and xix. 13. and xx. 10. *and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite;* he is called an Israelite, 2 Sam. xvii. 25. and so in the Targum here, he being either a proselyte, or else he was an Israelite by birth, but called an Ishmaelite, because he had dwelt among the Ishmaelites some time, as Obed-edom is called the Gittite for the like reason; so Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it.

Ver. 18. *And Caleb the son of Hezron, &c.*] The same that is called Chelubai, ver. 9. but not the same with Caleb the son of Jephunneh, made mention of in the books of Numbers, Joshua, and Judges: *he begat* children *of Azubah his wife, and of Jerioth;* who were both his wives; or it may be rather, since Azubah is so particularly called his wife, Jerioth might be a concubine: or of Azubah he begat Jerioth; so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; though it seems best with Hillerus [c] to interpret these names of the same person, and render the last clause, *that is, of Jerioth,* of her whose name also was Jerioth, Azubah having two names; and the rather, since only the children of one are mentioned, as follows: *her sons are these; Jesher, and Shobab, and Ardon;* of whom we read nowhere else; the Targum says, Azubah was so

[a] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 20. p. 52.
[b] So Junius & Tremellius, & Piscator.

[c] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 268.

called, because she was barren and despised, which this clause contradicts.

Ver. 19. *And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, &c.*] The Targum is, "Miriam, who "was called [illegible]," [illegible] according to Josephus[x], it was his [illegible] that was the husband of Miriam the sister of Moses: *which bare him Hur*; see the note on Exod. xvii. 10.

Ver. 20. *And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat Bezaleel.*] who yet is not thought to be the same Bezaleel we read of in Exod. xxxi. 2. though the fathers and grandfathers of both have the same names, and were of the same tribe.

Ver. 21. *And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilead, &c.*] Which Machir was the son of Manasseh, and Gilead was his grandson, Numb. xxvii. 29. the Targum is, "but he "enticed a virgin, the daughter of Machir;" which suggests, that he committed fornication with her, though he afterwards married her; her name is not mentioned; to me it seems to be Abiah, ver. 24. and whom the Targum there calls the daughter of Machir: *whom he married when he was 60 years old*; the Targum is, 66; this seems to be his last wife: *and she bare him Segub*; the same name with the youngest son of Hiel, who rebuilt Jericho, 1 Kings xvi. 34.

Ver. 22. *And Segub begat Jair, who had 23 cities in the land of Gilead.*] Which, according to Kimchi, he inherited in right of his wife, which, he says, he took out of the land of Gilead; but they seem to be rather what he took by force of arms from the former inhabitants; see Numb. xxxii. 41.

Ver. 23. *And he took Geshur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them, &c.*] Cities or countries which the Geshurites and Aramæans, or Syrians, before inhabited; and which he took from them, together with other towns, which, being taken by him, were called after his name; the Targum is, the Geshurites and Aramæans took the villages of Jair from them; that is, from the sons of Jair in after-times; see Josh. xii. 5. and xiii. 13. *with Kenath, and the towns thereof*; which Jair took by Nobah his general, and called it after his name, Numb. xxxii. 42. even 60 *cities*; see Deut. iii. 4—14. Josh. xiii. 30. *all these* belonged to *the sons of Machir the father of Gilead*; being given him by Moses, Numb. xxxii. 40. Deut. iii. 15.

Ver. 24. *And after that Hezron was dead in Caleb-ephratah, &c.*] Supposed to be the same with Bethlehem; and was so called, both from Caleb the son of Hezron, and Ephrath his wife, ver. 19. *then Abiah, Hezron's wife, bare him Ashur the father of Tekoa*; being left with-child by him at his death; the whole verse is paraphrased thus in the Targum, "and after Hezron "died in the house of Caleb his son in Ephrath, the "wife of Hezron the daughter of Machir was left with-"child, and she bare to him after his death Ashur "the prince of the Tekoites;" whose son gave name very probably to the city of Tekoa, 2 Sam. xiv. 2.

Ver. 25. *And the sons of Jerahmeel, the first-born of Hezron, were Ram the first-born, &c.*] So called by his father after the name of his brother, see ver. 9. *and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem*, and *Ahijah*; or *of Ahijah*, as some[y] render it, this being the name of his wife, who bare him the sons before named, since mention is made of another wife in the next verse.

Ver. 26. *Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name was Atarah, &c.*] Distinct from his wife before named; or *another woman*, which is a phrase for an harlot or concubine, Judg. xi. 2. which she might be, as Kimchi observes; though the former seems best: *she was the mother of Onam*; and perhaps was the only son she bore to Jerahmeel, of whose sons see ver. 28.

Ver. 27. *And the sons of Ram the first-born of Jerahmeel, &c.*] By his first wife: *were Maaz, and Jamin, and Ekar*; of whom no other notice is taken; perhaps they left no children.

Ver. 28. *And the sons of Onam, &c.*] The son of Jerahmeel by his other wife: *were Shammai and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur*; whose posterity are mentioned in the two following verses.

Ver. 29. *And the name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, &c.*] Of the same name was a wife of Rehoboam, a daughter of his grandfather David's eldest brother, Eliab, 2 Chron. xi. 18. *and she bare him Ahban, and Molid*; which are no more mentioned, they perhaps leaving no posterity.

Ver. 30. *And the sons of Nadab, &c.*] The eldest son of Shammai, ver. 28. *Seled and Appaim; but Seled died without children*; and therefore we hear no more of him.

Ver. 31. *And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan, &c.*] Though they had each of them but one son, yet the plural number is used, their posterity being included, as in ver. 8. and so in the next clause: *and the children of Sheshan; Ahlai*; who, from ver. 34, 35. appears to be a daughter.

Ver. 32. *And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai, &c.*] See ver. 28. *Jether and Jonathan: and Jether died without children*; the posterity of Jonathan are given in the next verse.

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Jonathan; Peleth and Zaza, &c.*] Of whom no mention is made elsewhere: *these were the sons of Jerahmeel*; not only his immediate sons, but their posterity, called from him Jerahmeelites, 1 Sam. xxvii. 10.

Ver. 34. *Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters, &c.*] And but one of that sort, whose name was Ahlai, ver. 31. the plural being put here for the singular; or, if that is the name of a son, as some think, he died in his father's life-time, and left no issue; so that there only remained daughters, and it seems but one by the next verse: *and Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha*; one born in his house, and brought up by him, and a proselyte, such an one as Eliezer in Abraham's family.

Ver. 35. *And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife, &c.*] Having first given him his freedom, as the Targum premises; this daughter seems to be Ahlai, ver. 31. which receives confirmation from Zabad, one of the descendants of this man, ver. 36. being said to be the son of Ahlai, ch. xi. 41. that is, great-grandson: *and she bare him Attai*; the genealogy of whose descendants is given to the end of ver. 41. of whom no mention is made elsewhere, but of Zabad, as

[x] Antiqu. l. 3. c. 2.

[y] Junius, Tremellius, Piscator, Michaelis.

before observed; and, according to the Jews, it is given for the sake of Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishamah, the last person mentioned in this genealogy; which Ishmael slew Gedaliah governor of Jerusalem, and is said to be of the seed-royal, Jer. xli. 1.

Ver. 42. *Now the sons of Caleb the brother of Jerahmeel, &c.*] Called Chelubai, ver. 9. and is the same Caleb spoken of in ver. 18. and his sons next reckoned were by a third wife, Azubah, Ephrath being dead, ver. 19. and these sons were *Mesha his first-born, which was the father of Ziph:* who gave name to the city of Ziph; there were two of this name in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 24, 55. or this is the title of Mesha, governor of the city of Ziph; so the Targum calls him, prince of the Ziphites: *and the sons of Maresha the father of Hebron:* according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, the words are to be supplied thus, *and the sons of Ziph were Maresha the father of Hebron;* which, though sometimes the name of a city in the tribe of Judah, is here the name of a man, from whom, perhaps, the city had its name, since Hebron is said to have sons in the next verse; Jarchi makes Mesha to be the prince of Ziph, and prince of the children of Maresha, and prince of Hebron.

Ver. 43. *And the sons of Hebron: Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.*] One of these, Tappuah, is the name of a city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 34. and there is also Beth-tappuah in the same tribe, ver. 53. which one, or both, might have their name from this man; and Shema also, ver. 26.

Ver. 44. *And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkoam, &c.*] Which Hillerus[a] takes to be the name of a city in the tribe of Judah; and Jarchi's note is, that wherever the word *father* is here used, it is to be understood of the prince of a city that follows: *and Rekem begat Shammai:* there is a descendant of Jerahmeel, the brother of Caleb, of this name, ver. 28.

Ver. 45. *And the son of Shammai was Maon, &c.*] Who gave name to a city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 55. see 1 Sam. xxiii. 24, 25. and xxv. 2. *and Maon was the father of Beth-zur;* prince of a very strong fortified city of this name in the same tribe, Josh. xv. 58. unless this was a son of Maon's, from whom the city had its name.

Ver. 46. *And Ephah Caleb's concubine bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez, &c.*] An half-wife, or secondary wife; for though this man seems not to have had more wives than one at a time, yet he had concubines with them; we read of another after this, if not a third: *and Haran begat Gazez;* whom he so named after his brother.

Ver. 47. *And the sons of Jahdai, &c.*] Who is not mentioned by this name before; perhaps the same with Moza, who might have two names, though, according to Hillerus[b], he was the son of Moza; some take it to be the name of another of Caleb's concubines, by whom he had the six following sons: *Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph:* one of these, Pelet perhaps, gave name to Beth-pelet in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 27.

Ver. 48. *Maachah, Caleb's concubine, &c.*] Another concubine of his: *bare Sheber, and Tirhanah:* or of whom Caleb begot those two; for the verb is masculine; so Kimchi.

Ver. 49. *She bare also Shaaph the father of Madmannah, &c.*] Prince of a place so called, in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 31. *Sheva the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibeah:* prince of two cities of those names in the same tribe; of the latter see Josh. xv. 57. *and the daughter of Caleb was Achsa:* Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, had a daughter of this name, but neither he nor she are here meant, Josh. xv. 16, 17. but by whom Caleb, the son of Hezron, had this daughter, is not said; perhaps by Maachah his concubine last mentioned.

Ver. 50. *These were the sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah, &c.*] This is another Caleb, the grandson of Caleb the son of Hezron, called after his name; he was the son of Hur, the first-born of his wife Ephratah, ver. 19. *Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim:* of the inhabitants of that place; they sprung from him; or, as the Targum, he was prince of Kirjath-jearim, a city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 60.

Ver. 51. *Salma the father of Beth-lehem, &c.*] Or prince of Beth-lehem, as the Targum; not the same as in ver. 11. he was the son of Nahshan, this of the younger Caleb: *Hareph, the father of Beth-gader;* prince of a place of that name called Gador, ch. iv. 4. and where this man's name is Penuel; Gader was in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 58.

Ver. 52. *And Shobal, the father of Kirjath-jearim, had sons, &c.*] Which shews that Kirjath-jearim is not the name of a man, or of any of Shobal's sons, who are next mentioned, but of a place of which he was prince: the first is *Haroeh,* who is called Reajah, ch. iv. 2. a word of the same signification: and *half of the Manahethites;* which Kimchi takes to be the proper name of a man called Chatzi-hamanaheth, another son of Shobal's; but Jarchi interprets it of the name of a place or province called Manaheth, ch. viii. 6. over half of which Haroeh was governor.

Ver. 53. *And the families of Kirjath-jearim, &c.*] That dwelt there, of which Shobal was prince, and who sprung from him, are as follow: *the Ithrite, and the Puhite, and the Shumathite, and the Mishraite;* who had their names from Jether, Putha, Shumath, and Mishra, descendants of Shobal: *of them came the Zareathite, and the Eshtaulite;* that is, from the Mishraites sprung the inhabitants of Zareath and Eshtaul, places in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 33.

Ver. 54. *The sons of Salma, &c.*] Another son of the younger Caleb, ver. 50, 51. whose sons were Beth-lehem, the inhabitants of the place, at least many of them, of which he was prince, ver. 51. *and the Netophathite;* the inhabitants of Netophah, a place in the tribe of Judah, mentioned along with Beth-lehem, Neh. vii. 26. these sprung from Salma: *Ataroth, the house of Joab;* Ataroth seems to be the name of a place in the tribe of Judah, where the family of Joab lived, the inhabitants of which were the descendants of Salma: *and half of the Manahethites;* the other half of the inhabitants of Manaheth, see ver. 52. *the Zorite;* part also of them, called Zareathites, ver. 53.

Ver. 55. *And the families of the scribes which dwelt*

[a] Onomast. Sacr. p. 329.

[b] Onomast. Sacr. p. 241.

at Jabez, &c.] A city in Judah, the founder of which, perhaps, was Jabez, mentioned in ch. iv. 9. in which learned men dwelt: *the Tirathites, the Shimeathites*, and *Suchathites;* who sprung from men whose names were Tira, Shimea, and Sucha; and if they were not the posterity of Salma, yet dwelt among his, and so are reckoned with them; perhaps the latter might have their name from dwelling in tents; the former clause may be rendered, *that dwelt* with *Jabez*, who was their master, and they his scholars; in the Vulgate Latin version the words are rendered as appellatives, *singing and resounding, and dwelling in tents:* Conrad Pellican, on the place, goes a middle way, and interprets these families as dwelling with Jabez their master, and they his scholars, and that they were called by their progenitors Tirathites, because learned and ingenious, and præcentors of the divine oracles; Shimeathites, because they diligently hearkened to the sacred songs, and the doctrines of the law of God; and Suchathites, because they dwelt not in cities, but in tents, despisers of all worldly things, that they might freely attend to learn: *these are the Kenites;* that is, the Suchathites are the Kenites, who, it is well known, dwelt in tents, and not in cities; though Jarchi takes these Kenites to be the inhabitants of Cain, a city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 57. but they seem rather to be the Kenites that sprung from Jethro, here made mention of, because some of them dwelt in the tribe of Judah, and among the posterity of Salma, see Judg. i. 16. *that came of Hemath, the father of the house of Rechab;* the prince of that family, and who from Rechab were called Rechabites, Jer. xxxv. 2.

CHAP. III.

THIS chapter gives an account of the sons of David, born to him both in Hebron and in Jerusalem, ver. 1—9. and of his successors in the kingdom, to the Babylonish captivity, ver. 10—16. and of his family, to the coming of the Messiah, ver. 17—24.

Ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Now these were the sons of David*, &c.] The six following born in Hebron, who are reckoned in the same order as in 2 Sam. iii. 2—5. only here the second son is called Daniel, who there goes by the name of Chileab; he had two names, the reason of which see there; and here David's wife, Eglah, is said in the Targum to be Michal, Saul's daughter, see the note on 2 Sam. iii. 5. to which is added an account of his reign both in Hebron and Jerusalem, agreeably to 2 Sam. v. 5.

Ver. 5, 6, 7, 8. *And these were born unto him in Jerusalem*, &c.] Whose names follow, in all 9; there are but 7 mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 14, 15, 16. the reason of which see in the notes there; it may be observed that Bathsheba is here called Bathshua, and her father Ammiel, whose name is Eliam in 2 Sam. xi. 3. names of much the same signification.

Ver. 9. These were *all the sons of David*, &c.] By his wives: *beside the sons of the concubines;* who are not reckoned, and how many they were is not known; he had ten concubines at least, 2 Sam. xv. 16. and xx. iii. *And Tamar their sister;* not the sister of the sons of the concubines, but of his other sons, and only of Absalom by the mother's side, of whom see 2 Sam. xiii.

Ver. 10—14. *And Solomon's son* was *Rehoboam*, &c.] From hence to the end of the 14th verse, David's successors are reckoned, according to the order of their reign, unto Josiah and his sons: *Solomon, Rehoboam, Abia, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, Azariah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah*, in all 16.

Ver. 15. *And the sons of Josiah* were, *the first-born Johanan*, &c.] Of whom we nowhere else read; he probably died before his father Josiah: *the second Jehoiakim;* whose name was Eliakim, changed for the former by the king of Egypt, when he deposed his younger brother, and set him on the throne, 2 Kings xxiii. 24. *the third Zedekiah;* whose name was Mattaniah, but changed by the king of Babylon, when he placed him on the throne in the room of his brother's son, 2 Kings xxiv. 17. *the fourth Shallum;* the same with Jehoahaz, who was first made king in the room of his father; but reigning so short a time, and making so mean a figure, is mentioned last, see Jer. xxii. 11.

Ver. 16. *And the sons of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son.*] This is not the Zedekiah mentioned in the preceding verse; for he was not the son but the uncle of Jeconiah, unless he should be called his son because he succeeded him in the kingdom; but he seems to be another of that name, nowhere else mentioned, and not the son of Jeconiah in any sense; he is not reckoned among them in the following verses, but of Jehoiakim.

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Jeconiah*, &c.] For though he was pronounced childless, Jer. xxii. 30. that respects not his having no children in any sense, but none to succeed him in the kingdom: *Assir;* which signifies bound, or a prisoner, because, as Kimchi thinks, he was born in a prison, his father then being a captive in Babylon; but rather it refers to Jeconiah himself, and is an appellation of him, and to be rendered, *the sons of Jeconiah the captive:* which agrees best with the Hebrew accents: *Salathiel his son;* the same that is called Shealtiel, Hagg. i. 1. who was both the proper son of Jeconiah, and who succeeded him, as some think, in the honour and dignity the king of Babylon raised him to.

Ver. 18. *Malchiram also*, &c.] That is, was a son of Jeconiah as well as Salathiel, and so the rest that follow: *and Pedaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah:* Kimchi says these were the sons of Salathiel; but I rather think they were the sons of Jeconiah, and brethren of Salathiel, because of what follows.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Pedaiah* were, *Zerubbabel and Shimei*, &c.] Here arises a difficulty, since elsewhere Zerubbabel is said to be the son of Shealtiel,

Hagg. i. 1. Matt. i. 12. Luke iii. 27. some think this is not the same Zerubbabel here as there; so Grotius [u]; but I see no reason for that; but this difficulty may be removed by observing, that if Pedaiah was a son of Salathiel, as Kimchi thinks, then Zerubbabel, being his grandson, may be called his son, as grandsons are sometimes called sons in Scripture; or rather, Salathiel, having no children, adopted Zerubbabel, his brother's son, and made him successor in the government; so that he was the son of Pedaiah by birth, and of Salathiel by adoption; or else Salathiel dying without children, his brother Pedaiah, according to the law, married his widow, and by her had Zerubbabel, who was the proper son of Pedaiah, and the legal son of Salathiel: *and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam:* who is called Abiud, Matt. i. 13. another son of his, with their father, is mentioned in this verse, and five more in the next. From hence to the end of the chapter, the genealogy is carried on from the captivity of Babylon, out of which Zerubbabel came, to the coming of Christ; and if Ezra was the writer of this book, as is generally thought, who was cotemporary with Zerubbabel, this account must be written by another hand: and it may be observed, that it is carried on in the same number of generations as in Matthew; and here it stands thus: *Zerubbabel, Hananiah, Jesaiah, Rephaiah, Arnan, Obadiah, Shecaniah, Shemaiah, Neariah, Elioenai, Anani;* in Matthew thus, *Zerubbabel, Abiud, Eliakim, Azor, Sadoc, Achim, Eliud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, Joseph:* the difference in names may be accounted for by their having two names; and it is remarkable that the Targum makes Anani to be the King Messiah, who was to be revealed; which, though it makes one generation less to his time, yet plainly shews that the Jews expected the Messiah to come at the end of this genealogy, and about the time Jesus the true Messiah did. Anani is reckoned by other Jews a name of the Messiah, who is said to come in the clouds of heaven, which *Anani* signifies, Dan. vii. 13. see the note there.

CHAP. IV.

IN this chapter is a further account of the tribe of Judah, and of some principal families in it, ver. 1—23. and of the tribe of Simeon, their families, cities, and villages, ver. 24—38. and of the enlargement of their borders, and conquest of the Amalekites, ver. 39—43.

Ver. 1. *The sons of Judah; Pharez,* &c.] The posterity of Judah in the line of Pharez, for he only is mentioned: *Hezron, and Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal:* Hezron was the son of Pharez, and Carmi is supposed to be Chelubai, or Caleb, the son of Hezron; and Hur the son of Caleb; and Shobal was the son of the second Caleb the son of Hur; see ch. ii. 5, 9, 19, 50.

Ver. 2. *And Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath,* &c.] Reaiah is the same with Haroeh, ch. ii. 52. the names are of the same signification: *and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathite;* who inhabited Zoreah, as the Targum, at least part of it; see ch. ii. 53, 54.

Ver. 3. *And these were of the father of Etam,* &c.] Or of the prince of Etam: or, as the Targum, these are princes that dwelt in Etam, a place not far from Zorah, Judg. xv. 8. and is mentioned with Beth-lehem and Tekoa in the tribe of Judah, 2 Chron. xi. 6. namely, which follow: *Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash; these* were the sons of the governor of Etam: *and the name of their sister* was *Hazelelponi;* who, perhaps, was a person of great note in those days, though now unknown; indeed, a Jewish chronologer [w] tells us, that the mother of Samson was Hazalelponith, of the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 4. *And Penuel the father of Gedor,* &c.] The prince of that place, according to some, and the same with Hareph, ch. ii. 51. *and Ezer the father of Hushah:* thought to be the same with Shuah, ver. 11. *these* are *the sons of Hur, the first-born of Ephratah:* Caleb's wife, ch. ii. 19. the Targum adds, the same with Miriam; and so other Jewish writers [x] say, Miriam had two names, and one was Ephratah; though Josephus makes [y] Hur to be her husband, and not her son, as here: who was *the father of Beth-lehem;* of the inhabitants of that city, at least part of them, or prince of that place, as his grandson Salma also was, ch. ii. 51.

Ver. 5. *And Ashur the father of Tekoa,* &c.] A son of Hezron by Abiah, ch. ii. 24. *had two wives, Helah and Naarah;* as Lamech had, polygamy not being reckoned unlawful in those times.

Ver. 6. *And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hepher, and Temeni, and Ahashtari,* &c.] Of whom we have no account elsewhere: *these* were *the sons of Naarah;* the second wife of Ashur.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Helah,* &c.] The other wife: were *Zereth, and Zoar, and Ethnan:* nowhere else mentioned.

Ver. 8. *And Coz,* &c.] Another son of Helah, and brother of the fore-mentioned: *begat Anub, and Zobebah;* of whom we nowhere else read: *and the families of Aharhel, the son of Harum;* these were of the posterity of Coz; the Targum is, "and the family of "Aharhal, this is Hur, the first-born of Miriam;" which is not at all probable.

Ver. 9. *And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren,* &c.] The Targum adds, "and wiser in the "law than his brethren;" or he might be a man of great wealth and riches, or of great strength and courage, all which make a man honourable; or he may be so called, because a praying man, as follows, a man of devotion and religion, a man of God, see 1 Sam. ix. 6. but who he was is not easy to say, probably a son or brother of Harum, or however that belonged to one of the families of Aharhel, mentioned in the preceding verse; for that he was Othniel, as say the Targumist and other Jewish writers [z], is not probable, and besides

[u] In Luc. 3.
[w] Juchasin, fol. 10. 2.
[x] Shemot Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 90. 4. Yalkut in 1 Chron. ii. 19.
[y] Antiqu. l. 3. c. 2.
[z] T. Bab. Temurah, fol. 16. 1.

is after spoken of distinct from him, ver. 13. *and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, because I bare him with sorrow;* either with sorrow for her husband, being dead, or by reason of very sharp pains she endured at the birth of him; he was another Benoni.

Ver. 10. *And Jabez called on the God of Israel,* &c.] Or prayed to him, as the Targum; though some understand it as a vow, promising what he would do if God would do thus and thus for him; the Syriac and Arabic versions read in the third person, taking it to be what others, his parents and friends, wished for him, *let him bless thee,* &c. but they are doubtless his own words, and a supplication of his to the Lord: *saying, oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed;* the Targum adds, with children; but he no doubt prayed for greater blessings than any outward or temporal ones are, even spiritual blessings, covenant blessings, the sure mercies of David, which are solid, substantial, durable, and irreversible: *and enlarge my coast;* the Targum is, "multiply my borders with disciples." It may be understood of an enlargement of the borders of his country, by expelling the Canaanites that might dwell in it, and of an increase of his worldly substance for good ends and purposes; or rather of a spiritual enlargement by deliverance from spiritual enemies, and of grace as to exercise; and particularly of spiritual light and knowledge, and of the affections and desires of the soul after divine things, see Psal. iv. 1. and cxix. 32. 1 Kings iv. 29. 2 Cor. vi. 11, 12. *and that thine hand might be with me;* the Targum adds, in business, prospering and succeeding him; the sense may be, that his hand of providence might be with him to protect him, of grace and love to comfort and help him in every time of need, of wisdom to direct him, and of power to keep him: *and that thou wouldest keep me from evil;* from the evil of affliction, and especially from the evil of sin, and from the evil one, Satan, and from all evil men and evil company; the Targum is, "and make me companions such as I am:" *that it may not grieve me;* alluding to his name Jabez, which he had from the sorrow and grief of his mother; and nothing is more grieving to a good man than the evil of sin, so contrary to the nature and will of God, being committed against a God of infinite love, grace, and mercy, whereby the name, ways, and truths of Christ are dishonoured, and the spirit of God grieved, and saints are bereaved of much comfort; and therefore desire to be kept from it, knowing they cannot keep themselves, but the Lord can and will, at least from the tyranny of it, and destruction by it: the Targum is, "lest the evil figment (or corruption of nature) "should move or provoke me:" *and God granted him that which he requested;* as he does whatever is asked in faith, according to his will, and will make for his glory, and the good of his people; see 1 John v. 14, 15.

Ver. 11. *And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir,* &c.] If Shuah is the same with Hushah, ver. 4, then Chelub was the son of Ezer: *which was the father of Eshton;* not the prince of a place called Eshton, as Vatablus; for it is the name of a man, the son of Mehir, and who in the next verse is said to beget sons.

Ver. 12. *And Eshton begat Beth-rapha,* &c.] Or the family of Rapha: *and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Ir-nahash;* or the city of Nahash; Tehinnah seems to have been the prince or governor of a city, so called; *these are the men of Rechah;* these sons of Eshton dwelt in a place called Rechah; the Targum, without any reason, says, these are the men of the great sanhedrim.

Ver. 13. *And the sons of Kenaz,* &c.] Who was either the son of Chelub, or of Eshton: *Othniel, and Seraiah;* the first of these is he who is mentioned, Josh. xv. 17. Judg. i. 13. and iii. 9. and was the first judge in Israel: *and the son of Othniel, Hathath;* and the next mentioned.

Ver. 14. *And Meonothai,* &c.] Another son of Othniel: *begat Ophrah; and Seraiah,* the brother of *Othniel, begat Joab;* not David's general, but another of the same name, who lived long before him, see ch. ii. 54. *the father of the valley of Charasim;* of the inhabitants of the valley, or the prince of them, called the valley of craftsmen, Neh. xi. 35. the reason of which is here given: *for they were craftsmen;* that dwelt in it, carpenters and smiths, both which the word signifies, men that wrought in stone, wood, and iron.

Ver. 15. *And the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh,* &c.] Jephunneh is not the same with Hezron, as the Targum, but another son of Kenaz, hence called the Kenezite, Josh. xiv. 6. and brother of Othniel; and Caleb his son is the same that was sent one of the spies of the land of Canaan by Moses, see Numb. xiii. 6. and xiv. 6. his sons were *Iru, Elah, and Naam;* of whom we nowhere else read: *and the sons of Elah, even Kenaz;* another Kenaz, or rather it should be read Uknaz; so Jarchi and Kimchi.

Ver. 16. *And the sons of Jahaleleel,* &c.] Who probably was the son of Uknaz: *Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asareel;* there were two cities in the tribe of Judah of the name of Ziph, Josh. xv. 24, 25. which might be called from these men, or from Ziph in ch. ii. 42.

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Ezra,* &c.] Who was perhaps the son of Asareel, last mentioned: *Jether, and Mered, and Epher, and Jalon;* only one of them, Mered, is after mentioned: *and she bare Miriam;* which is not the name of a woman, but of a man, as Kimchi observes; and, according to him, his mother was the wife of Mered, which he gathers from the next verse; though she seems to be the wife of Ezra, who bare him other sons: *and Shammai, and Ishbath the father of Eshtemoa;* a prince of a city in the tribe of Judah, so called, Josh. xv. 50. and xxi. 14.

Ver. 18. *And his wife Jehudijah,* &c.] Another wife of Ezra; or, according to Kimchi, of Mered; a Jewess, as the word is by some rendered, to distinguish her from another wife, an Egyptian, in the latter part of the verse: *bare Jered the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah;* who were princes, as Jarchi seems rightly to observe; of several cities of these names in the tribe of Judah, as of Gedor, see Josh. xv. 58. of Socoh, ver. 35, 48. of Zanoah, ver. 34. the Targum interprets the names of all these men of Moses, whom Pharaoh's daughter brought up; and so other Jewish writers[a], into which

[a] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 13. 1. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 1. fol. 146. 2.

mistake they were led by what follows: *and these are the sons of Bithiah, the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took*; that is, to wife; this Mered was one of the sons of Ezra, ver. 17. the Targum, and other Jewish writers [b], say this was Caleb, called Mered, because he rebelled against the counsel of the spies; but this contradicts their other notion of Jehudijah, or Bithiah, Pharaoh's daughter, whom he married, being the bringer-up of Moses, since Moses was elder than Caleb; but Bithiah, whom Mered married, was not a daughter of Pharaoh king of Egypt, but of an Israelite of this name; her sons are supposed to be those in the latter part of ver. 17.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of* his *wife Hodiah*, &c.] Another wife of Mered. Hillerus [c] takes her to be the same with Jehudijah, ver. 18. though some [d] take Hodiah to be the name of a man, and read the words, *and the sons of the wife of Hodiah*; which wife of Hodiah was *the sister of Naham*; or rather Achotnaham, we render the sister of Naham, is the name of the first son of Hodiah, as some think [e]: *the father of Keilah the Garmite*; prince of the city of Keilah, in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 44. who sprung from the family of Garmi: *and Eshtemoa the Maachathite*; the father or prince of the inhabitants of Eshtemoa, another city in the same tribe, see ver. 17. who sprung from Maacha, see ch. ii. 48.

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Shimon*, &c.] Perhaps another son of Mered by his last wife, or the same with Shammai, ver. 17. were *Amnon, and Rinnah, Benhanan, and Tilon*; nowhere else mentioned: *and the sons of Ishi*; who it may be was the brother of Shimon or Tilon: were *Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth*; of whom we know no more than their names.

Ver. 21. *The sons of Shelah, the son of Judah*, were, &c.] The genealogy of the posterity of Judah, in the lines of Pharez and Zerah, being given, and very largely in that of the former, because of the honour of David, and his kingdom, which sprang from thence, as Jarchi observes, and also the King Messiah, the writer returns to give an account of his posterity by Shelah, a son he had by the daughter of Shuah, Gen. xxxviii. 2—5. and the only one that had children: which were as follow, *Er the father of Lecah*; prince of a city of this name in the tribe of Judah; Shelah gave him the name of Er, in memory of his brother, Gen. xxxviii. 3. *and Laadah the father of Mareshah*; prince of a city of this name in the same tribe, Josh. xv. 44. *and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea*; which last clause explains what house these families were of, which sprang from Shelah, and were employed in making fine linen; the Targum adds, for the garments of kings and priests, or for the curtains of the tabernacle, as Jarchi; for not with the Egyptians and Greeks only fine linen was made, but among the Hebrews, as Pausanias [f] testifies.

Ver. 22. *And Jokim*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin version is, *and he that made the sun to stand*; as if Joshua was meant; and in the Talmud it is [g] said Jokim, this is Joshua, who confirmed the oath to the Gibeonites; and the Targum here is, "and the prophets of the "scribes that sprang from the posterity of Joshua;" but Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim, and not of Judah; though some interpret it of Elimelech, as Lyra observes [h], of whom the fable is, that the sun stood still at his prayers, as it did in Joshua's time, to convert the men of Beth-lehem; but Jokim is no doubt the proper name of some famous man or family that descended from Shelah: *and the men of Chozeba*; which signifies a lie; and the Targum interprets it of the Gibeonites, who lied to Joshua; but those were Canaanites, and not of the posterity of Shelah, and tribe of Judah; Chezib, or Achzib, a city in the tribe of Judah, very probably is meant, as Kimchi, the very place where Shelah was born, Gen. xxxviii. 5. and where dwelt some of his posterity: *and Joash and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab*; some render the word, *which married in Moab*; and so the Targum interprets it of Mahlon and Chilion, who took wives of the daughters of Moab; but rather it is to be understood of some who were governors in Moab in the times of David, when Moab was subdued by him, 2 Sam. viii. 2, or however were such, who, at one time or another, made war with Moab, and overcame them: *and Jashubi-lehem*; which the Targumist understands of Boaz, prince of the wise men of the school of Beth-lehem, and the Talmudists [i] of Ruth, that dwelt in Beth-lehem; and may be interpreted of some of the inhabitants of that place which sprang from Shelah; or rather is the name of a single man, famous in his time, though not now known: *and these are ancient things*; an account of persons that lived in ancient times, and which the writer of this book gives not on his own knowledge, but by tradition, or rather by inspiration.

Ver. 23. *These* were *the potters*, &c.] Or are the potters; the posterity of those men, who were so famous in their day, are now of mean employments: some of them made earthen pots; and some of them dwelt *among plants and hedges*; or were employed in planting gardens and orchards, and making fences for them; or, as others think, *dwelt in Netaim and Gadara*, cities in the tribe of Judah: *there they dwelt with the king for his work*; to make pots, plant gardens, and set hedges for him; either for the king of Judah, or it may be for the king of Babylon, where they were carried captive, and now chose to remain, doing those servile works for the king, without the city, in the fields.

Ver. 24. *The sons of Simeon*, &c.] The account of whom, next to the tribe of Judah, is given before Reuben, because its inheritance lay in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xix. 1. his sons were Nemuel, the same with Jemuel, Gen. xlvi. 10. *and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah*, and *Shaul*; who, in the place referred to, is said to be the son of a Canaanitish woman; and Jarib and Zerah are the same with Jachin and Zohar there: and Ohed is here omitted, it may be because he died without issue; see Numb. xxvi. 12, 13.

Ver. 25. *Shallum his son*, &c.] The son of Shaul,

[b] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 19. 2. & Megillah, fol. 13. 1.
[c] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 590.
[d] Michaelis in loc.
[e] Beckii Not. in Targ. 1 Chron. iv. 19.
[f] Eliac. 1. sive, l. 5. p. 291.
[g] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol 91. 2.
[h] So Heb. in Hieron. Trad. Heb. in Paralip. fol. 81. M.
[i] Ut supra.

and Mibsam was the son of Shallum, and Mishma the son of Mibsam.

Ver. 26. *And the sons of Mishma, &c.*] These were Hamuel, Zacchur, and Shimei.

Ver. 27. *And Shimei had 16 sons and six daughters, &c.*] None of which are mentioned by name: *but his brethren had not many children*; Hamuel and Zacchur: *neither did all their family multiply like to the children of Judah*: to shew the fruitfulness and great increase of which tribe, the genealogical account of it, in this and the two preceding chapters, is given.

Ver. 28. *And they dwelt at Beer-sheba, &c.*] The posterity of Simeon; and this and the other places of their habitation are mentioned in the same order, and with very little variation of names to the end of ver. 31. as in Josh. xix. 2—6. and here, at ver. 31. it is added, *these were their cities unto the reign of David*: when, according to Kimchi, and other Jewish writers, he expelled them from thence, and restored them to the tribe of Judah.

Ver. 32. *And their villages were Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities.*] There are but four mentioned in Josh. xix. 7. one might be added since, or new built, namely, Tochen; these, according to Kimchi, were all that remained for them to dwell in, in the times of David; and therefore they were obliged to seek out for new settlements for themselves and flocks, as in ver. 39, &c.

Ver. 33. *And all their villages that were round about the same cities, unto Baal, &c.*] The same with Baalath-beer, Josh. xix. 8. *these were their habitations, and their genealogy*: as before described, until the times of David.

Ver. 34—37. *And Meshobach, and Jamlech, &c.*] These, with those that follow to the end of ver. 37. were famous men in the tribe of Simeon, of rank and dignity, and eminent for courage and valour, as the latter part of the chapter testifies, though they are nowhere else taken notice of. Jamlech, as Fabritius[k] observes, is not very different from Jamblichus, the name of a famous Platonic philosopher.

Ver. 38. *These mentioned by their names were princes in their families, &c.*] The principal men of them, heads of their fathers' houses: *and the house of their fathers increased greatly*; by them, so that they were obliged to seek out for new habitations, as follows.

Ver. 39. *And they went to the entrance of Gedor, &c.*] There was a city of this name in the tribe of Judah, ver. 18. but this seems to be further off, and perhaps is the same with Gedaris, mentioned by Strabo[l] along with Azotus and Ascalon, cities that belonged to the Philistines; since it was inhabited by the posterity of Ham, of whom the Philistines were, as in the following verse: *even unto the east side of the valley*; which was near to Gedor, and a suitable place: *to seek pasture for their flocks*; their sheep and goats.

Ver. 40. *And they found fat pasture and good, &c.*] In or near the valley of Gedor: *and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable*: there was room enough for them and their flocks, and they had no enemies on either side to disturb them: *for they of Ham had dwelt there of old*: either the Canaanites who descended from Canaan the son of Ham, and had never been expelled from thence; or the Philistines, who were a colony of the Egyptians, the posterity of Ham; and these inhabitants being of this cursed race, the Simeonites scrupled not to dispossess them.

Ver. 41. *And these written by name, &c.*] Before in ver. 34, 35, 36, 37. *came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah*; as Dr. Lightfoot[m] thinks, not within the first 14 years of his reign, when the Syrian army was abroad, and none dost peep out, but in his last 15 years, when the army was destroyed and gone: *and smote their tents*; the tents of those who dwelt there for the sake of feeding their flocks, and whose pasturage the Simeonites wanted: *and the habitations that were found there*: or the Meunim or Maonites, which the Septuagint version here calls Minæans, a people sometimes mentioned along with the Philistines, and others: see Judg. x. 11, 12. 1 Chron. xxvi. 6, 7. *and destroyed them utterly unto this day*: to the writing of this book; they had not then recovered their possessions: *and dwelt in their room, because there was pasture there for their flocks*; which was the thing they were in search of.

Ver. 42. *And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, 500 men went to Mount Seir, &c.*] In the land of Edom: *having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi*; these four captains are said, by the ancient Rabbins, to be of the tribe of Manasseh, as Kimchi observes; see ch. v. 24. but as the 500 they were at the head of were of the sons of Simeon, the captains, no doubt, were of the same race.

Ver. 43. *And they smote the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped, &c.*] That escaped the sword of Saul; though, according to the Jews[n], 100,000 of them were slain by him in one day; and of the sword of David, though he is said not to leave man or woman alive, 1 Sam. xxvii. 8, 9. *and dwelt there unto this day*; in the cities of the Amalekites, even of the posterity of the above; who were some of the remnant of Israel, that were not carried away by the king of Assyria, and who dwelt here after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, even in the times of Ezra, the writer of this book; see 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9.

CHAP. V.

THIS chapter relates the genealogy of the tribes that lived on the other side Jordan; of the Reubenites, ver. 1—10. of the Gadites, ver. 11—17. of the half-tribe of Manasseh, ver. 23, 24. and of their war with the Hagarites, in conjunction with each other, and their conquest of them, ver. 18—22. and who yet for their sins were all carried captive by the king of Assyria, ver. 25, 26.

Ver. 1. *Now the sons of Reuben, the first-born of Israel, &c.*] Are as follow in ver. 3. where the account be-

[k] Bibliothec. Gr. l. 4. c. 28. p. 294.
[l] Geograph. l. 16. p. 522.

[m] Works, vol. 1. p. 111.
[n] Midrash Esther, fol. 93. 4.

gins; for what comes between this and that is in a parenthesis: *(for he was the first-born;* of Jacob by his wife Leah; that must be owned, and Jacob allows it, Gen. xlix. 3. and yet the genealogy in this book begins not with him, as might on that account be expected; the reason follows: *but forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed:* by lying with Bilhah his concubine: *his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel;* his beloved son by his beloved wife Rachel, and so had a double portion given him; his two sons being equally ranked with the other sons of Jacob, and became distinct tribes, and each had their lot in the land of Canaan, see Gen. xlviii. 5, 32. compared with Deut. xxi. 17. *and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright;* or, *but the genealogy,* &c.*; neither after the birthright of Reuben, which he had by nature, being Jacob's first-born; nor after the birthright of Joseph, which he had by his father's gift, as it might be thought it should; the reason of which follows.

Ver. 2. *For Judah prevailed above his brethren,* &c.] That is, the tribe of Judah prevailed above the rest in number, in valour, and courage, and in dignity; wherefore the genealogy is not reckoned according to birthright, but dignity and dominion; hence this genealogical account began with Judah, because *of him* came *the chief ruler;* David and the kings of Judah, his successors; and above all, from him the Prince Messiah was to spring, and did, according to Gen. xlix. 10. so both the Syriac and Arabic versions read, "out of Judah should go forth the King Messiah:" *but the birthright was Joseph's)* or *though* [#] it was; yet Judah having the dominion and dignity, that tribe is first genealogized.

Ver. 3. *The sons,* I say, *of Reuben the first-born of Israel,* were, *Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.*] As in Gen. xlvi. 9.

Ver. 4, 5. *The sons of Joel,* &c.] Who was either the son of Carmi last mentioned, or rather of Hanoch, Reuben's first-born, since the descendants of him were the princes of the tribe: his posterity in succession were, Shemaiah, Gog, Shimei, Micah, Reaia, Baal, Beerah; of whom we know no more than their names, and by these the descent is carried down to the captivity by Tiglath-pileser, as follows.

Ver. 6. *Beerah his son,* &c.] The last of Joel's posterity, who, according to the Targum and other Jewish writers [§], was a prophet, and the father of Hosea, see Hos. i. 1. but neither the name, title, time, nor tribe, agree: *whom Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away* captive; the same with Tiglath-pileser by a transposition of letters, 2 Kings xv. 29. and is read the same here in the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic versions: *he was prince of the Reubenites;* at that time; that is, Beerah was.

Ver. 7. *And his brethren by their families,* &c.] Either the brethren of Beerah, or the rest of the posterity of Reuben: *(when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned:)* either in the times of Jotham and Jeroboam, ver. 17. or at the time of their captivity, as in the preceding verse: were *the chief, Jehiel, and Zechariah;* these were the principals or heads of their families.

Ver. 8. *And Bela the son of Azaz, the son of Shema, the son of Joel,* &c.] The pedigree of Bela, another principal man in the tribe of Reuben, is traced up to Joel the father of Shema; the same with Shemaiah, according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, ver. 4. *who dwelt in Aroer;* which belonged to the tribe of Gad, and was rebuilt by them, Numb. xxxii. 34. wherefore Kimchi observes, it may be interpreted, either from Aroer, or on the border of it, Bela dwelt: *even unto Nebo, and Baal-meon;* of which see the note on Numb. xxxii. 38.

Ver. 9. *And eastward he inhabited,* &c.] Either Bela, or the tribe of Reuben: *unto the entering in of the wilderness;* the wilderness of Kedemoth, which was near to Sihon king of Heshbon, whose land the Reubenites inhabited, Deut. ii. 26. *from the river Euphrates;* a learned man [†] thinks that this river Phrat was different from the Euphrates near Babylon, which was northward, since this was to the east or south-east: *because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead;* therefore their habitation was extended further, even to the river Euphrates, as in the days of David and Solomon, 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Kings iv. 21.

Ver. 10. *And in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites,* &c.] Not with the Hungarians, as the Targum, a people not then in being; but the Ishmaelites, so called because they descended from Hagar*, Sarah's maid; the same that are placed by Pliny [†] and Ptolemy [*] in Arabia, near the Batanæans, or inhabitants of Bashan; with those the Reubenites made war, in conjunction with the Gadites and half-tribe of Manasseh, ver. 18, 19. perhaps this war might be much about the time Saul relieved Jabesh-gilead, and beat the Ammonites, 1 Sam. xi. by which the tribes on that side Jordan might be encouraged to it: *who fell by their hand;* were worsted and conquered by them: *and they dwelt in their tents;* in which the Arabians used to dwell, because of their flocks; hence some of them were called Scenites: *throughout all the east* land *of Gilead;* or rather throughout all the land of the Hagarites, which lay to the east of Gilead, as the Vulgate Latin version; or otherwise the land of Gilead itself was their original possession.

Ver. 11. *And the children of Gad dwelt over-against them,* &c.] Or by them, the Reubenites; and one part of Gilead was given them between them, and the other to the half-tribe of Manasseh: *in the land of Bashan, unto Salcah;* for though all Bashan is said to be given to the half-tribe of Manasseh, Deut. iii. 13. yet that is to be understood of the greater part of it; all of that which belonged to Og, but what did not, the Gadites, either from the first, or in after-times, inhabited even as far as Salcah, which was one of the cities of Og, Deut. iii. 10. and which Benjamin of Tudela [*] makes mention of, being called by the same name in his days.

Ver. 12. *Joel the chief,* &c.] In this and the following verse are reckoned up the principal men in the tribe of Gad, and the chief of all was Joel, another from him

* Nec tamen, Tigurine version.
[#] Licet, ibid.
[§] Aben Ezra in Hos. i. 1. Pesikta apud Abarbinel. in ib.
[*] Texelii Phœnix, l. 2. c. 7. p. 272.

[*] So David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 45. 4.
[†] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 28.
[*] Geograph. l. 5. c. 19.
[*] Itinerar. p. 57.

in the tribe of Reuben, ver. 4. *and Shapham the next*: the second chief man, from whom, Reland [x] conjectures, Shophan, a city in the tribe of Gad, had its name, Numb. xxxii. 35. *and Jaanai*: from whom Dan-jaan might be called, as Michaelis intimates, 2 Sam. xxiv. 6. *and Shaphat in Bashan*: not Shaphat the father of Elisha, according to a tradition of the Jews, mentioned by Kimchi; which is not at all probable.

Ver. 13. *And their brethren of the house of their fathers*, &c.] Who were also men of eminence and note in them: were, *Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven*: so they are as here mentioned by name.

Ver. 14. *These are the children of Abihail the son of Huri*, &c.] That is, the seven before mentioned; they were the posterity of Abihail, whose pedigree is traced from his father Huri to Buz, the intermediate progenitors being Jeroah, Gilead, Michael, Jeshishai, Jahdo.

Ver. 15. *Ahi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers*.] Which Ahi was a principal man in the families the seven above men belonged to; besides them, or those three, were every one of them heads of families.

Ver. 16. *And they dwelt in Gilead*, &c.] In that part of it which belonged to the tribe of Gad: *in Bashan, and in her towns*: see the note on ver. 11. *and in all the suburbs of Sharon, upon their borders*: there were two Sharons, one to the west of the land of Israel near the Mediterranean sea, which is mentioned in Acts ix. 35. as near Lydda and Joppa; and the other to the east or north-east, beyond Jordan, which is here meant.

Ver. 17. *All these were reckoned by genealogies*, &c.] All before mentioned: *in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel*: not that those two kings reigned at the same time, and one and the same reckoning is meant; but, as Dr. Lightfoot [y] observes, there were two reckonings; his words are, "in the days of Jotham there was an account taken "of the families of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh, "1 Chron. v. 17. and so had there been in the days of "Jeroboam the second; then at their restoring by Je-"roboam out of the hands of Hamath and Syria, and "now at their arming against the Assyrian, under "whom they fell in the time of Pekah, and are never "again restored to Israel."

Ver. 18. *The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh*, &c.] These all joined together, living together on the one side of Jordan: *of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war*; strong able-bodied men; and not only able to bear and carry arms, sword in one hand, and shield in another; but were men of valour and courage, and had military skill, and knew how to handle their arms to advantage: were 44,760, *that went out to the war*: that used to go out when there was occasion, and did at this time.

Ver. 19. *And they made war with the Hagarites*, &c.] Before mentioned, ver. 10. *with Jetur, and Nephish*: with the posterity of these men, who were sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 15. and so was Nodah; perhaps the same with Kedemah, mentioned along with the other two there; so Hillerus [z] thinks.

Ver. 20. *And they were helped against them*, &c.] The Israelites were helped against the Ishmaelites, to fight with them, and overcome them; either by their brethren of the house of Israel, as the Targum, those on this side Jordan; or rather by the Lord, to whom they cried, and who was entreated by them as follows: *and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them*: they and their confederates and auxiliaries, the Ituraeans, &c. *for they cried to God in the battle*: which at first seems to have gone against them; and they prayed to God, as the Targum, whilst they were fighting, that he would appear for them, and give them victory: *and he was entreated of them*; he received their prayer, as the same paraphrase; he heard them, and answered them: *because they put their trust in him*; in his power and providence, and not in their own strength, courage, and military skill; the Targum is, "because they trusted in his word."

Ver. 21. *And they took away their cattle*, &c.] Which they brought with them, and they found in their camp when they fled, or in their fields: *of their camels* 50,000: with which Arabia abounded, and were fit to travel with in those hot and desert countries, being strong to carry burdens, and able to bear much thirst. The Arabians, as Diodorus Siculus [a] reports, brought up camels, for almost all the uses of life; as for the sake of their milk and flesh to feed upon, as well as for carrying burdens in common; and which in time of war they loaded with provisions for the army, and fought upon, one of them carrying two archers with their backs to each other, the one to meet the enemy in front, the other to annoy those that pursued them; and so the Parthians made use of camels both to fight on, and to carry provisions for their soldiers [b]: *and of sheep* 250,000; which these Hagarites kept both for food and clothing, and some of them might be now taken with them to supply their army; the Spartans carried sheep with them in their expeditions, as sacrifices to their gods [c]; but it need not be supposed that these creatures, and those that follow, were in such large numbers with the Hagarites in the battle, but were afterwards found, partly in their camp, and partly in the places inhabited by them: *and of asses* 2,000; used to ride on, and carry loads, and also to plough with; and in all these lay the wealth of men in those times and countries, see Job i. 1. *and of men* 100,000; so that they took captive above as many more as their army consisted of.

Ver. 22. *For there fell down many slain*, &c.] Many were killed in the battle, besides the great number of prisoners made, so that the army the Ishmaelites brought into the field was very great: *because the war was of God*: or from the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; he stirred up the Israelites to it, directed, assisted, and succeeded them, that vengeance might be taken on this wicked and idolatrous people: *and they dwelt in their stead until the captivity*: the Targum adds, of Sennacherib king of Assyria; but this capti-

[x] Palestin. Illustrat. par. 2. p. 602.
[y] Works, vol. 1. p. 100.
[z] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 554.

[a] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 127. & l. 3. p. 178. Vid. Plin. l. 8. c. 18.
[b] Tacit. Annal. l. 15. c. 12. Herodian. l. 4. c. 28, 30.
[c] Pausan. Boeotica, sive, l. 9. p. 561.

vity of the tribes referred to was not by him, but by Tiglath-pilneser king of Assyria, ver. 26. and they dwelt not in the country of the Arab-hagarites, or Ishmaelites in their stead there, but in Gilead, as in ver. 10. which belonged to the Gadites and Reubenites originally, but had been dispossessed of it, or however distressed in it by these Hagarites, which they now drove out, and dwelt in their stead; for as for the Scenite-arabs or Ishmaelites, they never were conquered and brought into subjection by any people, but always maintained their independency [e]; and lived upon the plunder of their neighbours, pitching their tents here and there for their conveniency, which in these parts were at this time spoiled.

Ver. 23. *And the children of the half-tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land*, &c.] Not in the land of the Hagarites, but in the land of Gilead and Bashan beyond Jordan, given them by Moses. The writer, having reckoned the genealogies of some of the principal men of Reuben and Gad, proceeds to give a short account of some principal men in this half-tribe: *they increased from Bashan;* where they first settled, and extended their possessions: *unto Baal-hermon and Senir, and unto Mount Hermon;* mountains which lay to the north of the land of Canaan, and are what geographers call Anti-libanus.

Ver. 24. *And these were the heads of the house of their fathers*, &c.] Some of the principal men of this half-tribe: *even Epher, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel;* but of none of these we read elsewhere, excepting Hepher and Azriel, Numb. xxvi. 31, 32. *mighty men of valour, famous men, and heads of the house of their fathers;* men that obtained a name for their strength, courage, and valour, and military exploits, and were the chiefs of the families in this half-tribe, and by whom they were denominated; so from Hepher were the family of the Hepherites, and from Azriel the family of the Azrielites, as in the place before quoted.

Ver. 25. *And they transgressed against the God of their fathers*, &c.] Against his law, will, word, and ordinances, not only the half-tribe of Manasseh, but the Reubenites and Gadites also: *and went a-whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them;* that is, committed idolatry, which is spiritual fornication or whoredom; worshipped the idols either of the Amorites, who were destroyed by the Lord to make way for their first settlement; or of the Ishmaelites, whom they conquered, and whose land they dwelt in to the captivity.

Ver. 26. *And the God of Israel*, &c.] The Targum is, "the word of the God of Israel:" *stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria;* in the times of Menahem king of Israel: *and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser;* in the times of Pekah king of Israel, to invade the land, and make war in it: *and he carried them away;* not the former, but the latter: *even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh;* these entirely together, with some other parts of the land, see 2 Kings xv. 29. *and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan;* to the very same places where afterwards Salmaneser carried the 10 tribes, or what remained of them, see 2 Kings xvii. 6. *unto this day;* the times of Ezra, the writer of this book, after the tribe of Judah returned from the captivity of Babylon; but the 10 tribes remained where they were carried, and have not returned even to this day.

CHAP. VI.

THIS chapter begins with the fathers and heads of the tribe of Levi, ver. 1, 2, 3. and reckons up the high-priests in the line of Eleazar, to the Babylonish captivity, ver. 4—15. gives an account of the families of the sons of Levi, ver. 16—30. and of those Levites that were employed as singers, and in other ministrations in the sanctuary in the times of David and Solomon, ver. 31—49. then follows a repetition of the sons of Aaron in the line of Eleazar, to the said times, ver. 50—53. and a recital of the dwelling-places of the Levites in the several tribes, ver. 54—81.

Ver. 1. *The sons of Levi*, &c.] After an account of the chief of the tribes of Judah and Simeon, of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, follows that of Levi, and his posterity; the kingdom being given to Judah, the birthright to Joseph, and the priesthood to Levi: the immediate sons of Levi were *Gershon, Kohath, and Merari;* as in Gen. xlvi. 11. Exod. vi. 16. from these sprung the three families of the Levites.

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel*, &c.] Given in the same order as in Exod. vi. 18. see the note there.

Ver. 3. *And the children of Amram, Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam*, &c.] Very memorable persons: Aaron was the high-priest, Moses the prophet and lawgiver, and Miriam a prophetess, see Micah vi. 4. *the sons also of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar;* the two first were destroyed by fire from heaven for offering strange fire, Lev. x. 1, 2. and the third succeeded his father in the high-priesthood; the line of which is drawn from Aaron through him unto the Babylonish captivity, from hence to the end of the 15th verse, where it ends: Jehozadak is the same with Josedech, Hagg. i. 1. who went young into Babylon, and whose son Joshua, born in the captivity, came out of it on the proclamation of Cyrus, Ezra ii. 2. and iii. 2. According to Josephus [f], and other Jewish writers [f], in the times of Uzzi, ver. 6. the priesthood was translated into the family of Ithamar, of which Eli was the first high-priest; where it continued to the times of Solomon,

[e] See the notes on Gen. xvi. 12. and Dan. xi. 41. and a dissertation upon the independency of the Arabs, at the end of the Universal History, vol. 20.

[e] Antiqu. l. 5. c. 11. sect. 5.
[f] Juchasin, fol. 136. 1.

when it was restored to Zadok, of the line of Eleazar. It is particularly observed of Azariah, ver. 10. that he it was that executed the priest's office in the temple built by Solomon; not that he was the first that officiated in it; that was Zadok; but this seems to be Azariah, who was the high-priest in the times of Uzziah, who opposed him when he would have offered incense in the temple, 2 Chron. xxvi. 17, 18. which may be the reason why he is so particularly taken notice of here; though some think this is to be understood of Johanan, the father of Azariah, supposed to be the same with Jehoiada, who, in the times of Athaliah, was the instrument of preserving both church and state, 2 Kings xi. the temple in which he ministered is described as built by Solomon, because at the time of the writing of this there was another temple built, or building, by Zerubbabel.

Ver. 16. *The sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.*] Which is repeated from ver. 1. for the sake of their posterity, whose names are given in the three following verses, in the same manner as in Exod. vi. 17—19.

Ver. 20, 21. *Of Gershon, Libni his son,* &c.] Whose genealogy runs thus, Jahath, called Jehiel, ch. xxiii. 8. Zimmah, between whom was Shimei, ver. 42. Joah, the same with Ethan, ver. 42. Iddo, called Adaiah, ver. 41. Zerah, Jeaterai, whose name was also Ethni, ver. 41. the posterity of Shimei, the brother of Libni, are omitted.

Ver. 22—28. *The sons of Kohath, Amminadab,* &c.] The same with Izhar, ver. 2, 18, 38. the posterity of his brethren, Amram, Hebron, and Uzziel, are omitted; and his genealogy is carried to a considerable length, for the sake of Samuel the prophet, who sprang from him: it stands thus, Korah, Assir, Elkanah, Ebiasaph, Assir, Tahath, Uriel, called Zephaniah, ver. 36. Uzziah, the same with Azariah, ver. 36. Shaul, whose name is Joel, ver. 36. then through the sons of Elkanah, before mentioned, Amasai, Ahimoth, called Mahath, ver. 35. another Elkanah, Zophai, or Zuph, ver. 35. Nahath, the same with Toah, ver. 34. and Tohu, 1 Sam. i. 1. Eliab, called Eliel, ver. 34. and Elihu, 1 Sam. i. 1. Jeroham, another Elkanah, the father of Samuel the prophet, whose first-born was Vashni, and whose name also was Joah, ver. 33. 1 Sam. viii. 2. and so here it is read in the Syriac and Arabic versions: *and his second son Abiah.*

Ver. 29, 30. *The sons of Merari: Mahli;* &c.] The posterity of his brother Mushi are omitted; his genealogy is drawn thus, Libni, Shimei, Uzza, Shimea, Haggiah, Asaiah.

Ver. 31. *And these are they,* &c.] Who follow; the account of whom begins ver. 33. *whom David set over the service of the song in the house of the Lord:* whom he appointed chief musicians, and masters of the chorus, to manage and conduct that part of divine service in the sanctuary, singing the praises of God, both with vocal and instrumental music: *after the ark had rest;* which was when it was brought from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David, and was placed in a tabernacle he provided for it, 2 Sam. vi. 12—17. where it remained until the temple was built, when and which was the only time it was removed, whereas before it had been removed from place to place, and so till now had no rest; though some undertand this of the ceasing or silence of the oracle over the ark, which was neither consulted by Solomon and his successors, nor any of the high-priests afterwards [g].

Ver. 32. *And they ministered before the dwelling-place of the tabernacles of the congregation with singing,* &c.] Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; this service they performed before the ark, which was in a tent or tabernacle David pitched for it; and which the Targum here calls the tabernacle of time, or a temporary tabernacle: *until Solomon had built the house of the Lord in Jerusalem;* the temple there: *and then they waited on their office according to their order;* performed it in the manner prescribed by David, see ch. xxv.

Ver. 33—38. *And these are they that waited with their children,* &c.] They and their posterity, who officiated in the service of singing psalms in the sanctuary: the three heads of them were of the three families of the Levites, as follow: *of the sons of the Kohathites, Heman a singer;* the chief of the singers, and who composed psalms and hymns, which are in the book of Psalms: *the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel;* or Samuel. This Heman was grandson of Samuel the prophet; for whose sake his genealogy is traced up to Jacob or Israel in the following verses, and stands thus; after Samuel, Elkanah, Jeroham, Eliel, Toah, Zuph, Elkanah, Mahath, Amasai, Elkanah, Joel, Azariah, Zephaniah, Tahath, Assir, Ebiasaph, Korah, Izhar, Kohath, Levi, Israel.

Ver. 39—43. *And his brother Asaph,* &c.] That is, Heman's brother; so Asaph was, as he was a descendant from the same original ancestor Levi, yet in the line of Gershon; and as being of the same office, a precentor, or chief singer: *who stood on his right hand;* he was next to Heman; Heman stood in the middle, which was the most honourable [h], and Asaph on his right hand, and Ethan, after mentioned, on his left; even Asaph, whose name is often met with in the book of Psalms; and his genealogy here stands thus, as traced up to Levi, viz. Berechiah, Shimea, Michael, Baasiah, Malchiah, Ethni, Zerah, Adaiah, Ethan, Zimmah, Shimei, Jahath, Gershon, Levi.

Ver. 44—47. *And their brethren, the sons of Merari,* &c.] Who were the brethren of the Kohathites and Gershonites, descending from the same ancestor Levi: stood *on the left hand;* that is, of Heman, see ver. 39. the chief of whom was Ethan, sometimes called Jeduthun, ch. xvi. 41. and xxv. 1, 3, 6. and often in the book of Psalms; his genealogy is traced up to Levi thus; Kishi, called Kushaiah, ch. xv. 17. Abdi, Malluch, Hashabiah, Amaziah, Hilkiah, Amzi, Bani, Shamer, Mahli, Mushi, Merari, Levi.

Ver. 48. *Their brethren also the Levites,* &c.] Who were not skilled in singing, and employed in that service, even the rest of the Kohathites, Gershonites, and Merarites: were *appointed unto all manner of service*

[g] Vid. Marsham. Canon. Chron. Secul. 14. p. 365.

[h] Alecto stetit in mediis——Claudian in Rufin. l. 1. ver. 41. Vid. Barthii Animadv. in ib.

of the tabernacle of the house of God; some were porters at the gates; others had the care of the vessels; others slew the beasts for sacrifices, flayed them, and cut them up, and brought the pieces to the altar of burnt-offerings, for the priests to offer.

Ver. 49—53. *But Aaron and his sons,* &c.] Those that descended from him, though of the same tribe of Levi were all priests: and they *offered upon the altar of burnt-offerings:* the daily sacrifice, and all the offerings of the people brought to them: *and on the altar of incense:* they burnt incense night and morning: and were appointed *for all the work of the* place *most holy;* such as were high-priests of the line of Eleazar, whose work it was to go into the most holy place once a year: *to make atonement for all Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God commanded:* in Lev. xvi. which see; and on mention of this, a list of the high-priests from Aaron, in the line of Eleazar, is given, to the times of Solomon, in the four following verses, just in the same order as in ver. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 54—81. *Now these* are *their dwelling-places,* &c.] The dwelling-places of the priests and Levites, assigned and given to them in the several tribes of Israel: and the account of them agrees with that in Josh. xxi. with some few variations of names of places, which have been there observed: see the notes there; only in ver. 57—60 two cities are omitted, Juttah and Gibeon, through want of care in transcribing, since they are said to be *thirteen,* as they should be, whereas eleven only are mentioned. The Jews say[h], the cities of the suburbs (those here mentioned) ceased from the time the first temple was destroyed; and yet Ezra, who lived after the captivity, and the building the second temple, here gives a very particular account of them; the suburbs belonging to every city, which he particularly mentions, were 2,000 cubits, both to the cities of refuge, and the rest, Numb. xxxv. 5. Hebron, the first city mentioned in the next verse, was a city of refuge, and had suburbs of such a space; and it is remarkable, that some of the temples with the Heathens, which were asylums, or places of refuge, had the space of 2,000 paces assigned them for the same sanctity and privilege[i].

CHAP. VII.

IN this chapter are given the genealogies of the tribes of Issachar, ver. 1—5. of Benjamin, ver. 6—12. of Naphtali, ver. 13. of Manasseh, ver. 14—19. of Ephraim, ver. 20—29. and of Asher, ver. 30—40. even of the chief men of them; and their numbers are reckoned as in the times of David. The tribes of Dan and Zebulun are omitted.

Ver. 1. *Now the sons of Issachar* were *Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four.*] The same number is given, Gen. xlvi. 13. with a small variation of two of their names, there called Phuvah and Job, from whence so many families sprang, mentioned Numb. xxvi. 23, 24. where the names are the same as here.

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Tola,* &c.] The eldest son of Issachar, whose posterity are only reckoned by name: *Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Ibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their father's house,* to wit, *of Tola;* the principal man of his family: they were *valiant men of might in their generations:* famous for their courage and military exploits, though they sprang from Tola, whose name signifies a *worm:* and which name Bochart[k] conjectures was given him by his parents, because he was so weakly that they had no hopes of raising him; and yet from him sprung such mighty men, and from them such a numerous race, as follows: *whose number* was, *in the days of David,* 22,600; besides those of the posterity of Uzzi, after mentioned. This was at the time Joab took the number of Israel, by the order of David, ch. xxi. 5.

Ver. 3. *And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah,* &c.] Including his posterity: *and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five;* together with their father, all reckoned the sons of Uzzi: *all of them chief men;* in their father's house, heads of families.

Ver. 4. *And with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers,* were *bands of soldiers for war,* &c.] Companies of men of military courage and skill, who could and did go out to war upon occasion: 36,000 *men;* besides the 22,600 Tolaites, ver. 2. *for they had many wives and sons:* having many wives, they had many sons; polygamy was the cause of their large numbers; and that they gave into for the sake of the multiplication of Abraham's seed, according to the divine promise.

Ver. 5. *And their brethren among all the families of Issachar,* &c.] As those of Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, ver. 1. were *men of might;* valiant and courageous: *reckoned in all, by their genealogies,* 87,000; that is, including with these those of Tola and Uzzi before given.

Ver. 6. The sons *of Benjamin; Bela, and Becher, and Jediael, three.*] Benjamin had ten sons, but three only are mentioned first; the latter of these seems to be the same with Ashbel, Gen. xlvi. 21.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five,* &c.] These are thought by some to be the grandsons of Bela, because of the different names in ch. viii. 3, 4, 5. *heads of the house of* their *fathers, mighty men of valour;* principal men in their tribe and families, and of great courage: *and were reckoned by their genealogies* 22,034; who sprung from these men.

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Becher,* &c.] Another son of Benjamin, ver. 6. *Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer*

[h] T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 48. 2.
[i] Tacit. Annal. l. 3. c. 62.
[k] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 21. col. 630.

and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth; the two last of these, according to Kimchi, gave names to two cities in Benjamin, built by them; Anathoth, the native place of Jeremiah the prophet, and Alameth, the same with Bahurim, 2 Sam. xvi. 5. *all these are the sons of Becher*; before named.

Ver. 9. *And the number of them*, &c.] Of the posterity of the sons of Becher: *after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour*; as they increased in succeeding ages, and at the time of David: *was* 20,200.

Ver. 10. *The sons also of Jediael*, &c.] The third son of Benjamin before mentioned, ver. 6. Bilhan, including his posterity, as follows: *and the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin*; called so after his great-grandfather: *and Ehud*; who was the second judge in Israel, Judg. iii. 15. *and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Ahishahar*; of whom we nowhere else read.

Ver. 11. *All these the sons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour*, were 17,200, *fit to go out for war* and *battle*.] Which, with the above sums put together, make of the tribe of Benjamin, besides what follow, 59,430; who, if numbered by Joab, the account was not given in by him, ch. xxi. 6.

Ver. 12. *Shuppim also, and Huppim, the children of Ir*, &c.] The same with Iri, ver. 7. so that these were not sons of Benjamin, as they seem to be, if they are the same with Muppim and Huppim in Gen. xlvi. 21. but his great-grandchildren, and are the same with Shupham and Hupham, from whom families of the tribe of Benjamin sprung, Numb. xxvi. 39. the Targum calls them the inhabitants of a city, but of what is not said, unless Geba should be meant, ch. viii. 6. and *Hushim, the sons of Aher*; either the same with Aherah, the third son of Benjamin, ch. viii. 1. or Ahiram, Numb. xxvi. 38. though some read the words, *the sons of another*; whom they suppose to be Dan, who otherwise is omitted; and Hushim is the only son of Dan, Gen. xlvi. 23. where the same plural word is used as here: who, they think, is called another, by way of detestation, that tribe being guilty of gross idolatry; but he rather seems to belong to Benjamin.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shallum*, &c.] Called Shillem, Gen. xlvi. 24. *the sons of Bilhah*; Jacob's concubine; her grandsons: for Naphtali, the father of them, was her son; from these sprung so many families, after their names, Numb. xxvi. 48, 49.

Ver. 14. *The sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare*, &c.] The wife of Manasseh, as distinguished from his concubine in the next clause; though the Targum reads, in connexion with that, "whom his "Aramitess (or Syrian) concubine bare;" and then adds, who also *bare Machir the father of Gilead*; so that Ashriel and Machir were brethren; from which Ashriel sprung the family of the Ashrielites, Numb. xxxvi. as from Machir the Machirites, Numb. xxvi. 29, 31.

Ver. 15. *And Machir took to wife* the sister *of Huppim and Shuppim, whose sister's name was Maachah*, &c.] He married into the tribe of Benjamin, a sister of the persons mentioned, ver. 12. whose name was Maachah: *and the name of the second* was *Zelophehad*; the second son of Manasseh, or of his posterity mentioned; for he was not his immediate son: for he was the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, Numb. xxvii. 1. *and Zelophehad had daughters*; but no sons, the names of his daughters are given, Numb. xxvi. 33. and xxvii. 1. and xxxvi. 11. Josh. xvii. 3.

Ver. 16. *And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother* was *Sheresh*, &c.] He had both these sons by her: *and his sons* were *Ulam and Rakem*; that is, either the sons of Peresh or Sheresh, the nearest, as Kimchi observes.

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Ulam; Bedan*, &c.] See 1 Sam. xii. 11. *these were the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh*; that is, were of his posterity, or belonged to his family; for Ulam and Rakem were sons of a brother of Gilead, ver. 16.

Ver. 18. *And his sister Hammoleketh*, &c.] The sister of Gilead so named; though the Targum renders it *that reigned*; and so Kimchi, that reigned in some part of Gilead; and the Vulgate Latin version translates it, *a queen bare Ishod, and Abiezer, and Mahalah*; Abiezer is the same with Jeezer, from whom a family sprung of that name, Numb. xxvi. 30. Josh. xvii. 2. of which Gideon was, Judg. vi. 11, 15.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Shemida*, &c.] Another son of Gilead's sister, unless the same with Ishod; from him sprung the family of the Shemidaites, Numb. xxvi. 32. *were, Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam*; from Shechem came the family of the Shechemites, as from Likhi, if he is the same with Helek, as probably he may be, was the family of the Helekites, Numb. xxvi. 30, 31.

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Ephraim*, &c.] A son of Joseph, and father of a tribe of this name, whose genealogy through five generations follows: Shuthelath, Bered, Tahath, Eladah, Tahath; the second.

Ver. 21. *And Zabad his son*, &c.] Not the son of Tahath the second last mentioned, but the son of Ephraim, a second son of his: *and Shuthelah*; his son, the son of Zabad, called after his uncle's name, ver. 20. *and Ezer, and Elead*; two other sons of Zabad: *whom the men of Gath* that were *born in* that *land slew*: that is, Zabad and his three sons; these the men of Gath slew, who were Philistines that dwelt there, and were originally of Egypt, and were born in that land, but had removed into Palestine, which had its name from them, of which Gath was one of its cities; and this bordering upon the land of Goshen, or being near it, where the Israelites dwelt, they made inroads upon them, and plundered them: *because they came down to take away their cattle*: and the sons, the grandsons of Ephraim, resisted them, and so were slain: and that the aggressors were not the Ephraimites, who went out of Egypt before their time, and fell upon the men of Gath, born in the land of the Philistines, in order to dispossess them of their land and substance, and were slain by them, which is the sense of the Targum and other writers, both Jewish and Christian; but the men of Gath, as is clear from this circumstance, that they *came down*, as men did when they went from Palestine to Egypt, not when

they went from Egypt to Palestine, then they *went up*; which would have been the phrase used, if this had been an expedition of the Ephraimites into Palestine; besides, it is not reasonable to think, that the Ephraimites, addicted to husbandry and cattle, and not used to war, should engage in such an enterprise; but rather the men of Gath, or the Philistines, who were a warlike people, and given to spoil and plunder; this, according to a learned chronologer[l], was 74 years after Jacob went down to Egypt, and 140 years before the children of Israel came from thence.

Ver. 22. *And Ephraim their father mourned many days*, &c.] For the loss of his son and grandchildren; for the above fact was done while the Israelites were in Egypt, and Ephraim the patriarch yet alive; nor is there any need to suppose another Ephraim, different from him: *and his brethren came to comfort him*: some of the heads of the other tribes of Israel, particularly Manasseh, with some of his family.

Ver. 23. *And when he went in to his wife*, &c.] After his grief and sorrow in part at least had subsided: *she conceived and bare a son*; which in some measure made up for the loss he had sustained: *and he called his name Beriah*: which signifies being *in evil* or calamity, he being born in an evil time: *because it went evil with his house*: or evil was in his house, as Noldius[m], in his family; a great calamity had befallen it.

Ver. 24. *And his daughter* was *Sherah*, &c.] That is, the daughter of Beriah; not an immediate daughter, but a descendant of his, otherwise she could not have reached the times of Joshua, as she did by what follows: *who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper*: which were cities on the border of the tribe of Ephraim; which the Israelites having taken from the Canaanites, and destroyed, she rebuilt, see Josh. xvi. 3, 5. *and Uzzen-sherah*; which was called after her own name, and to distinguish it from another place called Uzzen; though of neither of them do we read elsewhere.

Ver. 25, 26, 27. *And Rephah* was *his son*, &c.] The son of Beriah, whose genealogy from him is traced down to Joshua in this and the two following verses, and stands thus: after Rephah, Resheph, Telah, Tahan, Laadan, Ammihud, Elishama, who was prince of the tribe of Ephraim in the wilderness, Numb. i. 10. then Non or Nun, whose son was Jehoshua or Joshua.

Ver. 28. *And their possessions and habitations*, &c.] That is, of the sons of Ephraim, when come into the land of Canaan: were *Beth-el, and the towns thereof*: the villages belonging to it, which was formerly called Luz, and was the border of Ephraim, Josh. xvi. 2. *and eastward Naaran*: the same with Naarath, Josh. xvi. 7. *and westward Gezer, with the towns thereof*; of which see Josh. xvi. 3, 10. *and Shechem also, and the towns thereof*; which was a city of refuge in Mount Ephraim, Josh. xx. 7. *unto Gaza, and the towns thereof*; not Gaza, a city of the Philistines, for the tribe of Ephraim did not reach so far; the Targum calls it Aiah; it may be read Ad-aza, as in the margin of our Bibles.

Ver. 29. *And by the borders of the children of Manasseh*, &c.] Of the half-tribe of Manasseh on this side Jordan: near to them the Ephraimites dwelt, even near to *Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns*; of all which places see Josh. xvii. 11. *in these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel*; the Ephraimites, in those mentioned in ver. 28. and the Manassites, in those that are here mentioned; who were both the children or posterity of Joseph, the beloved son of Israel.

Ver. 30, 31. *The son of Asher*, &c.] Which, and his two grandsons born before Jacob went down to Egypt, are here reckoned as in Gen. xlvi. 17. only it is here added Malchiel his second grandson, *who is the father of Birzavith*; which Jarchi interprets, prince of a city of this name, which signifies pure oil; which it might have from the abundance of olives about it, Asher being a tribe which abounded with them, see Deut. xxxiii. 24. though some of the Rabbins take it to be the name of a man, whose daughters, they say, as Jarchi observes, were very beautiful, having much oil to anoint with, and were married to kings and priests anointed with oil.

Ver. 32. *And Heber*, &c.] The other grandson of Asher, and son of Beriah; *begat Japhlet, and Shomer, and Hotham, and Shuah their sister*; a place on the borders of Ephraim is called the coast of Japhleti; but whether from this Japhlet is uncertain.

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Japhlet: Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath; these are the children of Japhlet.*] Of whom we read not elsewhere.

Ver. 34. *And the sons of Shamer*, &c.] Or Shomer, the brother of Japhlet, ver. 32. *Ahi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram*; of whom nothing is known but their names.

Ver. 35. *And the sons of his brother Helem*, &c.] Or Helem his brother, that is, the brother of Shomer, who, according to Hillerus[n], is Hotham, ver. 32. *Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal*; nowhere else mentioned.

Ver. 36, 37. *And the sons of Zophah*, &c.] The eldest of the sons of Helem: *Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah, Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and Ithran, and Beera*; in all eleven.

Ver. 38. *And the sons of Jether*, &c.] The same with Ithran, the last of Zophah's sons but one, ver. 37. *Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara*: not Jephunneh the father of Caleb; he was not of the tribe of Asher, but of Judah.

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Ulla*, &c.] Who either was the son of Ara, last mentioned, or another son of Jether: *Arah, and Aniel, and Rezia*: here ends the genealogy of Asher, the last of the tribes; Dan and Zebulun not being reckoned at all.

Ver. 40. *All these* were *the children of Asher, heads of their father's house*, &c.] Principal men in their tribe, and respective families: *choice* and *mighty men of valour*; these were some selected from others, being eminent for their courage and valour: *chief of the princes*; or chief princes; the Vulgate Latin ver-

[l] Nic. Abrami Pharus, l. 9. c. 21. p. 242.
[m] Ebr. Concord. Part. No. 750. p. 165.

[n] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 551.

sion is, dukes of dukes, they were heads of their fathers' families: *and the number throughout the genealogy that were apt to war*, and *to battle*, was 26,000; that is, in the days of David, ver. 4. this was the number, not of their chief men, nor of all the people in the tribe, but of their militia.

CHAP. VIII.

IN this chapter the genealogy of the tribe of Benjamin is reconsidered, and several of the principal men and families in it are taken notice of, which were not before; or a further account is given of them, as of the sons and grandsons of Benjamin, ver. 1—5. of Ehud, ver. 5, 6, 7. of Shaharaim, ver. 8—11. of Elpaal and Beriah, ver. 12—18. of Shimhi, ver. 19—21. of Shashak, ver. 22—25. of Jeroham, ver. 26, 27. of Jehiel the father of Gibeon, ver. 28—32. of Ner, and particularly Saul, ver. 33. and of Jonathan, and his posterity, ver. 34—40.

Ver. 1. *Now Benjamin begat Bela his first-born*, &c.] See ch. vii. 6. The genealogy of the tribe of Benjamin is reviewed, because it joined and kept close with Judah in the worship of God, went into captivity, and returned out of it with it; and this review is made chiefly for the sake of Saul, and his posterity, the first king of Israel, who was of it, and in whose posterity this genealogy ends: *Ashbel the second*; supposed to be the same with Jediael, ch. vii. 6. see Gen. xlvi. 21. *and Aharah the third*; the same with Aher, ch. vii. 12. and with Ahiram, Numb. xxvi. 38.

Ver. 2. *Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.*] Nohah is supposed by some to be the same with Becher, ch. vii. 6. and by others with Naaman, Gen. xlvi. 21. as Rapha, the same with Rosh there.

Ver. 3. *The sons of Bela* were *Addar, and Gera, and Abihud.*] The first of these is thought to be the same with Ard, mentioned among the sons of Benjamin, Gen. xlvi. 21. but was one of his grandsons, see Numb. xxvi. 40. as Gera also was.

Ver. 4, 5. *And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah, and Gera, and Shephuphan, and Huram.*] These were all the sons of Bela; one of the name of Naaman is reckoned among the sons of Benjamin, Gen. xlvi. 21. and from this grandson the family of the Naamanites are named, Numb. xxvi. 40. and Ahoah is by some thought to be the same with Echi, mentioned in Gen. xlvi. 21. as one of Benjamin's sons. Some take the three last to be the sons of Ehud, spoken of in the next verse; but Shephuphan and Huram seem to be the same with Shupham and Hupham, Numb. xxvi. 39.

Ver. 6. *And these are the sons of Ehud*, &c.] Not he that was a judge in Israel, Judg. iii. 15. but perhaps a son of Huram the last mentioned; for not the three last are his sons, as some think, but the three following in the next verse; what follows being to be read in a parenthesis: (*these are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba*:) a city in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 24. namely, those sons of Ehud, after mentioned, were principal men in that tribe, and chief of the inhabitants of the city of Geba: *and they removed them to Manahath*; the name of a country referred to in ch. ii. 52, 54. according to Jarchi, which was in the tribe of Judah; Geba being too strait, either the inhabitants of Geba removed them, or they removed themselves, or their fathers removed them, ver. 7. or it may be read impersonally, they were removed thither for the sake of a better habitation; the Targum adds, " to the land of the house of Esau," to Edom; which is not likely.

Ver. 7. *And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera*, &c.] Or, to wit, Naaman, *&c.* so the words are to be connected with *these are the sons of Ehud*, in the preceding verse: *he removed them*; to the above place, that is, either Gera, or rather Ehud, he advised them, directed and enjoined them to go thither, as being most convenient for them: *and he begat Uzza and Ahihud*; after he had removed his other sons.

Ver. 8. *And Shaharaim*, &c.] Who was either a son of Ahihud, or rather a brother of his, another son of Ehud: *begat* children *in the country of Moab*; whither he might go on account of the famine, as Elimelech did, Ruth i. 1. *after he had sent them away*; which some understand of those that were removed from Geba to Manahath, ver. 6. but a different word is here used; and besides Shaharaim seems to be one of those that were removed. Kimchi takes Shilho-otham, we render *had sent them away*, to be the name of his first wife, of whom he begat children in Moab; but it seems best to render and interpret the words in connexion with what follows: he begat children in Moab, *after he had sent them away*; even *Hushim and Baara his wives*: after he had divorced them, for some reasons he had, he begat children of another wife, after mentioned.

Ver. 9, 10. *And he begat of Hodesh his wife*, &c.] That is, he, I say, begat, namely, Shaharaim; the Targum makes this Hodesh to be the same with Baara, called so because she was newly espoused; but wrongly: the sons begotten of her were the seven following; *Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcham, Jeuz, Shachia, and Mirma. These* were *his sons*: the sons of Shaharaim by his wife Hodesh: *heads of the fathers*; of the houses or families of their father.

Ver. 11. *And of Hushim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal.*] Before he sent her away, or divorced her, ver. 8.

Ver. 12. *The sons of Elpaal: Eber, and Misham, and Shamed*, &c.] Besides those in ver. 14, 17, 18. *who built Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof*; not Shamed, but Elpaal his father, so the Targum; and the Talmudists say *, these were walled cities from the days of Joshua the son of Nun, and were destroyed in the days of the concubine in Gibea, and Elpaal came and rebuilt them; they were inhabited by the Benjaminites, upon their return from the Babylonish captivity,

* T. Hieros. Megillah, fol. 70. 1. & T. Bab Megillah, fol. 4 1. So the Targum.

Neh. xi. 35. they were near to each other; according to a Jewish chronologer [r], it was three miles from the one to the other; Lod is the same with Lydda, in Acts ix. 32, 35, 38.

Ver. 13. *Beriah also, and Shema*, &c.] These were sons of Elpaal: *who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon;* which, though in the tribe of Dan, Josh. xix. 42. might afterwards come into the possession of Benjamin; or this may be another place of the same name in Benjamin; or, however, might be inhabited by Benjaminites, upon the return from captivity, who descended from those men: *who drove away the inhabitants of Gath:* dispossessed them of their city, in revenge for what they had done to the Ephraimites, ch. vii. 21.

Ver. 14. *And Ahio, Shashak, and Jerimoth.*] These were also sons of Elpaal.

Ver. 15, 16. *And Zebadiah*, &c.] And all that follow in this and the next verse were the sons of Beriah the son of Elpaal; namely, *Arad, Ader, Michael, Ispah, and Joha.*

Ver. 17, 18. *And Zebadiah, and Meshullam*, &c.] These, with those that follow, *Hezeki, Heber, Ishmerai, Jezliah, and Jobab*, were the sons of Elpaal.

Ver. 19, 20, 21. *And Joakim*, &c.] With all the rest in these verses, namely, *Zichri, Zabdi, Elienai, Zilthai, Eliel, Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath*, were the sons of *Shimhi*, the same with Shema brother of Beriah, and son of Elpaal, ver. 13.

Ver. 22, 23, 24, 25. *And Ishpan, and Heber*, &c.] And all that follow to the end of these verses, *Eliel, Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, Hananiah, Elam, Antothijah, Iphedeiah, and Penuel*, were the sons of *Shashak*, another son of Elpaal, ver. 14.

Ver. 26, 27. *And Shamsherai*, &c.] Who, with those next mentioned, *Shehariah, Athaliah, Jaresiah, Eliah, and Zichri*, were the sons of *Jeroham*, who perhaps is the same with Jerimoth, another son of Elpaal, ver. 14. who makes a considerable figure in this genealogy. Kimchi observes that it is a tradition [q], that this Eliah is Elijah the prophet, who was of the seed of Rachel.

Ver. 28. *These were heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief* men, &c.] All from ver. 14. the sons of Elpaal and their sons: *these dwelt in Jerusalem;* part of which always belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, see Josh. xv. 63. and xviii. 28.

Ver. 29. *And at Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon*, &c.] The builder of the city, and prince of the inhabitants of it, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 25. whose name was Jehiel, ch. ix. 35. (*whose wife's name* was *Maachah;*) of which name were many, see ch. ii. 48. and iii. 2. and vii. 16.

Ver. 30, 31. *And his first-born son Abdon*, &c.] That is, Jehiel's, the father or prince of Gibeon; other sons follow: *Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, Gedor, Ahio, and Zacher;* called Zechariah, ch. ix. 37. and between Baal and Nadab Ner is placed, ver. 35. and another son is added at the end of ver. 37, Mikloth next mentioned.

Ver. 32. *And Mikloth begat Shimeah*, &c.] Called Shimeam, ch. ix. 38. *and these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over-against them;* in another part of the city, right against them.

Ver. 33. *And Ner begat Kish*, &c.] Who also is called Abiel, as the Targum here adds; for Ner had two names, as other Jewish writers likewise say [r], see 1 Sam. ix. 1. *and Kish begat Saul;* the first king of Israel, for whose sake chiefly the genealogy of Benjamin is revised and enlarged in this chapter: *and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and Esh-baal*, see 1 Sam. xxxi. 2. Abinadab is called Ishui, 1 Sam. xiv. 49. and Esh-baal is the same with Ish-bosheth, 2 Sam. ii. 8, 10. so Baal and Bosheth are used of the same idol of which they are names, Hos. ix. 10.

Ver. 34. *And the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal*, &c.] The same with Mephibosheth, 2 Sam. iv. 4. and ix. 6. so Jerub-baal is called Jerub-besheth, Judg. vi. 32. 2 Sam. xi. 21. *and Merib-baal begat Micah:* called his young son in David's time, 2 Sam. ix. 12.

Ver. 35. *And the sons of Micah* were, *Pithon, and Melech, and Tarea, and Ahaz.*] The last but one is called Tahrea, ch. ix. 41. where Ahaz is left out, though supplied in our version.

Ver. 36. *And Ahaz begat Jehoadah*, &c.] Called Jarah, ch. ix. 42. *and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza;* the same account is given, ch. ix. 42.

Ver. 37. *And Moza begat Binea: Rapha was his son*, &c.] Called Rephaiah, ch. ix. 43. *Elasa his son;* whose name is Eleasah, ch. ix. 43. *Azel his son.*

Ver. 38. *And Azel had six sons, whose names are these, Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan*, &c.] Which make the said number: *all these* were *the sons of Azel:* his family was large.

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Eshek his brother*, &c.] The brother of Azel; who he was is not known, unless he is the same with Elasa, as is conjectured: were *Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third.*

Ver. 40. *And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour*, &c.] Men of great fortitude and courage, though their names are not expressed: *archers;* skilful in the use of the bow and arrows, as the Benjaminites formerly were famous for slinging stones: *and had many sons, and sons' sons*, 150; so that the posterity of Jonathan, whose genealogy is drawn down from ver. 34 hither, were very great; and greater still, according to the Vulgate Latin version, in which the number is 150,000 in the edition of Sixtus the fifth, and so in most MSS. of that version [s]: *all these* are *of the sons of Benjamin;* his posterity, whose names are given in this chapter.

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[p] Juchasin, fol. 39. 2.
[q] Shemoth Rabba, sect. 40. fol. 135. 4.

[r] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 9. fol. 152. 4.
[s] See James of the Contrariety of the Popish Bibles, p. 294.

CHAP. IX.

THE genealogies of the several tribes being given, according as they were written in the books of the kings of Israel, ver. 1. an account follows of those who first settled in Jerusalem after their return from the Babylonish captivity; of the Israelites, ver. 2—9. of the priests, ver. 10—13. of the Levites, and of the charge and offices of several of the priests and Levites, ver. 14—34. and the chapter is concluded with a repetition of the genealogy of the ancestors and posterity of Saul king of Israel, ver. 35—44.

Ver. 1. *So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies, &c.*] Not now by the writer of this book in the preceding chapters; for two of the tribes are not reckoned at all, and the rest but in part; but there had been kept an exact account of them: *and, behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel;* not in the canonical book or books of Kings, but in the annals, journals, and diaries, which each king took care to be kept with some exactness, often referred to in the preceding books; out of which this writer, under a divine direction, had taken what was proper to be continued, and had carried the genealogy down to the captivity of the ten tribes; but the genealogy being lost with them, he could proceed no further, nor say any thing more concerning them: *but Judah;* for so the word should be stopped, and read according to the Hebrew accents: who *were carried away to Babylon for their transgression;* their idolatry, and were now returned again; of them the writer proposes to give a further account.

Ver. 2. *Now the first inhabitants* that dwelt *in their possessions in their cities, &c.*] Who first returned from Babylon upon the proclamation of Cyrus, and enjoyed their former possessions, and dwelt in the cities they had before, or in such as were allotted them, or they chose: were, *the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and the Nethinims;* the whole body that returned were divided into four classes, as they had been before the captivity; the Israelites were the common people in general, the body politic; the priests, the ecclesiastics, who officiated in sacred things; the Levites, who ministered to them; and the Nethinim were such persons as were *given*, as the word signifies, to do servile work for the sanctuary, as to be hewers of wood and drawers of water; such were the Gibeonites, Josh. ix. 27. and such as were appointed by David for such work, see Ezra viii. 20.

Ver. 3. *And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, &c.*] Of which tribes were the largest number that went into, and returned out of, captivity: *and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh;* such of those tribes who had joined the others when Jeroboam introduced his idolatry, or had fled to them when Samaria was besieged and taken by Salmaneser, and so went into captivity with Judah, and now returned; and as many of them as took the advantage of the proclamation of Cyrus, who were carried captive with the ten tribes.

Ver. 4. *Uthai, the son of Ammihud, &c.*] Called Athaiah, Neh. xi. 4. though his ancestors there are differently reckoned here; his genealogy here is traced from his father Ammihud, through Omri, Imri, Bani, Pharez, to Judah.

Ver. 5. *And of the Shilonites, &c.*] Not called so from the city of Shilo, which was in Ephraim; whereas these here intended were of the tribe of Judah, and were either the descendants of a man whose name was Shiloni, Neh. xi. 5. or rather these are the same with the Shelahites, Numb. xxvi. 20. so called from Shelah the son of Judah; and so the Targum here is, "and of "the tribe of Shelah:" *Asaiah the first-born, and his sons;* the same with Maaseiah, Neh. xi. 5.

Ver. 6. *And of the sons of Zerah, &c.*] Another son of Judah: *Jeuel, and their brethren;* 690: or their kinsmen; for this number includes all of the posterity of Pharez, Shelah and Zerah mentioned.

Ver. 7. *And of the sons of Benjamin, &c.*] Who were of the tribe of Benjamin, and went with Judah into captivity, and returned with them, and such of them as dwelt in Jerusalem before that: *Sallu the son of Meshullam;* whose pedigree is differently given, Neh. xi. 7. *the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hassenuah:* perhaps these men had two names, there called Joel and Pedaiah.

Ver. 8. *And Ibneiah the son of Jeroham, &c.*] Who with two more, Elah and Meshullam, whose ancestors are given, of whom we have no mention elsewhere, were all of the tribe of Benjamin, said to settle at Jerusalem.

Ver. 9. *And their brethren, according to their generations,* 956, &c.] Which was the number of the Benjaminites there resident put together, and which greatly exceeded that of Judah, ver. 6. *all these men* were *chief of the fathers, in the house of their fathers:* principal men in the families of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, even all the seven before mentioned.

Ver. 10. *And of the priests, &c.*] Who returned and dwelt at Jerusalem: *Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin:* Jedaiah was the son of Jehoiarib, and Jachin is called Jachin, Neh. xi. 10.

Ver. 11. *And Azariah the son of Hilkiah, &c.*] That is, the son of Azariah, whose name was Seraiah, see ch. vi. 13, 14. Neh. xi. 11. whose pedigree is traced up from Hilkiah through Meshullam, called Shallum, ch. vi. 12, 13. Zadok, Meraioth, to Ahitub, *the ruler of the house of God;* high-priest in it; which is to be understood of Ahitub, and not of Azariah or Seraiah in the time of Ezra; for Joshua was then high-priest.

Ver. 12. *And Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, &c.*] In this genealogy, between Jeroham and Pashur, were three more here omitted, Pelaliah, Amzi, Zechariah, Neh. xi. 12. and then Pashur the son of Malchijah, as here: *and Maasai the son of Adiel;* whose pedigree is traced up from hence, through Jahzerah, Meshullam, Meshillemith, to Immer; one of the five heads of the courses settled by David, ch. xxiv. 14. The names of this man, and of his ancestors, are given, with some variation, in Neh. xi. 13.

Ver. 13. *And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers,* 1,760.] These, with other priests, made

up this number, which was greater than those of Judah and Benjamin, that dwelt in Jerusalem, put together: *very able men for the work of the service of the house of God:* men that had not only strength of body, which some part of the work of the priests required; but had courage and fortitude of mind to set about the service of God with cheerfulness, and to preserve it from corruption.

Ver. 14. *And of the Levites,* &c.] Having given an account of the two first classes of the people, the Israelites and priests, the author of the book now proceeds to the Levites, the third class; and the first mentioned is Shemaiah, whose ancestors, Hashub, Azrikam, and Hashabiah, were *of the sons of Merari;* the third son of Levi.

Ver. 15. *And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah,* &c.] Four more of the chief of the Levites, the pedigree of the last of which is traced up by Micah and Zichri to Asaph, the singer in the times of David, a descendant of Gershon, the first son of Levi; the first of these is thought by Hillerus[t] to be the same with Bakbukiah, Neh. xi. 17.

Ver. 16. *And Obadiah the son of Shemaiah,* &c.] Called Abdah the son of Shammua, Neh. xi. 17. *the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun:* who was Ethan, another of the singers in the time of David: *and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites;* the villages about Netophah, which was in the tribe of Judah, ch. ii. 54. Neh. vii. 26. which may be understood either of Elkanah, the ancestor of Berechiah, whose dwelling was there; or of Berechiah, and must be rendered, *who had dwelt* there; for now he dwelt at Jerusalem.

Ver. 17. *And the porters,* &c.] Or keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: were *Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum* was *the chief;* of these four porters, and their brethren.

Ver. 18. *Who hitherto waited in the king's gate eastward,* &c.] At the gate through which the king went into the temple, and was at the east of it; and here these porters were placed in the same order after the captivity, and their return from it, as before: *they were porters in the companies of the children of Levi;* or in the camp of Levi, which was placed around the tabernacle, as in the wilderness: the Septuagint version is, *these* are *the gates of the camp of the children of Levi;* at which these porters were placed.

Ver. 19. *And Shallum the son of Kore,* &c.] The same as in ver. 17. whose pedigree is traced up to Ebiasaph the son of Korah, see Exod. vi. 24. *and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites;* so called, because they descended from Korah: were *over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle;* until the temple was built: *and their fathers* being *over the host of the Lord;* the Levites, who were the Lord's army, and whose service is represented as a warfare, Numb. iv. 3. were *keepers of the entry;* into the tabernacle, that none might enter that were impure; or into the court of the priests, excepting priests; or into the holiest of all, as Kimchi suggests.

Ver. 20. *And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past,* &c.] Over the host, over the Levites, and the chief of them; which is to be understood of Phinehas the son of Eleazar, in the time of Moses, who succeeded his father in that post, see Numb. iii. 32. though some think, as Kimchi observes, that this was not Phinehas the priest, but a certain Levite of this name in this post; but since he is said to be in time past, it may very well be understood of him: and it also is observed, and *the Lord was with him:* inspiring him with zeal for his honour and glory, assisting and strengthening him to do his will and work, as particularly in the affair of Zimri, Numb. xxv. 7, 8. the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord was for his "help;" this may be said for the encouragement of him that was in the same office now.

Ver. 21. And *Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah,* &c.] Some think this refers to one that was in the times of David; but it seems rather to respect one that was after the Babylonish captivity, see ch. xxvi. 1, 2. though he and his brethren were in an office established in the times of David, and the order of which was now, as then, observed: *was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation;* who was the chief porter, and kept the door; either that led into the outer court, and kept out all unclean persons from entering there; or that which led into the court of the priests, that none but priests might enter there.

Ver. 22. *All those that were chosen to be porters in the gates were* 212, &c.] As fixed in the days of David, and might not be fewer: *these were reckoned by their genealogies in their villages;* where they dwelt: *whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office;* the scheme was first drawn by Samuel the prophet, and communicated to David, who put it into execution, to be constantly and perpetually observed.

Ver. 23. *So they and their children* had *the oversight of the gates of the house of the Lord,* &c.] They that were appointed in David's time to watch the gates of the temple, their posterity succeeded them in that office; for it was hereditary: *namely, the house of the tabernacle, by wards;* that which was at Gibeon in David's time, and now one was erected until the temple was built.

Ver. 24. *In four quarters were the porters,* &c.] For, according to the Targum on ver. 22, there were 24 wards: *towards the east, west, north, and south;* and, as the same paraphrase has it, six wards to the east, six to the west, six to the north, and six to the south.

Ver. 25. *And their brethren,* which were *in their villages,* &c.] Assigned them to dwell in: were *to come after seven days from time to time with them;* there was a new course of them every week; the old ones went off of duty, and another course succeeded, which came out of the villages where they dwelt, and the old course retired to theirs.

Ver. 26. *For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office,* &c.] The four chief porters who were over all the 212, and had one over them, ver. 17. these were never changed, nor went into the country-villages; but were always upon the spot, and in their office, superintending the rest: *and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God;* see ch. xxvi. 20.

[t] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 401, 548.

Ver. 27. *And they lodged round about the house of God*, &c.] In chambers on the outward wall about it, that they might be near to do their office: *because the charge* was *upon them:* to guard the house: *and the opening thereof every morning* pertained *to them;* that is, the opening of the doors of the mountain of the house, and the court of women; for as for others, that appertained to the priests, as Dr. Lightfoot [u] observes; under the second temple, it is said [w], Ben Geber was over the shutting of the gates in the evening, and so of opening in the morning.

Ver. 28. *And* certain *of them had the charge of the ministering vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale.*] Which the priests used in sacrificing, and which the Levites brought to them, and returned again to their proper places.

Ver. 29. Some *of them also* were *appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the instruments of the sanctuary*, &c.] They were committed to their care; they delivered them out on occasion, and their business was to see that they were returned when they had done their use and service: *and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices;* which were used in meat-offerings, drink-offerings, *&c.* see ch. xxvi. 20. under the second temple, Ahiah was over the libations or drink-offerings [x].

Ver. 30. *And* some *of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices.*] For though the Levites had the care of the spices, they might not make the ointment with them, only the priests, see Exod. xxx. 23.

Ver. 31. *And Mattithiah*, one *of the Levites, who* was *the first-born of Shallum the Korahite*, &c.] Of whom see ver. 19. *had the set office over the things that were made in the pans:* the meat-offerings that were made in pans: and so had the care of the fine flour, oil, and frankincense used in them, which he delivered to the priests when necessary, see Lev. ii. 5. the Septuagint version is, "over the works of the sacrifice of the pan "of the high-priest;" as if it respected peculiarly his meat-offering, Lev. vi. 20, 21. we read in the Misnah [y] of the offerings of the high-priest, as expressed by this word, which it signifies, and not pans, but what was fried in them [z]; and Ben Melech on the place says, this man was an high-priest who offered every day the 10th part of an ephah in a pan, half of it in the morning, and half of it in the evening, according to Lev. vi. 20. but that cannot be, for certain it is he was a Levite, as the text expresses it.

Ver. 32. *And* other *of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, were over the shew-bread, to prepare* it *every sabbath*, &c.] Twelve loaves of which were set every week before the ark upon the shew-bread table, and the old ones taken away: now the work of these Levites was to make this shew-bread, and get it ready every week to be set upon the table, and which was done not by them, but by priests; under the second temple, the family of Garmu was set over this work [a].

Ver. 33. *And these* are *the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites*, &c.] Others of them were employed in singing, and were masters of the song, and presided in that service, see ch. vi. 31. who remaining *in the chambers* were *free:* from all other work and service; and there they abode, even in the chambers of the temple, that they might be near to perform their work, and not be defiled, and made unfit for it: *for they were employed in* that *work day and night;* some or other of them, either in composing or singing psalms and hymns, or teaching others how to sing them.

Ver. 34. *These chief fathers of the Levites* were *chief throughout their generations*, &c.] Even all before made mention of in this chapter: *these dwelt at Jerusalem;* always resided there, and did not in turns go into the country-villages, as the inferior Levites did; their office requiring them to be constantly there, being chief of the porters, singers, *&c.* who had the superintendency and direction of the rest.

Ver. 35. *And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon*, &c.] Whose name is here mentioned, which is not in ch. viii. 29. Jehiel, *whose wife's name* was *Maachah;* as there, but here called his sister, as a wife sometimes is, Gen. xx. 2, 5. see 1 Cor. ix. 5. From hence to the end of the chapter is a repetition of the ancestors and posterity of Saul king of Israel; which is made to lead on to and connect the following history of the kings of Judah, begun in this book, and carried on in the next unto the Babylonish captivity, see ch. viii. 29—40. and the notes there.

CHAP. X.

THIS chapter, from ver. 1. to the end of ver. 12. which gives an account of the last battle of Saul with the Philistines, and of his death and burial, is the same with 1 Sam. xxxi. 1—13. see the notes there; the cause of his death follows here.

Ver. 13. *So Saul died for his transgression*, &c.] A violent and dishonourable death, which was suffered on account of the sins he was guilty of: one was, *which he committed against the Lord*, even *against the word of the Lord, which he kept not:* both in not staying for Samuel the time appointed, and by sparing the Amalekites, whom he was bid to destroy, 1 Sam. xiii. 13, 14. and xv. 3, 9. *and also for asking* counsel *of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire* of it; what he should do with respect to engaging in battle with the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxviii. 8, 15. which to do was contrary to an express command of God, Lev. xix. 31.

Ver. 14. *And inquired not of the Lord*, &c.] For though he did inquire in some sense in an external, careless, and hypocritical manner, yet not done seriously, sincerely, and heartily, nor with constancy; it was accounted as if he inquired not at all, see 1

[u] Temple-Service, c. 7. sect. 1.
[w] Misn. Shekalim, c. 5. sect. 1.
[x] Ibid.
[y] Menachot, c. 11. sect. 3. & Tamid, c. 1. sect. 3.
[z] Vid. Sheringham. in Misn. Yoma, c. 2. sect. 3. p. 16.
[a] Misn. Shekalim, ut supra.

Sam. xxviii. 6. the Targum adds another reason of his death, because he killed the priests of Nob; but that is not in the text: *therefore he slew him:* or suffered him to be slain: *and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse:* translated the kingdom of Israel out of Saul's family, upon his death, into Jesse's, even unto David; for the sake of which observation this short account is given of the last end of Saul.

CHAP. XI.

THIS chapter treats of David's being anointed king by all Israel, ver. 1—3. which agrees with 2 Sam. v. 1, 2, 3. see the notes there, and of his taking Jerusalem from the Jebusites, ver. 4—9. the account of which we have 2 Sam. v. 6—10. see the notes there; only here we are told, that it was Joab that smote the Jebusites first, and so was made chief captain according to David's promise; and that he also repaired the rest of the city David built round about; perhaps the fortifications demolished in taking it, ver. 6, 8. or rather, as others give the sense, he *saved alive*[a] those that remained in the city, after he had slain the lame and the blind; though a learned[c] writer conjectures it should be read, *and Joab* היה *was made* שר *the governor of the city;* and the Targum is, "Joab governed "the rest of the city." And then follows an account of David's mighty men and worthies, ver. 10—41. of whom see the notes on 2 Sam. xxiii. ver. 8—39. and others are added here, ver. 42—47. of whom we know no more than their names.

CHAP. XII.

THIS chapter gives an account of those that came to David at different times, and joined and assisted him both before the death of Saul, and when persecuted by him, and after he was made king of Judah in Hebron, and before he was king of all Israel, in order to it; of the Benjaminites that came to him when at Ziklag, ver. 1—7. of the Gadites that came to him when in the hold, ver. 8—15. of some of Judah and Benjamin, who came to him in the same place, ver. 16—18. and of the Manassites at the time he came with the Philistines against Saul, ver. 19—22. and the number of the several tribes are given, that came to him at Hebron to make him king over all Israel, ver. 23—40.

Ver. 1. *Now these* are *they that came to David to Ziklag,* &c.] Given him by Achish to live in, when he fled from Saul, 1 Sam. xxvii. 6. *while he yet kept himself close, because of Saul the son of Kish:* when he was an exile from his own country, and obliged to live retired in a foreign one, because of Saul's persecution of him, and seeking to take away his life: *and they were among the mighty men, helpers of the war:* not against Saul, with whom David had none, but with the Amalekites, and others, 1 Sam. xxvii. 8. and xxx. 16, 17.

Ver. 2. They were *armed with bows,* &c.] Much used in war in those times: *and could use both the right hand and the left, in* hurling *stones, and* shooting *arrows out of a bow;* they were ambidexters; who could sling stones, or shoot arrows, with either, which was no small advantage to them: even *of Saul's brethren of Benjamin:* they were of the tribe of Benjamin, of which Saul was, and so his brethren; and they might be, at least some of them, his relations and kinsmen; who observing the unreasonableness of Saul's enmity to David, and detesting his cruelty, and sensible of the innocence of David, and of the service he had done his country; and perhaps not being ignorant of his divine right and title to the kingdom, went over to him, to comfort, strengthen, and assist him.

Ver. 3. *The chief* was *Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite,* &c.] Who was of Gibeah, in the tribe of Benjamin, sometimes called Gibeah of Benjamin, and of Saul, it being his birth-place, see 1 Sam. xi. 4. and xiii. and so these might be some of his kindred: *and Jeziel, and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth;* there is one of this name in the posterity of Jonathan, ch. viii. 36. who might be so called after some of his relations: *and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite;* or Anathothite, as the Vulgate Latin version, who was of Anathoth, a city in the tribe of Benjamin, the native place of Jeremiah the prophet.

Ver. 4. *And Ishmaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the 30, and over the* 30, &c.] That came with him, and he had the command of; this man was of Gibeon, another city in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 25. *and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Josabad, the Gederathite;* one of Gedera, a city in the tribe of Judah, perhaps on the borders of that and Benjamin; Jerom speaks of it as belonging to the country of the city Ælia or Jerusalem.

Ver. 5. *Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealjah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite.*] A native of Haruph or Hariph, see Neh. vii. 24.

Ver. 6. *Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites.*] Not Korahites, descendants of Levi, ch. ix. 19. but the posterity of Korah a Benjaminite.

Ver. 7. *And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.*] A city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 58. and might now belong to Benjamin; or this was another city of the same name in that tribe.

Ver. 8. *And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David, into the hold to the wilderness,* &c.] Men

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[a] יחיה את שאר vivas conservavit urbis reliquias, Junius & Tremellius; Strigelius in Poli Synops. in loc.

[c] Dr. Kennicot's State of the Hebrew Text, dissert. 1. p. 34.

of the tribe of Gad, who lived on the other side Jordan; these separated themselves from the rest of their tribe, from their families and dwellings, and from the government of Saul, and came over to David, and joined him; either when he was in some strong hold in the wilderness of Ziph, or Maon, 1 Sam. xxiii. 14, 24, 25. or, as some think, when he was at Ziklag, in the hold there, said to be in the wilderness of Judah: *men of might, and men of war, fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler;* warlike, valiant, and courageous men, well skilled in military discipline: *whose faces were like the face of lions;* bold, stern, and fierce. The philosopher observes [e], that of all creatures the lion most resembles a man, having a great mouth, a square face and forehead, large eye-brows, &c. *and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains;* which are remarkable for their swiftness on the mountains, see Cant. ii. 17, and viii. 14. Ælianus [*] speaks of one sort of them that run as swift as a tempest. These Gadites, as with their undaunted looks and courage, intimidated their enemies, and put them to flight, so they were swift to pursue them, and overtake them.

Ver. 9—13. *Ezer the first,* &c.] This, and those that follow, are the names of the Gadites given, according to their age, or merit, or order in coming to David: Obadiah, Eliab, Mishmannah, Jeremiah, Attai, Eliel, Johanan, Elzabad, Jeremiah, Machbanai; in all eleven.

Ver. 14. *These were of the sons of Gad, captains of the host,* &c.] Of the militia in their own country, and of the men they brought with them; or they were such afterwards in David's army: *one of the least was over 100, and the greatest over 1,000;* not that they were so when they came, or brought over such a number of men with them under their command; but they were promoted by David, when he came to the throne, to be centurions and chiliarchs; according to Jarchi, the sense is, that the least of them would put to flight and pursue 100, and the greatest of them 1,000, and so fulfilled the passage in Lev. xxvi. 8.

Ver. 15. *These are they that went over Jordan in the first month,* &c.] The month Nisan or Ab; as they must come over Jordan to come to David, since they dwelt on the other side of it: *when it had overflown all its banks;* as it did at this time of the year, see Josh. iii. 15. which is observed to shew both the time of the year when they came over, and their zeal and ardour to assist David, and their boldness and intrepidity; fearless of danger, they threw themselves into Jordan, and swam over it, in all probability when the waters of it were so deep they could not ford it, and so rapid that they were in danger of being carried away with them: *and they put to flight all them of the valleys,* both *towards the east, and towards the west;* who dwelt in the valleys, or plains of Jordan east and west; who seeing a number of men come over, took them for enemies, and fled, so Kimchi; or, as others think, these were the Philistines, who, on the defeat of Saul, took possession of the cities of Israel, in the valleys forsaken by them, 1 Sam. xxxi. 7. or rather these were the Moabites or Arabs, who made incursions into the land of Israel for prey, the Gadites met with, when they came over Jordan.

Ver. 16. *And there came of the men of Benjamin, and of Judah,* &c.] Besides those before mentioned, ver. 2. *to the hold unto David;* the same as in ver. 8.

Ver. 17. *And David went out to meet them,* &c.] Out of the hold where he was; either out of respect and deference to them, some of them being persons of eminence; or it may be out of suspicion, fearing they were not his friends, being, it may be, chiefly of the tribe of Benjamin, and therefore was desirous of sounding them before he admitted them: *and said unto them, if ye be come peaceably unto me to help me;* if they were come with a good will to him, and intention to help him against his enemy, and protect him: *mine heart shall be knit unto you;* they should have such a share in his affections, that their hearts would be as one, as his and Jonathan's were, 1 Sam. xviii. 1. *but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies;* into the hands of Saul, and his courtiers, that sought his life: *seeing there is no wrong in mine hands;* no injury done by him to Saul, or to them, or to any other: *the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke* it; he that sees all things, let him revenge it; and it is not only a wish that he would, but a prayer of faith that so it would be.

Ver. 18. *Then the spirit came upon Amasai,* &c.] Or *clothed* [f] him; a spirit of fortitude, as the Targum, of strength, courage, and presence of mind, with which he was endowed, covered, and clothed as with a garment; this was a sister's son of David's, see 2 Sam. xvii. 25. who was *chief of the captains,* of them that came at this time with him to David; he was afterwards Absalom's general, and designed to be David's, but was murdered by Joab: and he said, *thine* are we, *David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse;* which being spoken in this short and concise manner, as the supplement shews, denotes the vehemency with which he spake, and is exprsssive of their cordial fidelity to him, and their resolution to abide by him at all events: *peace, peace* be *unto thee, and peace* be *to thine helpers;* wishing all prosperity, temporal and spiritual, to him and all his confederates and auxiliaries, among whom they reckoned themselves: *for thy God helpeth thee;* which they perceived by the remarkable deliverances of him out of the hand of Saul, when in imminent danger; the Targum is, "for the Word of the Lord "is for thy help:" *then David received them;* into the hold, and admitted them as his friends: *and made them the captains of the band;* they brought with them; or in after-times, when he came to the throne.

Ver. 19. *And there fell* some *of Manasseh to David,* &c.] Of the tribe of Manasseh; they took his part, and on his side, and joined him: *when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle;* which was a strong proof of their cordial attachment to him: *but they helped them not;* the Philistines; neither David nor his men, nor the Manassites that joined them: *for the lords of the Philistines, upon advisement;* counsel taken among themselves: *sent him away;* that is, David and his men: *saying, he will fall to his master Saul, to the* jeopardy *of our heads;* meaning, that he would go off

[e] Aristot. Physiognom. c. 5.
[*] De Animal. l. 14. c. 14.

[f] לבשה induit, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

with his troops to Saul, and betray them into his hands, and with their heads make his peace with him, see 1 Sam. xxix. 4.

Ver. 20. *As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh*, &c.] Others besides the former, who joined him when he went with the Philistines; these joined him when he was dismissed from them, and was returning to Ziklag: namely, *Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediael, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thousands that* were *of Manasseh*; that tribe being, as the rest were, divided into hundreds and thousands; these were captains over the thousands of the militia of the tribe.

Ver. 21. *And they helped David against the band* of the rovers, &c.] The Amalekites, who, whilst he was gone with the Philistines, had seized on Ziklag, and burnt it, and carried the women captive, with what spoil they could make; these coming to David thus opportunely, assisted him in his pursuit and defeat of them: *for they* were *all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host*: or army of David.

Ver. 22. *For at* that *time, day by day, there came to David to help him*, &c.] Particularly after the defeat of Saul by the Philistines, unto the time that David came to Hebron: *until* it was *a great host, like the host of God*: the heavenly host, the angels; so the Targum.

Ver. 23—37. *And these* are *the numbers of the bands* that were *ready armed to the war*, &c.] That were trained up to it, and accoutred for it: and *came to David to Hebron*; after the death of Ish-bosheth and Abner, and when David had reigned seven years in Hebron: *to turn the kingdom of Saul to him*: to transfer it to him and his family: *according to the word of the Lord*; by Samuel, which they were acquainted with; and the number of those of the children of Judah, who made him their king already, and so there was the less need of a numerous appearance of them, were 6,800 armed men, ver. 24. of the tribe of Simeon, valiant men, 7,100, ver. 25. of the children of Levi 4,600, ver. 26. of the Aaronites or priests, with Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, according to Jarchi and Kimchi, at the head of them, 3,700, ver. 27. besides Zadok, a young man of the line of Eleazar, who was made high-priest in the time of Solomon, who brought with him 22 captains, ver. 28. the heads of the courses of the priests, which were afterwards 24, 1 Chron. xxiv. 4. of the tribe of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, the greatest part of whom had been sticklers for the continuance of the kingdom in the family of Saul, 3,000, ver. 29. of the tribe of Ephraim, valiant men, 20,800, ver. 30. of the half-tribe of Manasseh on this side Jordan, whose names were pricked down, being given, to make David king, 18,000, ver. 31. and of the tribe of Issachar, 200 of the heads of them; men of knowledge and understanding, either in chronology or astrology, or in the proper seasons for husbandry, or for the fixing the beginning of years and months, and the intercalation of them, for keeping the several festivals; or rather were men of prudence and wisdom, and knew that this was the proper time for making David king, Ish-bosheth and Abner his general being dead; and as they were men in high esteem for their parts and abilities, their brethren were at their beck and command, ver. 32. and of the tribe of Zebulun, warlike men, skilful in war, and well armed, 50,000 men; and their numerous appearance shewed that they were hearty and sincere, being the greatest number of all the tribes, ver. 33. and of the tribe of Naphtali, 1,000 captains, and with them armed men, 37,000, ver. 34. and of the tribe of Dan, men skilled in war, 28,600, ver. 35. and of the tribe of Asher, warlike men, 40,000, ver. 36. and of the Reubenites, Gadites, and half-tribe of Manasseh, on the other side Jordan, military men, well armed, 120,000, ver. 37. which in all made 348,800 men, and upwards.

Ver. 38. *All these men of war that could keep rank*, &c.] Well-disciplined men: *came with a perfect heart to Hebron to make David king over Israel*; they were all of one mind, and quite hearty and sincere in fixing David on the throne of all Israel: *and all the rest also of Israel* were *of one heart also to make David king*; those who came not were of the same mind; it was the unanimous voice of the people that he should be their king.

Ver. 39. *And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking*, &c.] Keeping a festival, to testify their joy on this occasion: *for their brethren had prepared for them*; not the inhabitants of Hebron only, but all the country round about, brought in provisions on this joyful occasion; otherwise the men of Hebron would not have been able to have provided what was sufficient for such a vast number, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 40. *Moreover, they that were nigh*, &c.] To Hebron, or bordered on the tribe of Judah: even *unto Issachar, and Zebulun, and Naphtali*; as far as to those tribes, and including them: *brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules*; all which were creatures used to carry burdens: *and on oxen*; who, though commonly employed in ploughing, yet, on this occasion, might be made use of either in drawing waggons laden with provisions, such as follow, or in carrying loads on their backs; though, as Tully[a] observes, their backs shew they were not formed to receive and carry burdens: and *meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly*; that is, food made of flour, baked meats, besides bread, before mentioned, with dried figs, pressed and made into cakes, and clusters of grapes dried, and of liquids, wine and oil, which make cheerful, and beef and mutton in great plenty: *for* there was *joy in Israel*; that their civil wars were ended; that they were united into one kingdom again; and had a king over them according to their hearts' desire, the darling of the people, of whom they had raised expectations; being a valiant, prudent, and good man, who studied the good both of church and state, and, above all, was one of God's choosing, appointing, and anointing: greater joy there will be, when David's son and antitype, Zion's King, reigns, when he shall be King over all the earth, and there will be one Lord, and his name one, Psal. xcvii. 1. Isa. lii. 7. Zech. xiv. 9. Rev. xi. 15, 16, 17.

[a] De Natura Deorum, l. 2. prope finem.

CHAP. XIII.

THE contents of this chapter are the same with 2 Sam. vi. 1—11. only David's consultation with the principal men of Israel concerning the affair herein transacted is premised in the first four verses of this.

Ver. 1. *And David consulted with the captains of thousands, and hundreds, and with every leader.*] With the chiliarchs and centurions, and every officer in that large body of armed men in every tribe, who met to make and crown him king: for at that time was this consultation had, and therefore is connected with it; though the affair advised about was not yet done, as Dr. Lightfoot[b] observes, and was not done until some considerable time afterwards. Advice being taken, the several officers went with their men to their respective countries, to meet again at a certain time and place to put the thing projected into execution; and between this and that time were Hiram's message to David on his accession to the throne, the taking of Jerusalem, and the two battles with the Philistines, as the same writer notes; most of which are recorded before this in the book of Samuel, and follow here.

Ver. 2. *And David said unto all the congregation of Israel,* &c.] To the above persons, as representatives of it: *if* it seem *good unto you, and* that it be *of the Lord our God;* if it could be thought by them a good and useful thing, and agreeable to the will of God, and would make for his glory: *let us send abroad unto our brethren everywhere* that are *left in all the land of Israel;* that were not then present with them, even all the common people; whom David, though king, owns as his brethren; nor is his antitype ashamed to own this relation between him and his people, Heb. ii. 11. *and with them* also *to the priests and Levites* which are *in their cities* and *suburbs;* given to them in the several tribes to dwell in, see ch. vi. 54—81. *that they may gather themselves unto us:* at a certain time and place appointed.

Ver. 3. *And let us bring again the ark of our God to us,* &c.] The symbol of the divine Presence, than which nothing was more desirable to David, and he chose to begin his reign over all Israel with it: *for we inquired not at it in the days of Saul:* he being indifferent to religion, and careless about it, and the enjoyment of the presence of God, and having direction from him; and the people also content with worship at the tabernacle at Gibeah, though the token of the divine Presence was absent.

Ver. 4. *And all the congregation said that they would do so,* &c.] They unanimously agreed to the motion: *for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people;* they saw the propriety, necessity, and usefulness of it.

Ver. 5. *So David gathered all Israel together,* &c.] The principal of them, even 30,000 select men, 2 Sam. vi. 1. *from Shihor of Egypt;* or the Nile of Egypt, as the Targum and other Jewish writers, called Shihor from the blackness of its water, see Jer. ii. 18. though some think the river Rhinocurura is meant, which both lay to the south of the land of Israel: *even unto the entering of Hamath;* which the Targum interprets of Antiochia, which lay to the north of the land; so that this collection of the people was made from south to north, the extreme borders of the land: *to bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim;* where it then was, and had been a long time, see 1 Sam. vii. 1. from hence to the end of the chapter the account is the same with 2 Sam. vi. 1—11. see the notes there; what little variations there are, are there observed.

CHAP. XIV.

THIS chapter gives an account of the message of Hiram king of Tyre to David, and of David's taking him more wives, with the names of his children by them; and of two battles he fought with the Philistines, in which he had the victory over them; the same are recorded in 2 Sam. v. 11—25. see the notes there; and the chapter is concluded with observing, that the fame of David, on account of his victories, was spread in all countries, and they were struck with a panic from the Lord, and were in dread of him.

CHAP. XV.

DAVID, having prepared a place for the ark of God, gathered the Israelites, Levites, and priests, to assist in the bringing of it up thereunto, ver. 1, 13. and which was done in a very honourable and joyful manner, ver. 24—28. though David, for his behaviour, was despised by Michal his wife in her heart, ver. 29.

Ver. 1. *And* David *made him houses in the city of David,* &c.] With the help of the masons and carpenters Hiram sent him, ch. xiv. 1. the royal palace is meant, with all the apartments in it, which were many and large, as so great a family he had required, and with all the out-houses to it necessary for his servants, and their offices: *and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent:* see 2 Sam. vi. 17.

[b] Works, vol. 1. p. 61, 62.

Ver. 2. *Then David said*, &c.] Either within himself, or to his ministers and courtiers about him: *none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites;* he saw his former mistake in employing those that were not Levites in bringing up the ark from Kirjath-jearim, and bringing it in a cart, and not on the shoulders of the Levites, and so miscarried in his attempt, 2 Sam. vi. and, perhaps, had since more diligently consulted the law of God about this matter: *for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever:* as long as the Levitical dispensation lasted, as appears from Numb. i. 50. and iv. 15. and vii. 9.

Ver. 3. *And David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem*, &c.] The chief and heads of the people: *to bring up the ark of the Lord:* from the house of Obed-edom, where it had been three months, and for the sake of which his house was blessed, and which David heard of; and this encouraged him to take this step to fetch it from thence: *unto his place, which he had prepared for it;* ver. 1. see 2 Sam. vi. 12, 17.

Ver. 4—10. *And David assembled the children of Aaron, and the Levites.*] Whose business it was to bear the ark when there was any occasion for it: and from hence to the end of ver. 10 an account is given of the Levites, and their number employed in this affair: *of the sons of Kohath;* a son of Levi, that is, of his posterity; for his immediate sons, and so those of the rest after mentioned, had been dead ages ago; the principal of those, at this present time, was Uriel, and his kindred, or those of the same family with him, were 120: of those of Merari, another son of Levi, the chief was Asaiah, with 220 of his relations: of those of Gershon, another son of Levi, was Joel, and his brethren were 130: of the posterity of Elizaphan, a grandson of Kohath, Exod. vi. 18, 22. the most noted was Shemaiah, who had 200 of his family with him: and of those of Hebron, the son of Kohath, Exod. vi. 18. Eliel was the most famous, and he had 80 of his kindred with him: and of those of Uzziel, another son of Kohath in a different line from Elizaphan, who also was a son of Uzziel, was Amminadab the chief, who had 112 of his kindred with him: the number of Levites, in all, gathered together, were 862, besides their chiefs.

Ver. 11. *And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests*, &c.] See 2 Sam. viii. 17. and xv. 27, 29. 1 Kings iv. 4. *and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab;* the six chiefs before mentioned.

Ver. 12. *And he said unto them, ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites*, &c.] Of the families of the Levites, heads of their fathers' houses: *sanctify yourselves*, both *ye and your brethren:* respectively under each, whose numbers are before given, by washing their bodies and clothes, and abstaining from their wives: *that you may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel unto* the place that *I have prepared for it:* 2 Sam. vi. 17.

Ver. 13. *For because ye* did it *not at the first*, &c.] Did not sanctify themselves, as the supplement in our version directs; but rather the sense is, ye were not there at first, when the ark was brought from Kirjath-jearim as far as the house of Obed-edom, as they should have been; they were not then employed, as was their business, and therefore *the Lord our God made a breach upon us;* by smiting Uzzah with death, who was no Levite, and touched the ark, which is called his *error*, and for which God smote him, 2 Sam. vi. 7. on which place Lud. Capellus observes, the word *shal*, we there render *error*, signifies *a disease* in the Arabic language, and might formerly design a sudden one with the Hebrew; as an apoplexy; and so the sense be, that God smote Uzzah with an apoplexy, of which he suddenly died: *for that we sought him not after the due order;* but, instead of employing the Levites to carry the ark on their shoulders, it was put upon a cart.

Ver. 14. *So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves*, &c.] As they were ordered, and in the manner they should: *to bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel;* for though it was chiefly the work of the Levites, yet the priests might do it, and sometimes did, see Josh. iii. 13, 14. and vi. 6.

Ver. 15. *And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders, with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded, according to the word of the Lord.*] Not only bare it on their shoulders, but with the staves in it, which rested on their shoulders, see Numb. vii. 9. Exod. xxv. 14. the reason of this command, that the ark should be carried on men's shoulders, and not in any carriage, according to Maimonides[a], was both for the honour of it, and lest its form and structure should be any ways damaged.

Ver. 16. *And David spake to the chief of the Levites*, &c.] The six before mentioned, ver. 11. *to appoint their brethren* to be *the singers;* before the ark, as they brought it up: *with instruments of music, psalteries, and harps, and cymbals;* which were used in those times, see 2 Sam. vi. 5. and ch. xiii. 8. *sounding by lifting up the voice with joy;* the instrumental music was to be attended with vocal music, and that very sonorous and loud, and performed with all tokens of inward joy and gladness, as the occasion required.

Ver. 17. *So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel*, &c.] The grandson of Samuel the prophet, ch. vi. 33. *and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah;* a famous singer, often mentioned in the Psalms, ch. vi. 39. *and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiah;* the same with the son of Kishi, ch. vi. 44. these were the chief of the singers.

Ver. 18. *And with them their brethren of the second degree*, &c.] Who were next unto them, both in office and skill in singing: the fourteen following, *Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters;* who, when they were not employed in singing, were door-keepers of the sanctuary; either they had been porters at the tabernacle in Gibeon, or were so after the ark was placed in the tabernacle David prepared for it.

Ver. 19. *So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan*, &c.] The three principal of them: these were appointed *to sound with cymbals of brass;* for as there were three sorts of musical instruments, ver. 16. these three

[a] Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 45. p. 479.

chief singers had one of those instruments appropriated to them, one of which were the cymbals of brass, to which the apostle alludes, 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

Ver. 20. *And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah,* &c.] Who were eight of the second degree; Aziel is the same with Jaaziel, ver. 18. and Ben is left out, in whose room Azaziah, in the next verse, seems to be put; Ben is thought to be sick or dead before they came to execute their office, and whom the father of Kimchi takes to be the same with him who is expressed in the title of Psal. ix. which title is, on Muth Labben, or the death of Ben: these were appointed to sound *with psalteries on Alamoth*; psalteries were another kind of instruments of music; and Alamoth was either the beginning of a song, to the tune of which those instruments played, or the tune itself, and the note of it; either the treble or counter-tenor, a shrill sound, like that of organs, which this word sometimes signifies, see Psal. xlvi. title.

Ver. 21. *And Mattithiah, and Elipheleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah,* &c.] These six were appointed to sound; *with harps on the Sheminith to excel*; which Sheminith some take to be an harp with eight strings, or the beginning of a song, or a musical tone, the bass; see the title of Psal. vi.

Ver. 22. *And Chenaniah chief of the Levites was for song,* &c.] But the chief for the song were Heman, Asaph, and Ethan; rather *for the burden*, as the Targum; for the lifting up and bearing the ark: *he instructed about the song*: or about the taking up and bearing the burden, the ark; directing when to take it up, and how far to go with it, and then rest: *because he was skilful*; a wise and prudent man in all things, and so proper to direct in this business.

Ver. 23. *And Berechiah, and Elkanah, were door-keepers for the ark,* &c.] Either whilst it was at Kirjath-jearim, and at Obed-edom's house; or rather after it was put in the tabernacle David had prepared for it; though it may be best of all to understand it, that those, as it was carrying, went before it, to keep the people from pressing to it, and gazing on it.

Ver. 24. *And Shebaniah, and Jehoshaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God,* &c.] With the silver trumpets; one use of which was to blow with when the camps and ark of the Lord moved, Numb. x. 5, 6. *and Obed-edom and Jehiah* were *door-keepers for the ark*: they went behind it, as the others before it, for the same purpose, as it was bringing up.

Ver. 25. *So David and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands,* &c.] He and the principal men of the nation, and the officers of the army or militia: *went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the house of Obed-edom with joy*; with all demonstrations of it; for which purpose such a band of music was prepared, as before described.

Ver. 26. *And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord,* &c.] Not merely granted them bodily strength to carry it, which did not require a great deal; but helped them to carry it with cheerfulness, and without fear, and so as to commit no error, nor in any respect provoke his displeasure, as when it was brought before from Kirjath-jearim: *that they offered seven bullocks and seven rams*; by way of thanksgiving, besides what David offered; and this was done by the way, see 2 Sam. vi. 13.

Ver. 27. *And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen,* &c.] For though a king, he, being among the singers, was clothed as they; for so it follows: *and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song*: or of those that bore the burden, the ark, as the Targum: *with the singers*; all were clothed in robes of fine linen: *David also had upon him an ephod of linen*; which he had besides his linen robe, and was over it; and being a shorter and straiter garment, it bound the other closer to him; though some think this is explanative of the former, and designs the same, and is what others, besides priests, were, on occasion, allowed to wear, see 1 Sam. ii. 18.

Ver. 28. *Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting,* &c.] See 2 Sam. vi. 15.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window,* &c.] Of the palace, to see the procession, see 2 Sam. vi. 16, 20, 21, 22, 23. where not only this circumstance is related, and the inward contempt she had David in, because of his behaviour, but also what she said, and what David returned in answer to it.

CHAP. XVI.

THIS chapter relates that David offered sacrifices when the ark was brought into his city, ver. 1, 2, 3. who were the singers he appointed to sing before it continually, ver. 4, 5, 6. and the song he that day composed and delivered to them to sing, ver. 7—36. and that he appointed not only proper persons to minister before the ark, but also before the tabernacle at Gibeon, ver. 37—43.

Ver. 1, 2, 3. *So they brought the ark of God,* &c.] What is contained in these three verses is the same with 2 Sam. vi. 17, 18, 19. see the notes there.

Ver. 4. *And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord,* &c.] By singing the praises of God: *and to record*; or bring to remembrance; to commemorate in a song the great and good things God had done for Israel as a people: *and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel*; for all his benefits, and the blessings of his goodness bestowed on them.

Ver. 5. *Asaph the chief,* &c.] Of those that were now appointed: otherwise, of the three principal singers, Heman was the chief, and Asaph next, ch. vi. 33, 39. and next to him *Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah,*

and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, with psalteries, and with harps: to play upon them before the ark at the same time the psalms and songs were vocally sung; the above persons are such as are named before, ch. xv. 18, 20, 21. *but Asaph made a sound with cymbals;* he struck and played upon them, see ch. xv. 19.

Ver. 6. *Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests,* &c.] These were appointed to blow *with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of the Lord;* morning and evening.

Ver. 7. *Then on that day,* &c.] The ark was brought to Zion, and the above persons appointed to minister before it: *David delivered first* this psalm *to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph and his brethren:* to be sung by them now, and on every proper occasion; and this seems to be the first that was delivered to them; afterwards there were many more, as the titles of the psalms shew; the following is composed of part of two others, as they now stand in the book of Psalms. From hence, to the end of ver. 22, is the same with Psal. cv. 1—15. with a little variation, see the notes there; and from thence to the end of ver. 33 is Psal. xcvi. which see; and ver. 34 is the same with Psal. cvi. 1, and cvii. 1. see the notes there.

Ver. 35, 36. *And say ye, save us, O God of our salvation,* &c.] The author of temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation; the words are a direction to the singers, and those that sung with them, to express the prayer and doxology in the next verse, which both are the same with Psal. cvi. 47, 48. see the notes there; which David directed by a spirit of prophecy, foreseeing the people of Israel would be in captivity among the Heathens; though some think these were added by Ezra; for though there was in his time a return from the captivity, yet many still remained in it.

Ver. 37. *So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, Asaph and his brethren,* &c.] Whom he, that is, David, had appointed for the service of it: *to minister before the ark continually:* in singing the praises of God: *as every day's work required:* at the time of the morning and evening sacrifice, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it.

Ver. 38. *And Obed-edom, with their brethren,* 68, &c.] The Levites, the brethren of Asaph and Obed-edom, these were left before the ark to minister there: *Obed-edom also the son of Jeduthun;* or Ethan, which some take to be another Obed-edom; but the *vau* may be explanative, *even Obed-edom: and Hosah,* to be *porters:* these he left to be door-keepers of the ark.

Ver. 39. *And Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests,* &c.] These he left, having appointed them to be *before the tabernacle of the Lord, in the high place that* was *at Gibeon;* namely, the tabernacle of Moses, which was removed from Nob thither in the days of Saul, and continued there to the times of Solomon, ch. xxi. 28. 1 Kings iii. 4. and viii. 4.

Ver. 40. *To offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord,* &c.] Which was the work of the priests only to do: *upon the altar of burnt-offering continually morning and evening:* the lambs of the daily sacrifice, which were a burnt-offering, and only to be offered on the brasen altar at the tabernacle: *and to* do *according to all that is written in the law of the Lord, which he commanded Israel:* with regard to them, and all other sacrifices, see Exod. xxix. 38—42.

Ver. 41. *And with them,* &c.] That is, with Zadok, and the priests with him at Gibeon: he left *Heman and Jeduthun;* or Ethan, two principal singers: *and the rest* that were *chosen, who were expressed by name;* see ver. 18, 20, 21. *to give thanks to the Lord, because his mercy endureth for ever:* to praise him for his goodness, flowing from his grace and mercy continually.

Ver. 42. *And with them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals,* &c.] Or with them were the trumpets and cymbals, as Kimchi; or, as Piscator supplies it, with them he *left* the trumpets and cymbals: *for those that should make a sound;* by striking upon them: *and with musical instruments of God;* sacred ones, such as were devoted to his service, as psalteries and harps; the Syriac and Arabic versions carry the sense of the words quite differently, that these men did not sing with those musical instruments, but with a pleasant voice, and with pure and acceptable prayers, in humility and uprightness, glorified God: *and the sons of Jeduthun* were *porters;* at the tabernacle in Gibeon.

Ver. 43. *And all the people departed, every man to his house,* &c.] Having accompanied the ark to its place, and having praised the Lord for it, and been refreshed with food, see 2 Sam. vi. 19. *and David returned to bless his house;* his family; the Targum is, "to bless "the people;" see 2 Sam. vi. 20.

CHAP. XVII.

THIS chapter contains an account of David's intention to build an house for God, which he signified to Nathan the prophet, who first encouraged him to it; but afterwards was sent by the Lord to him with an order to desist from it, assuring him, at the same time, that his son should build it, and that his own house and kingdom should be established for ever; for which David expressed great thankfulness, the whole of which is related in 2 Sam. vii. with some little variation, see the notes there; only one thing has since occurred, which I would just take notice of, that here, ver. 5. as there also, it is said by the Lord, that he had *not dwelt in an house since the day* he *brought up Israel out of Egypt;* which seems to suggest that he had dwelt in one before, as has been hinted on 2 Sam. vii. 6. even whilst the people of Israel were in Egypt, though it is nowhere mentioned by Moses, or any other writer; yet it is not unreasonable to suppose it; for as the ancestors of the Israelites, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, when only travellers from place to place, built altars for God wherever they came; so their posterity, it is highly probable, not only did the same, but when they found themselves settled in Egypt, in the land of Goshen, might build places of worship;

and when we consider the wealth of Joseph, and his family, and indeed of all Israel, who enjoyed for many years great plenty, prosperity, and liberty, before their servitude, the vast numbers they increased to, and the long continuance of them in Egypt, more than 200 years; it will not seem strange that they should build houses for religious worship, and even one grand and splendid for public service, to which also they might be led by the example of the Egyptians; who, as Herodotus says[i], were the first that erected altars, images, and temples to the gods, and who in the times of Joseph had one at On, where his father-in-law officiated as priest, Gen. xli. 45. or rather to this they might be directed by some hints and instructions of their father Jacob before his death, who it is certain had a notion of a Beth-el, an house for the public worship of God, Gen. xxviii. 17, 19, 22. and xxxv. 1. and I find a learned man[k] of our own nation of this opinion, and which he founds upon this passage; and he supposes the house God dwelt in, in Egypt, was not a tent of goats' hair, as in the wilderness, but a structure of stones or bricks, a firm and stable house, such an one as Abraham built at Damascus when settled there; which continued to the times of Augustus Cæsar, as related by Nicholas of Damascus[l].

CHAP. XVIII. XIX. XX. XXI.

THE xviiith and xixth chapters are the same with 2 Sam. viii. x. with very little variations, which are observed in the notes on them, to which the reader is referred; and ch. xx.

AGREES with various passages in the second book of Samuel; ver. 1. with ch. xi. 1. and ver. 2, 3. with ch. xii. ver. 31, 32. and the rest, to the end of it, with ch. xxi. ver. 15—22. What differences there are, are observed in the notes on those passages, which see. And ch. xxi.

EXCEPTING the three last verses, is contained in 2 Sam. xxiv. with some few variations, which are there observed; see the notes there.

Ver. 28. *At that time when David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite*, &c.] The same with Araunah, 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. with some small variation of the letters, and are of the same signification, both signifying the *ornus*, as Hillerus[m] observes, the pine-tree or ash; see Isa. xliv. 14. in whose threshing-floor David now was, and where he had been praying and sacrificing; and God had accepted his prayer, as the Targum, and had answered him, by causing fire to come down on the sacrifice and consume it, and by ordering the angel to put up his sword in its sheath: *then he sacrificed there*: again by the priests, and continued to do so, for he had sacrificed there before, ver. 26. and finding his sacrifices in that place were acceptable, he repeated them, and did not go to Gibeon, as follows.

Ver. 29. *For the tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses made*, &c.] Or ordered to be made by the command of God, and according to his direction: *and the altar of burnt-offerings*, were *at that season in the high place at Gibeon*; which was four or five miles from Jerusalem, and too far for David to go in that time of extremity; though he must have gone thither to sacrifice, had not the Lord bid him build an altar on the threshing-floor; for there was the altar of burnt-offering, on which only, according to the law of Moses, sacrifices were to be offered: this high place is, in the Targum, called the sanctuary, it including, as Kimchi observes, the whole house, the tabernacle, and the altar of it; which had been here, and at Nob, 57 years, as the Jewish writers say[n].

Ver. 30. *But David could not go before it to inquire of God*, &c.] Which yet was the proper place to seek the Lord in: the reason follows, *for he was afraid, because of the sword of the angel of the Lord*; which had so terrified him, that he was so weak that he could not go; and he feared that, should he attempt to go, whilst he was going thither, at such a distance, the angel would make a terrible slaughter in Jerusalem, and therefore he durst not go and leave it; and besides, as the Lord had commanded him to build an altar there, he might fear it would displease him, should he depart from it; and the rather, as hereby he pointed out to him the place where the temple should be built, and sacrifices offered, as appears from what he says in the beginning of the next chapter.

CHAP. XXII.

IN this chapter we read of the place David pitched upon by divine direction for building the temple on, ver. 1. the preparation he made of artificers to build it, and of matter to build it of, as iron, brass, and wood, ver. 2—5. the charge and instructions he gave to Solomon to set about it, ver. 6—16. and to the princes of Israel to assist him in it, ver. 17—19.

Ver. 1. *Then David said*, &c.] Within himself, or to some principal persons about him: *this is the house of the Lord God*; the place where the temple was to

[i] Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 4.
[k] Dickinson. Physic. vet. & vera, c. 19. sect. 24.
[l] Apud. Joseph. Antiqu. l. 1. c. 7. sect. 2.
[m] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 529, 530.
[n] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Zebachim, c. 14. sect. 7.

be built, hinted at in Deut. xii. 5. and elsewhere; the meaning is, here, or in *this* place, shall be the house of God, so Noldius[o], for as yet there were none; but it was now made known to David that here it should be built, and so the words in 2 Chron. iii. 1. should be rendered, *then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, which was shewn to David his father, which he prepared in the place of David*, that which he bought *in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite: and this* is *the altar for the burnt-offering for Israel:* not which he had built here; but this is the place where one should be built for the people of Israel to bring their offerings to, and to be here offered for them by the priests: this he said by a divine impulse upon his mind, or which he concluded from the acceptance of his sacrifice here, signified by fire that came down from heaven and consumed it; and this being in the threshing-floor of the Jebusites, might prefigure the church of God to be built up among the Gentiles.

Ver. 2. *And David commanded to gather together the strangers that* were *in the land of Israel*, &c.] The proselytes, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; that is, proselytes of the gate, who submitted to the seven precepts of Noah, were admitted to dwell in the cities of Israel, see Gen. ix. 4. and these were ordered to be got together to be employed in building the temple, and making preparations for it; and that partly because they were better artificers than the Israelites, who were chiefly employed in husbandry and cattle, and partly that the Israelites, who were freemen, might not be put to hard service; but chiefly this was for the sake of a mystery in it, denoting that the Gentiles would be concerned in building the spiritual house and church of God, the temple was a type and figure of, see Zech. vi. 15. *and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God*: to dig them out of the quarries, and fit them for the building.

Ver. 3. *And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings*, &c.] Great plenty of iron to make nails of for joining the boards together, of which the doors and gates were to be made, and for the fastening of the hinges of them: *and brass in abundance without weight;* for making the altar of brass, and the laver of brass, and other vessels. Brass was much used by the Heathens in sacred things, as Macrobius[p] observes.

Ver. 4. *Also cedar-trees in abundance*, &c.] To be sawed into boards and planks for the cieling, wainscotting, and flooring of the temple, and other things: *for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre, brought much cedar-wood to David:* from Mount Lebanon, which was chiefly in their possession; and which they did either of themselves as a free gift and present to him, or at his request, for which he paid them; and this is another thing prefiguring the help of the Gentiles in building up the church of Christ in Gospel times.

Ver. 5. *And David said, Solomon my son is young and tender*, &c.] Jarchi supposes he was about 12 years of age, though he observes that the same word is used of Joshua when 42 years of age; it is probable Solomon might be now about 20: *and the house* that is *to be builded for the Lord* must be *exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries:* and such was the temple built by Solomon; it was renowned throughout the whole earth; never was there a temple equal to it, no, not the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus, built by the assistance of many kings, and at the expense of all Asia, and was 200 years in building: *I will* therefore *now make preparation for it*: seeing his son was so young, and this building to be so magnificent, though he himself was not admitted to build it: *so David prepared abundantly before his death;* of which we have an after-account in this chapter, and more largely in ch. xxviii. and xxix.

Ver. 6. *Then he called for Solomon his son*, &c.] To be brought before him: *and charged him to build an house for the Lord God of Israel;* which charge was given a little before his death, after he had made great preparations for this work, as appears from ver. 5, 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 7. *And David said to Solomon*, &c.] When brought into his presence: *my son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God;* he was disposed and inclined to it, and was once determined upon it, see 2 Sam. vii. 2, 3.

Ver. 8. *But the word of the Lord came to me*, &c.] The word of prophecy, as the Targum, by the mouth of Nathan the prophet: *saying;* as follows, which though not expressed in the book of Samuel before referred to, is here recorded by divine inspiration: *thou hast shed blood abundantly;* Kimchi thinks this refers to the blood of Uriah, and those gallant men that were slain with him, and to the priests slain by the order of Saul, which David was the occasion of, or accidental cause of, 1 Sam. xxii. 22. and to many good men among the Gentiles; though it was the intention of the Lord to consume the wicked among them, that they might not prevail over Israel: *and hast made great wars;* with the Philistines, Moabites, *&c. thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight*: an intimation this, that the church of God, of which this house was a type, was to be built by Christ, the Prince of peace, and to be supported and maintained not by force of arms, and by spilling of blood, as the religion of Mahomet, but by the preaching of the Gospel of peace.

Ver. 9. *Behold, a son shall be born to thee*, &c.] For this was said to David before the birth of Solomon, see 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13. and xii. 24. *who shall be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about:* and so should be at leisure for such a work, and his people enjoy great prosperity and riches, and so be capable of contributing largely and liberally to it: *for his name shall be Solomon;* which signifies peace, and is one of the six persons that had their names given them before they were born, as the Jews observe[q]: *and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days:* and so a proper time to begin and carry on such a work; of the fulfilment of this prophecy, see 1 Kings iv. 24, 25. and v. 3, 4.

Ver. 10. *He shall build an house for my name*, &c.]

[o] Ebr. Concord. Part. p. 352. No. 1257.
[p] Saturnal. l. 5. c. 19.
[q] Pirke Eliezer, c. 32.

For the worship of God, and for his honour and glory: *and he shall be my son, and I will be his father*: see 2 Sam. vii. 13, 14. and which is applied to Christ, Heb. i. 5. *and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever*: that is, for a long time in his posterity; and which will have its fulfilment in Christ, his antitype, in the utmost sense of the expression, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his throne for ever and ever, Luke i. 32, 33. Heb. i. 8.

Ver. 11. *Now, my son, the Lord be with thee*, &c.] Or *shall be with thee*[z], as some; and if it be considered as a prayer, it was no doubt a prayer of faith; the Targum is, "may the Word of the Lord be thine "help:" *and prosper thee*: may success attend thee: *and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he hath said of thee*: foretold he should, and therefore would assist him to do it, which was an encouragement to go about it.

Ver. 12. *Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding*, &c.] To manage and conduct an affair of such importance, as well as to govern the people, as follows: *and give thee charge concerning Israel*; or, *when he gives*, commits the charge of them to thee, sets thee king over them: *that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God*: have wisdom and understanding to do that, and make that the rule of all thine actions, private and public, in thine own house, in the house of God, and in all things relative to that, and in the government of the nation.

Ver. 13. *Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes*, &c.] See 1 Kings ii. 2, 3. where the same things are said as here: which shews that this was spoken by David a little before his death.

Ver. 14. *Now, behold, in my trouble*, &c.] Or affliction, which had attended him, through the greater part of his reign, partly through wars abroad, and partly through rebellions and insurrections at home: or, *in my poverty*[a]; living in a frugal way, as if he had been a poor man, in order to lay up money for this purpose: *I have prepared for the house of the Lord*; for the building of it, and for things to be used in it: *100,000 talents of gold, and 1,000,000 talents of silver*; a prodigious sum, be it reckoned as it will; the gold, according to Scheuchzer [b] was answerable to 1,222,000,000 ducats of gold; according to Waserus[c] the talents of gold made 600 millions of Hungarian pieces of gold, or 6,000 tons of gold; our Brerewood[d] makes them to amount to 450,000,000 pounds; but this being a sum so excessive large as what exceeds the riches of any monarch read of in history, he thinks[e] the word *ki:kar* signifies a mass or cake of gold of an uncertain value; or that this talent was of a lesser value than the Mosaic one, as there were small talents in the times of Homer[f], as he observes, and some of different worth in various countries. The silver, taking gold to be in proportion to silver as 10 to 1, as it formerly was, is just of the same value with the gold; but Brerewood, who takes it to be as 12 to 1, computes it at 375,000,000 pounds; but the proportion of gold to silver is now grown, as Bishop Cumberland observes[g], to above 14 to 1. According to Scheuchzer the silver talents amounted to 4,500,000,000 imperials or rix-dollars; according to Witsius[h] the gold and silver both amounted to 3,000 and 900 millions of pieces of gold; but Josephus[i] has reduced these sums very much, making them to be 10,000 talents of gold, and 100,000 of silver. Dr. Prideaux[k] says that what is said to be given by David here, and in ch. xxix. 3, 4, 5. and by his princes, ver. 6, 7, 8. if valued by the Mosaic talent, exceeded the value of 800 millions of our money, which was enough to have built the whole temple of solid silver: *and of brass and iron without weight, for it is in abundance*: there was so much of both, that it was too much trouble to take the weight and value of them: *timber also and stone have I prepared*: see ver. 2—4. *and thou mayest add thereunto*: which might easily be obtained, there being not a sufficiency of either of them prepared for the work.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, there are workmen with thee in abundance*, &c.] All the strangers in the land being gathered by the order of David, ver. 2. who were skilled in all manner of work, as follows: *hewers and workers of stone and timber*; masons and carpenters: *and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work*: joiners, carvers, *&c.*

Ver. 16. *Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron*, &c.] That is, the cunning artificers were skilful to work in each of these, some in gold and silver, others in brass and iron: *there is no number*; either of the workmen, or of these materials; which yet must be restrained to the brass and iron, for the gold and silver are numbered, but not the brass and iron, ver. 14. *arise therefore, and be doing*: not that he should set about and begin the building the temple directly; but as soon as he could after he came to the throne, and not neglect and delay it: *and the Lord be with thee*; as in ver. 11. and here, as there, the Targum is, "may "the Word of the Lord be thy help."

Ver. 17. *David also commanded all the princes of Israel*, &c.] His courtiers and nobles that were about him: *to help Solomon his son*; by their advice, and with their purses, should he need them, and by overlooking the workmen, directing and encouraging them: *saying*: as follows.

Ver. 18. *Is not the Lord your God with you?* &c.] Blessing them with wealth and riches: *and hath he not given you rest on every side?* from all enemies within and without; so that they had peace and quietness, and leisure to attend the service he recommended to them: *for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into my hand*; meaning the rest of the Canaanites, who before were unsubdued, as even the Jebusites in Jerusalem: *and the land is subdued before the Lord, and before his people*: and the extent of it carried to its utmost bounds, as God had promised.

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[z] יהי erit, Pagninus, Montanus; futurus est, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[a] בעניי in paupertate mea, V. L.
[b] Physica Sacra, vol. 4. p. 631.
[c] De Antiqu. Num. Heb. l. 2. c. 12.
[d] De Pond. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 5.
[e] De Pond. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 6.
[f] Vid. Suidam in voce τάλαντα.
[g] Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 4. p. 121.
[h] Miscell. Sacr. 2. Exercit. 10. sect. 17.
[i] Antiqu. l. 7. c. 14. sect. 2.
[k] Connection, part 1. p. 6.

Ver. 19. *Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God*, &c.] His honour and glory, most sincerely and cordially, and to the utmost of their power: *arise ye, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God:* assist therein, and encourage the work as much as they were able, without delay: *to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord*; which was now in a tent of David's erecting and pitching: *and the holy vessels of God:* which were in the tabernacle at Gibeon: *into the house that is to be built to the name of the Lord*; that so they might be together, and made use of; which in times past had been separated, and much neglected.

CHAP. XXIII.

IN this chapter David makes Solomon king, ver. 1. calls together the princes, priests, and Levites, numbers the latter, and assigns them their proper work, ver. 2—5. divides them into three classes, ver. 6—23. when the number of them was taken from 20 years of age, and upwards; the reasons of which are given, partly from the rest the land enjoyed, and partly from the several branches of their work and office in the temple, ver. 24—32.

Ver. 1. *So when David was old and full of days*, &c.] Perhaps was now in the last year of his age, about 70 years old, though before he was bed-rid; see ch. xxviii. 2. *he made Solomon his son king over Israel*; declared him to be his successor; this was before the affair of Adonijah, for then he ordered him to be anointed king, and placed on the throne; and this aggravated the rebellion of Adonijah, that it was against the declared and known will of his father.

Ver. 2. *And he gathered together all the princes of Israel*, &c.] Ordered them to be assembled, partly to acquaint them with his will and pleasure, that Solomon should succeed him in the kingdom; and partly to settle the order of the work and service of the temple; and therefore these were convened *with the priests and Levites*; to assign to them their respective places and offices.

Ver. 3. *Now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years, and upward*, &c.] So they were numbered in the days of Moses, and by his order, and so they were now at first; though afterwards there was a new reckoning of them, ver. 24. *and their number by their posts*; or, according to their heads: *man by man, was* 38,000; which vastly exceeds the number in the times of Moses; see Numb. iv. 47, 48. but then those above 50 years of age were not numbered, as they now might; since their work in the temple would be much more easy, no burdens to carry, as the ark, the vessels, *&c.*

Ver. 4. *Of which* 24,000 were to *set forward the work of the house of the Lord*, &c.] To prepare for the work of the priests by slaying the sacrifices, flaying them, cutting them in pieces, and washing them, and bringing them to the altar; 1,000 of these served weekly in their turns: *and* 6,000 were *officers and judges*; that acted as justices of the peace in the several parts of the country, heard causes and administered justice to the people, being trained up in and acquainted with the laws of God, civil as well as ecclesiastic; some were more properly judges, and others executioners of their sentence; see Deut. xvi. 18. and xvii. 9.

Ver. 5. *Moreover* 4,000 were *porters*, &c.] At the east, north, and south gates of the temple, in their turns; *and* 4,000 *praised the Lord with the instruments*; were singers in the temple, which in all made up 38,000: *which I made*, said *David*, *to praise* therewith; which instruments he devised and ordered to be made to praise the Lord with; see 2 Chron. xxix. 26. Neh. xii. 36.

Ver. 6. *And David divided them into courses among the sons of Levi*, &c.] Into three classes, according to the number of them, which follow: namely, *Gershon, Kohath, and Merari*; see Exod. vi. 16.

Ver. 7. *Of the Gershonites* were *Laadan and Shimei*.] These two were the immediate posterity of Gershon; are the same with Libni and Shimhi, and heads of families, Exod. vi. 17.

Ver. 8. *The sons of Laadan; the chief* was *Jehiah, and Zetham, and Joel*.] Not his immediate sons, but some that descended from him.

Ver. 9. *The sons of Shimei*, &c.] Not him that was the son of Gershon, but a descendant of Laadan, his son, as Kimchi observes: *Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, these* were *the chief of the fathers of Laadan*; of the families that sprang from him.

Ver. 10. *And the sons of Shimei*, &c.] The son of Gershon, and brother of Laadan, according to Kimchi, which seems right: were *Jahath, Zina, and Jeush, and Beriah; these four* were *the sons of Shimei*; descendants of his in the times of David.

Ver. 11. *And Jahath was the chief*, &c.] The prince and head of a family: *and Ziza the second*; the same with Zina in ver. 10. and is there read Ziza in the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions: *but Jeush and Beriah had not many sons*; so as to constitute distinct families: *therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their father's house*; made one family with their brethren.

Ver. 12. *The sons of Kohath*, &c.] The second son of Levi: *Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four*; see Exod. vi. 18.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses*, &c.] A son of Kohath, ver. 12. Exod. vi. 20. *and Aaron was separated*; from the children of Israel, Exod. xxviii. 1. *that he should sanctify the most holy things, he and his sons for ever*; by an holy use of them, and keeping them from all unholy and profane uses; and this they were to do as long as the Aaronical priesthood lasted: *to burn incense before the Lord*; in the holy place, on the altar of incense; which none but priests descended from Aaron might do: *to minister unto him*; both at the altar of burnt-offering and of incense; and the high-priest in the holy of holies: *and to bless his name for ever*, or *in his name*; that is, the people in his name; see Numb. vi. 23—27.

Ver. 14. *Now concerning Moses the man of God*,

&c.] Raised up by him as a prophet, admitted to great familiarity with him, a lawgiver from him, and the ruler and guide of Israel under him through the wilderness: *his sons were named of the tribe of Levi:* were only common Levites; Moses had no ambition to gratify; he sought no honour for his posterity; the civil government was left to Joshua, and the priesthood to Aaron.

Ver. 15. *The sons of Moses* were *Gershom and Eliezer.*] See Exod. xviii. 3, 4.

Ver. 16. *Of the sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the chief.*] Of the posterity of Gershom in the times of David, called Shubael, ch. xxiv. 20. the Targum makes him to be the same with Jonathan, Judg. xviii. 30 [l].

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Eliezer were Rehabiah the chief,* &c.] The first and only begotten, as it follows: *and Eliezer had none other sons;* before nor after him: *but the sons of Rehabiah were very many:* or greatly multiplied; not, as the Targum says, above 600,000; the number of Israel, as the Jewish writers [m] fancy; which they gather from Exod. i. 7. and xxxii. 10. see Numb. xi. 21. and that though Moses deprecated the multiplication of his seed, God fulfilled it.

Ver. 18. *Of the sons of Izhar,* &c.] Another son of Kohath, the son of Levi, ver. 12. *Shelomith the chief;* the principal descendant of Izhar at this time.

Ver. 19, 20, 21. *Of the sons of Hebron,* &c.] A third son of Kohath, ver. 12. *Jeriah the 1st, Amariah the 2d, Jahaziel the 3d, and Jekameam the 4th: of the sons of Uzziel:* another son of Kohath, ver. 12. *Micah the 1st, Jesiah the 2d: the sons of Merari, Mahli and Mushi,* Exod. vi. 19. *the sons of Mahli, Eleazar and Kish:* of whom see ch. xxiv. 28, 29.

Ver. 22. *And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters,* &c.] And so none to succeed him in his office and service: *and their brethren the sons of Kish took them;* married them, their uncle's sons, their own cousins.

Ver. 23. *And the sons of Mushi,* &c.] The other son of Merari: *Mahli;* so called from his uncle, his father's brother: *and Eder and Jerimoth, three;* mentioned again ch. xxiv. 30.

Ver. 24. *These* were *the sons of Levi, after the house of their fathers,* &c.] According to the three classes of them, as descending from the three sons of Levi: even *the chief of the fathers;* or heads of families: *as they were counted by number of names by their polls;* or according to their heads, one by one: *that did the work for the service of the house of the Lord;* the particulars of which are in ver. 28—31. *from the age of 20 years, and upwards;* they were first numbered from 30 and upwards, ver. 3. but David before his death ordered they should be numbered from 20 and upwards, ver. 27. because the Israelites being increased, there would be more work for the priests in the temple, which would require the assistance of more Levites. The reasons follow.

Ver. 25. *For David said,* &c.] As a reason why he ordered a new account to be taken: *the Lord God of Israel hath given rest unto his people:* from all their enemies round about, and settled rest in the land, so that there was no danger of being carried captive, as they were time after time in the days of the Judges, and whereby they became more numerous: *that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever:* where the temple would always continue, and not be removed, as the ark and tabernacle had been, and where all Israel would appear three times in the year continually.

Ver. 26. *And also unto the Levites,* &c.] Or with respect to them: *they shall no more carry the tabernacle;* on their shoulders, from place to place, as they had done: *nor any vessels of it for the service thereof;* and so the service of it did not require men at their full strength, but such as were but twenty years of age might be employed in it.

Ver. 27. *For by the last words of David,* &c.] Or therefore by the last orders he gave before his death: *the Levites were numbered from 20 years old and above;* as able and sufficient to do the work of their office.

Ver. 28. *Because their office* was *to wait on the sons of Aaron,* &c.] The priests: *for the service of the house of the Lord;* to assist them therein, and not to bear burdens as in times past; the Targum is, "where-"fore the place of their habitations was by the side of "the sons of Aaron, for the worship of the sanctuary "of the Lord:" *in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God;* to keep the house, and all the apartments in it, courts and chambers, clean, by sweeping and washing them, and carrying out all the filth thereof made by the sacrifices, and otherwise.

Ver. 29. *Both for the shew-bread,* &c.] Also to make and get that ready every week for the priests to set on the shew-bread table, when they took off the other that had stood a week, see ch. ix. 32. *and for the fine flour for meat-offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for* that which is baked in *the pan, and for that which is fried;* to deliver out the flour of which these several things were made, see ch. ix. 31. and Lev. ii. *and for all manner of measures and size;* as the *hin* and the *ephah*, and the several parts of them; for things both liquid and dry, which were in their keeping, and according to which they gave out the proper quantity of oil, and wine, and fine flour, upon occasion.

Ver. 30. *And to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord,* &c.] The office of others of them was to sing the praises of God, both vocally and with instruments of music, at the time of the morning sacrifice: *and likewise at even;* at the time of the evening sacrifice, by way of thankfulness for the mercies of the night and of the day.

Ver. 31. *And to offer all burnt-sacrifices unto the Lord,* &c.] This was the work of the priests to offer such sacrifices, and not the Levites; but the meaning is, according to the Targum, and so Kimchi, that these not only sung the praises of God morning and evening, but at all times when burnt-offerings were offered to the Lord; besides, some of them helped the priests at such times in slaying the sacrifices, and bringing them to the altar: and especially their service was requisite *in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number;* because, besides the daily sacrifices, there

[l] So in Hieron. Trad. Heb. in Paralipom. fol. 84. C.

[m] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 7. 1, 2. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 16. fol. 220. 4.

were additional offerings at those times: *according to the order commanded unto them continually before the Lord;* see Numb. xxviii. and xxix.

Ver. 32. *And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation,* &c.] That no unclean persons entered into it, and that none of the vessels were carried out of it; this was the business of the porters: *and the charge of the holy place;* of things that belonged unto it, the vessels in it, and what was requisite for it, and used there: *and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren;* the priests, whatever they should command them to do: *in the service of the house of the Lord;* in any part and branch of it before specified.

CHAP. XXIV.

THIS chapter relates the distribution David made of the priests into twenty-four classes or courses, and which were observed by lot, and each course had an head or principal man over it, ver. 1—19. and of a like distribution of the Levites into the same number of courses, to attend the priests in theirs, ver. 20—31.

Ver. 1. *Now these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron,* &c.] Into the classes or courses following: *the sons of Aaron; Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar:* ch. vi. 3. these were the immediate sons of Aaron; but the division or distribution of them into classes are of their posterity in the times of David, who descended from the two latter.

Ver. 2. *But Nadab and Abihu died before their father,* &c.] Whilst he was living, see Lev. x. 1, 2. *and had no children, therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the priests' office:* otherwise, as Jarchi observes, had their brethren left children, they would have come into the office before them.

Ver. 3. *And David distributed them,* &c.] The posterities of Eleazar and Ithamar into certain classes or courses: *both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar;* these were the two principal men of the respective families, the one was high-priest, and the other *sagan* or deputy; or they both officiated as high-priests alternately, until the one was removed in Solomon's time, and the other established alone. And now their brethren the priests, who were under each of these, are the persons David divided into classes: *according to their offices in their service;* to perform their office as priests in the service of the temple in their turns.

Ver. 4. *And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar,* &c.] Or heads of men, heads of their fathers' houses and families: *and thus were they divided: among the sons of Eleazar* there were 16 *chief men of the house of their fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar, according to the house of their fathers:* in all 24, and into so many classes or courses did David divide them: Jarchi says, at first when the tabernacle was at Shiloh, there were but 16 courses, eight from Eleazar, and eight from Ithamar, as is explained in the treatise of fasting*; but when David saw that there were more heads of men, or chief men of Eleazar's, he divided the courses of Eleazar into two parts, and fixed 16 courses; and the courses of Ithamar he established as at first, eight courses; left them as they were, which he thinks appears from ver. 6. but of the former number of courses, and when and by whom fixed, the Jews are divided*; see the note on Luke i. 5. perhaps there were none before David's time.

Ver. 5. *Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another,* &c.] Which course should serve first, and which next, and so on; and who should be the chief to each course; which course was to serve a week, and then go out; and this method was taken to prevent envy, strife, and contention about precedence: *for the governors of the sanctuary;* or of the holy things, or who presided in things ecclesiastical: *and governors* of the house *of God;* or rather *governors of God,* appointed by him judges in civil things: *were of the sons of Eleazar, and of the sons of Ithamar;* there were, of both families, some employed both in sacred and civil things, and who presided in each.

Ver. 6. *And Shemaiah the son of Nethaneel the scribe,* &c.] The Targum is, Moses the chief scribe, so called: one *of the Levites wrote them;* the lots, and the names upon them, put into the urn, and as they came out, which was first, second, *&c.* and this was done *before the king, and the princes, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and* before *the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites;* and in this public manner, before such great personages, and in the presence of those that were interested in the affair, that it might appear plainly no fradulent methods were taken, and that there might be no suspicion of any: *one principal household being taken for Eleazar, and one for Ithamar;* the sense of Jarchi as above, and other Jewish writers, is, that one was added to each family of Eleazar, and so made 16, and Ithamar's were retained, and left as at first, eight: but the sense is, that first one family of Eleazar was taken, and then one of Ithamar's family, and then one of Eleazar's again, and so on until 16 were gone through; and then the other eight were divided under so many heads of the family of Eleazar.

Ver. 7—18. *Now the first lot came forth to Jehoiarib,* &c.] And the other 23 to the following persons in order: *Jedaiah, Harim, Seorim, Malchijah, Mijamin, Hakkoz, Abijah, Jeshua, Shecaniah, Eliashib, Jakim, Huppah, Jeshebeab, Bilgah, Immer, Hezir, Aphses, Pethahiah, Jehezekel, Jachin, Gamul, Delaiah,* and *Maaziah;* of all which courses we know little more than their names, though they continued in some form or other both under the first and second temple, to the destruction of it; the Jews say only four of these courses returned from the Babylonish captivity, which were those of Jedaiah, Harim, Pashur, and Immer; though Pashur is not among these here; yet they say

* T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1.

* T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 27. 1.

each of these four had six lots, and that the names and the order of the other courses were retained and continued under them, and supplied by them: hence we read of Mattathiah, from whom sprung the Maccabees, as of the course of Jehoiarib, 1 Maccab. ii. 1. which was the first course, and the most honourable; wherefore Josephus[f], who was of it, valued himself upon it, that he was not only of the priestly order, but of the first class or course of the 24; and we also read of the course of Abijah, the eighth course, of which was Zechariah the father of John the Baptist, Luke i. 5. of these courses, see more in the note there.

Ver. 19. *These were the orderings of them*, &c.] Their classes or courses into which they were divided: *in their service to come into the house of the Lord;* to perform their service in the temple, according to their turns, and in course as fixed by lot; one class or course served one week, and then went out, and another came in, each consisting of 1,000 men, see ch. xxiii. 4. *according to their manner;* law, right, custom, here prescribed for them: *under Aaron their father;* that is, him who was high-priest for the time being; who bore this name because his successor and representative, under whose inspection, direction, and authority, all the rest of the priests were, and whom they were to obey in all things: *as the Lord God of Israel had commanded him;* to take care they should be done.

Ver. 20—30. *And the rest of the sons of Levi* were these, &c.] Who were not priests, only Levites; and from hence, to ver. 30. their names are given; of the sons of Amram, Shubael, and his son Jehdeiah; Rehabiah the son of Eleazar, and Isshiah the son of Rehabiah; of the Izharites, so called from Izhar, the brother of Amram, Shelomoth, and his son Jahath; and of the sons of Hebron, another brother of Amram, Jeriah, Amariah, Jahaziel, and Jekameam; of the sons of Uzziel, another brother of Amram, Michah, and his son Shamir; Isshiah the brother of Michah, and his son Zechariah: the sons of Merari, Mahli and Mushi, his immediate sons; from whom sprung by Jaaziah, Beno, Shoham, Zaccur and Ibri; of Mahli sprung Eleazar, who had no sons; and Kish, whose son was Jerahmeel; the sons of Mushi, another son of Merari, Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth; most of these names are the same with those in ch. xxiii. 16—23. *these were the sons of the Levites, after the house of their fathers;* some of the principal of them.

Ver. 31. *These likewise cast lots over-against their brethren, the sons of Aaron*, &c.] These, being divided into 24 classes also, cast lots, which class should answer to, attend upon, and serve the first course of the priests, and which the second, and so on. And this they did in the same solemn and public manner as the priests had done: *in the presence of David the king, and Zadok, and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites;* as in ver. 6. *even the principal fathers over-against their younger brethren:* the sense is, either that the one stood over-against the other, to be distributed by lot, the one as well as the other; or they were chosen by lot, let it fall as it would, without any regard to age or dignity, to the seniority or largeness of houses and families; but as they were chosen, be they younger or elder, richer or poorer, their families more or less numerous and ancient, so they took their places.

C H A P. XXV.

THIS chapter relates the appointment of the sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, to be singers in the temple, ver. 1—7. the distribution of them by lot into 24 classes, 12 in each class, ver. 8—31.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, David and the captains of the host separated to the service*, &c.] Of singing the praises of God; this was done by the princes of the people, and the chief of the priests, who were gathered together, and before whom the lots were cast, both for priests and Levites, and now here for the singers, see ch. xxiii. 2. and xxiv. 6. and those that were separated were *of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun;* or Ethan, the three precentors, or chief of the singers: *who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals;* sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, endited by the Holy Spirit of God; which contained in them prophecies concerning things to come, particularly relating to the Messiah, of which there are many in the book of Psalms; and to the tunes of these they played on the above instruments of music: *and the number of the workmen, according to their service, was;* as follows.

Ver. 2. *Of the sons of Asaph*, &c.] Who were separated, and by lot appointed, to the service of singers in the temple: *Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and Asarelah;* called Jesharelah, ver. 14. these had the 3d, 4th, 5th, and 7th lots, ver. 9, 10, 12, 14. *under the hands of Asaph;* under his instruction and authority: *which prophesied according to the order of the king;* which Asaph composed psalms under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, and was ordered by King David to sing them, and by whose command they were inserted in the book of Psalms, where they now stand with his name to them.

Ver. 3. *Of Jeduthun*, &c.] Or Ethan, the sons of Jeduthun: *Gedaliah and Zeri;* called Izri, ver. 11. *and Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six;* whereas five only are mentioned; it may be thought that Shimei, ver. 17. is the sixth, he not being mentioned elsewhere; it is a tradition of the Jews, that his mother was now with-child of him, and it being foreseen by the Holy Spirit that he would be the chief of a course, the number six is given, as Jarchi observes; but rather, as Kimchi, he was young, and not fit to sing, yet was chosen the head of a course, until he was grown up and fit for it; to these six came up the 2d, 4th, 8th, 12th,

[f] Vita ejus, sect. 1.

14th, and 10th lots, ver. 9, 11, 15, 21, 17. and these were *under the hands of their father Jeduthun*: to instruct and direct them, and appoint their service to them: *who prophesied with a harp*; or sung a prophetic psalm or hymn on that: *to give thanks, and to praise the Lord*; for what he had done and promised, and foretold he would do for his people.

Ver. 4. *Of Heman: the sons of Heman*, &c.] The third chief singer: *Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel*: the same with Azareel, ver. 18. *Shebuel*; called Shubael, ver. 20. *and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romanti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir*, and *Mahazioth*; in all fourteen, to whom came the 6th, 9th, 11th, 15th, 16th, 18th, 20th, 22d, 24th, 17th, 19th, 20th, and 23d lots, ver. 13, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 24, 26, 28, 30.

Ver. 5. *All these* were *the sons of Heman, the king's seer*, &c.] The prophet of the king, as the Targum, who was frequently with him, assisting him *in the words of God*: in divine things: *to lift up the horn*; to blow with the hornpipe or trumpet, and to magnify and set forth the greatness of the kingdom of Israel, and especially of the King Messiah, the horn of salvation, that would be raised up in the house of David: *and God gave to Heman fourteen sons*; whose names are before mentioned: *and three daughters*: of whom we have no more account, only may observe, that both are the gifts of God, and an heritage from him, Psal. cxxvii. 3.

Ver. 6. *All these were under the hands of their father, for song* in *the house of the Lord*, &c.] Instructed and directed by him in the performance of the service in the temple: *with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God*: which were the three principal instruments of music used in the temple-service: *according to the king's order, to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman*: who ordered and directed them what to sing, what tunes to make use of, and what instruments to play upon to those tunes.

Ver. 7. *So the number of them, with their brethren*, &c.] Who each of them had 12 with them, as after reckoned: *that were instructed in the songs of the Lord*; taught how to sing them: even *all that were cunning*; expert and well skilled in the science of singing: *was* 288; for there being 24 classes answerable to those of the priests, and 12 in each class, 12 times 24 make 288.

Ver. 8. *And they cast lots, ward against* ward, &c.] That is, which ward or course of the singers should answer to and attend on the first ward or course of the priests in their weekly service, and which the second, and so on: *as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar*; no regard was had to the age of a person, his being the first-born or a younger brother, or to his office and station, whether as a teacher or a learner in the science of singing; he was made the head of a course, as the lot came up; and it may easily be observed, by comparing the lots in the following verses with the sons of the chief singers, according to the order of them in ver. 2, 3, 4. that the younger are often preferred in the courses by lot to the elder, of which even the first lot is an instance.

Ver. 9. *Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph*, &c.] His second son to the preference of the first-born, ver. 2. *the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons* were *twelve*; and which must also be understood of Joseph, and supplied to him; for those being both in one verse, as Jarchi observes, it is but once mentioned, but must be supplied, or otherwise the number of 288 could not be made up; the same is observed of all the other lots and courses to the end of the chapter as here, and therefore need no more remarks.

CHAP. XXVI.

In this chapter we have a further account of the disposition and distribution of the Levites, to serve in other offices, as of porters at the several gates of the temple, for which they cast lots, ver. 1—19. of others, as over the treasures of the house of the Lord, ver. 20—28. and of others that were appointed judges in the land, to administer justice to the people, ver. 29—32.

Ver. 1. *Concerning the divisions of the porters*, &c.] Or door-keepers, whose business it was to open and shut the doors of the temple, to keep all impure and improper persons from entering into it, or any of the vessels being carried out of it, and to prevent tumults and riots about it; these, as it seems, David divided into a like number of classes, as the singers, to take their turns in waiting: *of the Korhites* was *Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph*: not Asaph the singer, who was a Gershonite, but the same with Eliasaph, ch. vi. 23, 37. a Korhite.

Ver. 2, 3. *And the sons of Meshelemiah* were, *Zechariah the first-born*, &c.] And six more, who are mentioned in their order: *Jediael, Zebadiah, and Jathniel, Elam, Jehohanan, and Elioenai.*

Ver. 4, 5. *Moreover, the sons of Obed-edom*, &c.] The same at whose house the ark was, before it was brought by David to Zion; his sons were porters also, as himself, ch. xv. 24. and xvi. 38. mention is made of eight sons of his, according to their birth: *Shemaiah, Jehozabad, Joah, Sacar, Nethaneel, Ammiel, Issachar, Peulthai*: *for God blessed him*; as with wealth and riches, so with a numerous offspring, and that because of his entertainment of the ark at his house; the great increase of his family is aggravated by the Jews [q] beyond all credit, that all in his family brought eight at a birth; the Targum here makes them eighty-two in all.

Ver. 6. *Also unto Shemaiah his son*, &c.] His first-born, ver. 4. *were sons born, that ruled throughout the house of their father*; were heads of families, eminent and principal men: *for they were mighty men of valour*; which their office sometimes required them to be, to guard the temple at night as well as day from thieves and robbers, and to hinder resolute men entering in, unfit for it, and seize on rioters, and quell tumults raised.

Ver. 7. *The sons of Shemaiah*, &c.] The same be-

[q] Hieron. Trad. Heb. in 2 Reg. fol. 77. M.

fore mentioned, the first-born of Obed-edom: *Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, and Elzabad, whose brethren were strong men; Elihu and Semachiah;* which may rather denote their valour and courage, as before, though strength of body was needful, particularly to open and shut the doors of the temple, which, Josephus [r] says, required the assistance of twenty men.

Ver. 8. *All these of the sons of Obed-edom,* &c.] And grandsons: *they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service;* men of fortitude of mind and strength of body, as before observed: were 62 *of Obed-edom;* that sprung from him, which the Jews [s] account for in an extravagant manner, as the effect of miraculous births.

Ver. 9. *And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen,* &c.] He had seven sons, ver. 1, 2, 3. and therefore must have eleven brethren or kinsmen.

Ver. 10. *Also Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons,* &c.] Who was a fellow-porter of Obed-edom's at the ark, ch. xvi. 38. *Simri the chief (for though he was not the first-born, yet his father made him the chief);* the first-born being unfit for service, either through want of an intellectual capacity, or of strength of body, or through some defect or another; according to the Syriac version, he was dead; so some understand the words, he, the father, had no first-born remaining or living.

Ver. 11. *Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth; all the sons and brethren of Hosah were thirteen.*] Four sons, and nine brethren or kinsmen.

Ver. 12. *Among these were the divisions of the porters, even among the chief men,* &c.] These before named were the principal men of the porters, among which was a division or distribution of them into classes or courses, in which they served weekly in turn: having *wards one against another, to minister in the house of the Lord;* meaning either to watch in, as on the north against the south, and the east against the west, and *vice versa.* The Jews say [t], the priests kept ward in three places in the house of the sanctuary; in the house of Abtines, in the house of Nitzotz, and in the house of Moked; and the Levites in 21 places, five at the five gates of the mountain of the house, four at the four corners of it within, five at the five gates of the court, four at the four corners of it without, one at the chamber of the offering, one at the chamber of the vail, and another behind the house of atonement, the holy of holies; but rather the sense is, that they had wards or courses answerable to those of the priests, and the other Levites, the singers, and were distributed into 24 classes or courses as they, which are thus reckoned by Kimchi; at the east six, at the north four, at the south four, at Asuppim two and two, which were four, at the west four, and at Parbar two: lo, twenty-four; see ver. 17, 18.

Ver. 13. *And they cast lots,* &c.] To determine at which gate each should stand, who at this gate, and who at the other, *&c. as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate;* meaning, not little ones and grown persons in a family, but the smaller and poorer families, and the larger and richer ones, had their places assigned them at the several gates, as the lot directed; they did not go according to the dignity and precedence of their families, but according to lot.

Ver. 14. *And the lot eastward fell to Shelemiah,* &c.] The same with Meshelemiah, ver. 1, 2, 9. he by lot was placed at the eastern gate, called afterwards the gate Shushan, the city Shushan being portrayed upon it [u]: *then for Zechariah his son (a wise counsellor);* and who was his first-born, ver. 2. a man of great parts and learning: for they were not mean persons that were employed in this office, nor was the office a mean one, like that of our porters; but men of considerable rank and figure, and of knowledge and learning, were in it; some of them were judges, ver. 29. and their places were places of great trust, they had much treasure committed to them, as appears by ver. 20. *&c. they cast lots, and his lot came out northward;* where was a gate in after-times, called Teri or Tedi, which differed from other gates in this, that it had no threshold, only one stone was laid upon another, and was not commonly used [w].

Ver. 15. *To Obed-edom southward,* &c.] Where were two gates in after-times, called the gates of Huldah [x]: *and to his sons, the house of Asuppim;* the word has the signification of gathering, hence some take it to be a council-house, where the sanhedrim or elders gathered together, and sat; and others, rather a treasure-house, where things of value were collected and laid up, since Obed-edom had the charge of gold and silver, and the vessels of the house, 2 Chron. xxv. 24. but Dr. Lightfoot [y] is of opinion, that "Asuppim were two "gates in the western wall, which stood most south, "or nearest to Jerusalem; and *the house of Asuppim* "was a large piece of building that ran between them, "which was a treasury, or divers rooms for treasuring "or laying up something for the use of the temple;" though L'Empereur thinks [z] it was the chamber of Korban, which is not so probable.

Ver. 16. *To Shuppim and Hosah* the lot came forth *westward,* &c.] Of Shuppim no mention is before made: of Hosah, see ver. 10, 11. their lot was to be placed at the gates on the western wall, where were four; the two more southward being assigned to the sons of Obed-edom, whose lot also was southward, are taken notice of under the division in the preceding verse; Parbar was another, ver. 18. and another follows here: *with the gate Shallecheth, by the causeway of the going up;* this gate was in later times called Coponius, from the name of a Roman commander, in the times of Herod, who might give it this name on his account; it might have the name of Shallecheth either from *sending out,* or carrying out the filth of the temple through it; or rather from *casting up* the causeway, as here expressed, which was the going up, or ascent, Solomon made, by which he went up to the temple,

[r] Contr. Apion. l. 2. sect. 9.
[s] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 63. 2. & 64. 1.
[t] Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 1.
[u] Ib. sect. 3.
[w] Misn. Middot, ib. & c. 2. sect. 3.
[x] Ib. c. 1. sect. 3.
[y] Prospect of the Temple, ch. 5. sect. 3.
[z] Not. in Middot, c. 1. sect. 1. No. 5.

1 Kings xx. 5. and which agrees with the description Josephus [a] gives of one of the gates on the western wall, that it led to the royal palace, the valley between being filled up for the passage; on each side of which causeway, it is said, grew oaks and teil-trees, see Isa. vi. 13. which served both to keep up the causeway, and to make a fine, pleasant, shady walk for the king to pass through to the temple; all which are observed by Dr. Lightfoot [b]: *ward against ward*; for as the gates answered one another, so the wards or watches at them.

Ver. 17. *Eastward were six Levites, &c.*] The eastern gate, being the way of entrance into the temple, required more porters: *northward four a day*; in the day-time, or every day, where was the gate Teri or Tedi, ver. 14. *southward four a day*; at the two gates of Huldah, ver. 15. *and toward Asuppim two* and *two*; which were two gates, two at each gate, ver. 15.

Ver. 18. *At Parbar westward, &c.*] A gate at the western wall; the Jewish writers generally interpret it an outward place, but Dr. Lightfoot [c] thinks it is the same with Parvar, which signifies suburbs, 2 Kings xxiii. 11. and which agrees with the description Josephus [d] gives of one of the western gates, that it led to the suburbs: *four at the causeway*; by which was the gate Shallecheth, ver. 16. *and two at Parbar*; the gate before mentioned.

Ver. 19. *These are the divisions of the porters among the sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari.*] For among those Levites which descended from Kore, a grandson of Kohath, and which sprung from Merar, a brother of Kohath, the porters only were; see ver. 1, 10.

Ver. 20. *And of the Levites, &c.*] The rest of the Levites, as the Gershonites, Amramites, Izharites, and Hebronites, ver. 21, 23. *Ahijah* was *over the treasures of the house of God*; as the tithes, vessels, vestments, wine, and oil, and other things; such an one was Phinehas at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian, who being taken, shewed and delivered the priests' garments, and many other precious things and sacred ornaments under his care [e]: *and over the treasures of the dedicated things*; voluntarily devoted for sacrifices and repairs of the temple; and this Abijah had the care of each of those at first, which afterwards were divided, and put under the care of different persons.

Ver. 21. As concerning *the sons of Laadan, &c.*] The same with Libni, see ch. xxiii. 7. *the sons of the Gershonite Laadan*; so called, to distinguish him from another Laadan, as Kimchi thinks: *chief fathers, even of Laadan the Gershonite*; that sprung from him: were *Jehieli*; and his sons next mentioned.

Ver. 22. *The sons of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his brother, &c.*] Both sons of Jehieli: which were *over the treasures of the house of the Lord*; that part of the trust which before was committed to Ahijah, which concerned provisions for sacred uses, before observed.

Ver. 23. *Of the Amramites* and *the Izharites, the Hebronites,* and *the Uzzielites.*] Who sprang from the four sons of Kohath, Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, Exod. vi. 18. with respect to the concerns they severally had in the trust of the treasures, the account follows, all but the Uzzielites, who are not after mentioned.

Ver. 24. *And Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses,* was *ruler of the treasures.*] This is the first time that any of the posterity of Moses are taken notice of, as being in any office of honour, authority, and trust; by the Targum he is said to be Jonathan, spoken of in Judg. xviii. 30. but very wrongly; this man, according to Jarchi and Kimchi, had all the treasures and treasurers under him.

Ver. 25. *And his brethren by Eliezer, &c.*] His kinsmen that descended from Eliezer, the brother of Gershom, the ancestor of Shebuel, whose descent from him in succession were *Rehabiah, Jeshaiah, Joram, Zichri, and Shelomith.*

Ver. 26. *Which Shelomith, &c.*] The last mentioned in the lineage from Eliezer, the younger son of Moses: *and his brethren*; or kinsmen: were *over all the treasures of the dedicated things*: which had been devoted for the service of God, and of the temple particularly: *which David the king had dedicated*; out of the spoils he took in war, see 2 Sam. viii. 11. *the chief fathers*; princes of tribes, and heads of families: *the captains over thousands and hundreds*; in the several tribes of the kingdom, and were concerned in the administration of justice to the people: *and the captains of the host, had dedicated*; of the army, out of the spoils in victory that came to their share, see Numb. xxxi. 48, 50. as follows.

Ver. 27. *Out of the spoils won in battle did they dedicate to maintain the house of the Lord.*] When it should be built; for as yet it was not; both to repair it when necessary, and to provide sacrifices for it; or to confirm, strengthen, and animate the heart of the king to build it, so some, and put it into the power of his hands to do it: so the Romans dedicated the best of their spoil, and laid it up in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius, after the example of Romulus, their first king [f]; yea, sometimes out of the spoil they erected temples, as Tarquinius Superbus [g] did; or repaired and ornamented them, as the temple at Delphos, and others [h].

Ver. 28. *And all that Samuel the seer, &c.*] Or prophet, won in battle with the Philistines: *and Saul the son of Kish*; in his wars with the Moabites, Edomites, Amalekites, and Philistines: *and Abner the son of Ner*; the general of his army, who as such had his share in the spoils: *and Joab the son of Zeruiah*; the general of David's army, who fought with the Ammonites, Syrians, and others; all of whom *had dedicated* more or less towards the building of the temple, and the support of it, it being known by them all that God would have a place to put his name in: and *whosoever had dedicated* any thing, it was *under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren*; this man had a great trust committed to him, with his brethren; some, before mentioned, are said to be over the treasures, some over one part, and some over another; but this man was over all of them, he had the superintendency of the whole.

Ver. 29. *Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons*

[a] Antiqu. l. 15. c. 11. sect. 5.
[b] Ut supra, c. 5. sect. 1.
[c] Ib. sect. 2.
[d] Ut supra.
[e] Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. 6. c. 8. sect. 3.
[f] Vid. Valtrinum de re militar. Roman. l. 7. c. 21.
[g] Flori Hist. l. 1. c. 7.
[h] Vid. Strabo, Geograph. l. 6. p. 190. Liv. Hist. l. 10. c. 46.

were *for the outward business over Israel*, &c.] Which was done out of the temple, and out of Jerusalem, in the several parts of the country: *for officers and judges*: to administer justice and judgment, and to take care that the laws of God were observed, both with respect to things civil and religious, and delinquents punished; which is a better sense than what Jarchi and Kimchi put upon this, *outward business*, as if it lay in taking care to have timber cut down in the forest, and stones dug and hewed in the mountains, for the building of the temple; and that the lands were ploughed, and the vineyards, gardens, and orchards, dressed, which were devoted to sacred uses.

Ver. 30. And *of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour*, 1,700, &c.] And supposing the Izharites in the preceding verse to be 1,600, these, with those on the other side Jordan, 2,700, ver. 32. make up just the 6,000 officers and judges, ch. xxiii. 4. these *were officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward*: in those parts of the land which were on this side Jordan, to the west of it, yet nearer to it than those meant by Israel in the preceding verse; it may respect those that dwelt more remote from Jordan, though on this side also, towards the Mediterranean sea: *in all business of the Lord, and in the service of the king*: in things divine and civil, what appertained to the worship of God, and the support of civil government, and to take care that all the laws were observed, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, and that both the Lord was feared, and the king honoured, and both had what was due unto them.

Ver. 31. *Among the Hebronites* was *Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites*, &c.] The posterity of Hebron, the son of Kohath: *according to the generations of his fathers*: a principal man in the families that descended from his ancestors: *in the 40th year of the reign of David*; which was the last year of his reign, in which year all the above things were done; the distribution of the priests into their classes and courses, and so of the Levites, singers, and porters; as well as the appointment of those several judges and officers employed in divers parts of the land: and particularly in this year those *Hebronites were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour, at Jazer of Gilead*: a city on the other side Jordan, which belonged to the tribe of Gad, see Numb. xxi. 32. and xxxii. 1, 3, 35.

Ver. 32. *And his brethren, men of valour*, were 2,700 *chief fathers*, &c.] That is, the brethren or kinsmen of Jerijah the Hebronite were so many principal men in their families, and men of fortitude and courage: *whom King David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh*: all which lay on the other side Jordan; and being so remote from the seat of civil government, and of the worship of God, they were in greater danger of revolting, both from their obedience to their king, and duty to their God; and therefore so large a number was appointed over them, to instruct them and keep them in their duty to both, as follows: *for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king*; to see that they kept close to the pure worship and service of God; and were faithful and loyal subjects of the king.

CHAP. XXVII.

IN this chapter we have an account of twelve military courses, or twelve legions of soldiers, with the captains of them, that served David monthly in their turns, ver. 1—15. and of the princes of the several tribes, ver. 16—24. and of his economical rulers, ver. 25—31. and of his counsellors and general, ver. 32, 33, 34.

Ver. 1. *Now the children of Israel after their number*, &c.] Not the whole body of the people, but the militia of the nation; for after the account of the division of the priests and Levites into courses, follows an account of the militia of the nation, being divided also into monthly courses; which, though done in the beginning of David's reign, as Kimchi and Jarchi observe, yet is here related; and that it was so soon is clear from the instance of Asahel, who was killed whilst David was king in Hebron, ver. 7. to wit, *the chief fathers*: the chief men in the tribes, the princes of them, not the natural fathers of the soldiers in each course, as a learned man suggests [1]: since it can never be thought that such a number sprung from those as made a course of 24,000; for they are distinct from the captains and officers after mentioned, under which the soldiers were; besides, why should they be called *chief fathers*? these, no doubt, were the general officers or princes, under which the captains and inferior officers were: *and captains of thousands and hundreds*: in the several tribes: *and their officers*: that were under them: *that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month, throughout all the months of the year*: by which it appears that the militia of the kingdom was divided into twelve courses, which served each month by turns; when one went out another came in; by which means the king was well supported and guarded, and had an army at once at command upon any insurrection or war that might arise; and each course serving but one month in a year, it was no great burden upon them, even if they maintained themselves, since they were at leisure, the other eleven months, to attend to their business; and especially if it was, as Jarchi observes, that not the poor but the rich were selected for this service: *of every course* were 24,000; so that the twelve courses amounted to 288,000 men.

Ver. 2—15. *Over the first course for the first month*, &c.] The month Nisan, sometimes called Abib, which was March: was *Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel*: the first and chief of David's worthies, ch. xi. 11. *and in his course* were 24,000; and so in all the following ones; this man was of the posterity of Perez, or Pharez, a son of Judah, and so had the preference and com-

[1] Delaney's Life of King David, vol. 1. p. 319.

mand of all the captains of the army for that month: *Dodai an Ahohite;* the same with Dodo, ch. xi. 12. was over the course of the second month, the month Ziv, sometimes called Jiar, or April; and his lieutenant or successor was Mikloth: *Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest;* or rather a prince, a principal officer, was general of the army for the third month, Sivan, or May; the same was mighty among the thirty, and even above them, for he was among the three mighty, ch. xi. 22, 24. and Ammizabad his son succeeded him, or was his deputy, when otherways employed: though led by our version here, and following the Jewish writers, I have called Benaiah a priest in the note on 1 Kings ii. 31. yet I am now rather of opinion that he was not one; for though priests might bear arms on some occasions, yet it is not likely that one should be in a constant military office, and especially general of an army; and besides, this man was of Kabzeel, a city in the tribe of Judah, which is not mentioned among the Levitical cities, see 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. Josh. xv. 21. Asahel the brother of Joab was over the course for the fourth month, Tammuz, or June, and who being slain by Abner, his son Zebadiah succeeded him: Shamhuth, the same with Shammah, 2 Sam. xxiii. 11. and Shammoth, ch. xi. 27. was captain for the 5th month, Ab, or July: Ira the son of Ikkesh, the Tekoite, was over the course of the 6th month, Elul, or August, see ch. xi. 28. Helez the Pelonite was captain for the 7th month, Tisri, or September, see ch. xi. 27. the captain for the 8th month, Marchesvan, sometimes called Bul, or October, was Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zarhites, of the posterity of Zerah, a son of Judah in the line of Hushah, ch. iv. 4. see ch. xi. 29. the captain of the course for the 9th month, Cisleu, or November, was Abiezer, of Anethoth, in the tribe of Benjamin, see ch. xi. 28. Maharai, of Netophath, in the tribe of Judah, and of the posterity of Zerah, was over the course for the 10th month, Tebet, or December, see ch. xi. 30. and the captain for the 11th month, Shebet, or January, was Benaiah, of Pirathon, in the tribe of Ephraim, see ch. xi. 31. and over the course for the 12th month, Adar, or February, was Heldai the Netophathite, the same with Heled, ch. xi. 30. and who was of the posterity of Othniel, the first judge in Israel, Judg. i. 13. and iii. 9.

Ver. 16—22. *Furthermore, over the cities of Israel,* &c.] Were the following rulers or princes; the captains over the militia before named were of David's appointment; but these ruled over their respective tribes in their own right, or by the choice of their tribes: the ruler of the tribe of Reuben was Eliezer, the son of Zichri: of the tribe of Simeon, Shephatiah the son of Maachah; whether this was his father's or mother's name is not certain, it being the name both of a man and woman: of the tribe of Levi, Hashabiah the son of Kemuel: of the Aaronites, who were of the same tribe, but, being priests, are thus distinguished from the Levites, Zadok, who was made high-priest in the times of Solomon: of the tribe of Judah, Elihu, a brother of David's, the same with Eliab, 1 Sam. xvi. 6. of the tribe of Issachar, Omri the son of Michael: of the tribe of Zebulun, Ishmaiah the son of Obadiah: of the tribe of Naphtali, Jerimoth the son of Azriel: of the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea the son of Azaziah: of the half-tribe of Manasseh, on this side Jordan westward, Joel the son of Pedaiah: of the half-tribe of Manasseh, in Gilead, on the other side Jordan eastward, Iddo the son of Zechariah: of the tribe of Benjamin, Jaasiel the son of Abner, the famous general on the side of Ish-bosheth; of the tribe of Dan, Azareel the son of Jeroham: *these* were *the princes of the tribes of Israel;* of all excepting Gad and Asher, who are omitted; perhaps he that was prince of the tribe of Reuben, or else of the half-tribe of Manasseh beyond Jordan, was ruler of Gad and Asher; these lying between Zebulun and Naphtali, might be under the prince of one of them.

Ver. 23. *But David took not the number of them from twenty years old and under,* &c.] Only those that were twenty years and upwards; but, according to Cornelius Bertram [*], he numbered them that were under 20, though but 16, 17, 18, or 19 years of age, provided they were of robust bodies, and of a tall stature, and able to bear arms; which he takes to be the sin of David, in numbering the people, being contrary to the law of God; yet though he had ordered them to be numbered, and they were, yet he would not take them and put them into the account of his chronicles, as in the next verse, that his sin might not be known, see 2 Sam. xxiii. 9. *because the Lord had said, he would increase Israel like to the stars in the heavens;* which are not to be numbered, and therefore David sinned in attempting to number the people.

Ver. 24. *Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number,* &c.] By the order of David, but entirely against his own will, see ch. xxi. 2, 3, 4, 6. *but he finished not;* the two tribes of Benjamin and Levi not being counted by him, ch. xxi. 6. *because there fell wrath for it against Israel;* the plague being broke forth before he had done numbering, which put a stop to it, ch. xxi. 14. *neither was the number put in the account of the chronicles of David;* that which was brought in by Joab, though imperfect, was not entered into the diary, journal, or annals which David ordered to be written of all memorable events and transactions in his reign; and which were afterwards carried on by the kings of Judah, often referred to in the preceding books; and this was done, not because of the imperfection of the account, but because David did not choose this sin of his should be transmitted to posterity, though it has been, notwithstanding this precaution of his.

Ver. 25—34. *And over the king's treasures* was *Azmaveth the son of Adiel,* &c.] The historian here proceeds to relate who were employed in the economical and civil affairs of David; and the first mentioned is the lord of his treasury, who had the care of his gold and silver brought into his exchequer, either by a levy on his own people, or by the tribute of others: Jehonathan the son of Uzziah had the care of the storehouses, in which were laid up what the fields, cities, villages, and castles that belonged to the king produced, whether by fruits gathered in, or by rents collected: Ezri the son of Chelub looked after his

[*] Lucubrat. Franktall, c. 2.

workmen in the fields, employed in the tillage of the ground: Shimei of Ramath, in the tribe of Benjamin, had the care of the vineyards, to see that they were dressed and pruned, and kept in good order: Zabdi of Shepham, Numb. xxxiv. 10, 11. had the charge of the wine squeezed out of the grapes, both in the presses and in the cellars: Baal-hanan of Geder, in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 36, 58. was over the olive and sycamore trees, to see that they were well taken care of: and Joash was intrusted with the cellars where the oil was deposited: Shitrai the Sharonite had the herds of kine fed in Sharon committed to his trust; whether in Sharon beyond Jordan, or that about Lydda and Joppa, near the Mediterranean sea, both affording fruitful pastures for herds; and this man, being of Sharon, was a fit man to be employed in such service: and Shaphat the son of Adlai was over those herds that were in the valleys, where were good pastures for them; such officers Pharaoh king of Egypt had, Gen. xlvii. 6. and as early as the times of Ninus king of Assyria, one named Simma was master of the king's cattle[l], as Faustulus was to Amulius king of the Latines[m]; and so Tyrrhus in Virgil[n] had the command of all the king's cattle; and Cicero mentions another in the same office[o]: Obil the Ishmaelite (an Arab, as the Targum) had the care of the camels; and a very proper person he was, who must know the nature of them, and how to manage them, Arabia, or the land of the Ishmaelites, abounding with them. This man was so called, either because he was an Ishmaelite by birth, and was proselyted to the Jewish religion; or he was an Israelite that had dwelt some time in the land of Ishmael, and therefore so called. Bochart[p] thinks he had his name of Obil from his office, the word in the Arabic language signifying a keeper of camels. Jehdeiah the Meronothite was over the asses, which were employed in ploughing and carrying burdens; and Jaziz the Hagarite was over the flocks of sheep, the chief shepherd, who had the command of all the under shepherds, and a very proper person, being an Hagarite, or Arab; for such dwelt in tents for the sake of pasturage for their flocks, as Jarchi notes: these were the principal men that had the care of David's personal substance; so, in aftertimes, the Roman Cæsars[q] had such sort of servants to take care of their farms, fields, fruit, cattle, &c. the rest that follow were David's courtiers. Jonathan, or to whom David was uncle, the son of Shimea, his brother being a wise and learned man, was his counsellor, see 2 Sam. xxi. 21. and Jehiel the Hachmonite was preceptor, or tutor to the king's sons, that brought them up, and took care of their education; Ahithophel was his counsellor until the conspiracy and rebellion of Absalom; and Hushai the Archite was his companion, friend, and favourite, with whom he conversed at leisure hours. After the death of Ahithophel, Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar, were his counsellors, and Joab the general of his army.

CHAP. XXVIII.

DAVID, having convened the principal men of the nation, declared Solomon his successor, whom God had chosen both to be king, and to build the temple, ver. 1—7. and exhorted both them and him to serve the Lord, and build an house for him, ver. 8, 9, 10. then gave Solomon the pattern of it, and an account of the materials he had prepared for it, ver. 11—19. and encouraged him to go about the work with alacrity and intrepidity, ver. 20, 21.

Ver. 1. *And David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes,* &c.] Whose names are given in ch. xxvii. 16—22. *and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course;* monthly, each having 24,000 men under him, whose names are expressed, ch. xxvii. 2—15. *and the captains over the thousands;* of which there were 24 in a course, at the head of each 1,000, under the chief captain: *and captains over the hundreds;* centurions under the second captains: *and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons;* whose names may be read in ch. xxvii. 25—31. *with the officers;* the courtiers: *and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men;* both men of valour, and of wealth and riches: these David assembled *unto Jerusalem;* the metropolis of the kingdom, and where his court and palace were.

Ver. 2. *Then David the king stood up upon his feet,* &c.] Rose from the bed or couch on which he lay, as Kimchi thinks, being somewhat recovered of his paralytic disorder, and being willing to exert himself on this occasion; or he rose up from the seat or throne, on which he before sat, in honour to this august assembly before him, and that he might be the more easily heard; for which reason we are told[r] it was a custom with the ancients even for kings to stand up when they had a number of people about them they spoke to; and if any one sat it was reckoned a new and strange thing; so Agamemnon, when wounded, did not speak sitting, until he had made an excuse for it: *and said, hear me, my brethren, and my people;* having something of moment and importance to say unto them, and which required their diligent attention; and though they were his subjects, he calls them his brethren, being of the same nation and religion, and to shew his modesty and humility; in which he was a type of Christ, the King of kings, see Heb. ii. 11. *as for me, I had it in my heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord;* where it might abide, and not be removed from place to place; the same he had told Solomon, ch. xxii. 7. *and for the footstool of our God;* or *even for* it, for the ark is meant, which is so called, Psal. xc. 5. and cxxxii. 7, 8. for as

[l] Diodor. Sicul. l. 2. p. 92.
[m] Liv. Hist. Decad. 1. l. 1. p. 5.
[n] Æneid. l. 7. Tyrrhusque pater, &c. ver. 485.
[o] Apud Serv.um, in ib.

[p] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 2. col. 77.
[q] Vid. Pignorium de Servis, p. 648.
[r] Eustathius in Homer. Iliad. 1. p. 46. Vid. Iliad. 19. ver. 77, 78.

the Lord sat between the cherubim over the mercy-seat, the lid of the ark, it was, speaking after the manner of men, a footstool to him: *and had made ready for the building*: prepared materials for it; see ch. xxii. 3, 4, 14, 15, 16. and ch. xxix. 2—5.

Ver. 3. *But God said unto me, thou shalt not build an house for my name*, &c.] This he said by Nathan the prophet, 2 Sam. vii. 5. *because thou* hast been *a man of war, and hast shed blood*: see ch. xxii. 8.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit, the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever*, &c.] Passing by all his brethren who were elder than he, he pitched upon him, and ordered him to be anointed king of Israel, see 1 Sam. xvi. 10, 12. and that for ever, for a long time, as long as he lived; or rather in his posterity for many years to come, and best of all in his antitype Christ, the son of David, see Luke i. 32, 33. *for he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler*; the tribe of Judah to be the seat of government, and one out of that tribe to be the chief ruler, see ch. v. 2. Gen. xlix. 10. *and of the house of Judah, the house of my father*; out of that tribe he chose his father's family, to take from thence one to be king of Israel: *and among the sons of my father he liked me to make me king over all Israel*; though the youngest of them, 1 Sam. xvi. 11. this was his will and pleasure.

Ver. 5. *And of all my sons, for the Lord hath given me many sons*, &c.] Whose names, and the order of their birth, may be read in ch. iii. 1—9. *he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel*: to be his successor in it: this he says to observe to them, that this was not merely his own will and choice, nor the fruit and effect of a fond affection to Solomon; nor was it barely in pursuance of a promise made to Bathsheba, she had obtained of him; but it was according to the will and appointment of God, and therefore to be the more regarded.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house*, &c.] See 2 Sam. vii. 13. *and my courts*; in the house or temple: *for I have chosen him to be my son*; predestinated him to the adoption of children, Eph. i. 5. *and I will be his father*; see 2 Sam. vii. 14.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, I will establish his kingdom for ever*, &c.] The same is said in 2 Sam. vii. 13. *if he be constant to do my commandments, and my judgments, as at this day*; if he continued in the observance of them, as he had begun, and went on in until that day; this is added here, and was not spoken by Nathan, when what goes before was; for Solomon was not then born, but must be suggested to David since, and as it should seem at this time.

Ver. 8. *Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the Lord*, &c.] Whom this assembly represented: *and in the audience of our God*; before him, as Jarchi, in whose presence they were, and who heard and saw all that passed, and to whom David appeals as a witness; the Targum is, "before the "Word of the Lord," before whom all things are naked and open, Heb. iv. 12, 13. *keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God*; seek to know them, search for them in the word of God, and endeavour to keep them: *that ye may possess this good land*; continue in the possession of it, for by their obedience they held it, Isa. i. 19. *and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever*; that so they might not be removed from it, and carried captive into other lands, as they were for their disobedience.

Ver. 9. *And thou, Solomon my son*, &c.] Who was present in this assembly, and presented to them by David as his successor, and their future king: and having addressed them, he turns himself to him, and exhorts him, saying, *know thou the God of thy father*; who was his father and covenant-God, and whom he served and worshipped, and who had bestowed upon him many favours, both temporal and spiritual; and having had such an experience of his goodness, he exhorts his son to seek to know more and more of him, and to own and acknowledge him as his God, and to love and fear him: *serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind*; cordially and sincerely, cheerfully and freely, neither in an hypocritical manner, nor through force and constraint, nor with loathing and weariness: *for the Lord searcheth all hearts*; the hearts of all men, even of kings, and knows from what principles, and with what views, and in what manner they serve him: *and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts*; not only the thoughts of the heart, when regularly formed and ranged in order, but even the very beginning of them, the first motions of the mind, and before they are well formed, see Gen. vi. 5. Psal. cxxxix. 2. *if thou seek him*; by prayer and supplication in his house and ordinances: *he will be found of thee*; grant his presence, and bestow his favours, see Isa. lv. 6. *but if thou forsake him*; his word, his ways, his worship: *he will cast thee off for ever*; from being king, or enjoying that peace, prosperity, and happiness, which otherwise would be enjoyed.

Ver. 10. *Take heed now*, &c.] Of offending God by forsaking him; or see, consider, and observe now what he was further about to say to him, concerning the building of the temple, as follows: *for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary*; a temple for the ark, called the sanctuary, Numb. vii. 9. and x. 21. the Targum is, the Word of the Lord hath chosen thee, &c. *be strong, and do it*, be of a good heart and courage, and set about it with vigour and resolution.

Ver. 11. *Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch*, &c.] The breadth, and length, and height of it, which was to be placed at the east end of the temple, and was the entrance into it: *and of the houses thereof*; the holy place, and the most holy, which latter is called the greater house, 2 Chron. iii. 5. *and of the treasuries*; where things belonging to the temple were laid up, the priests' vestments, and other things: *and of the upper chambers*; where the priests lay or met for conversation, Jer. xxxv. 2. and Acts i. 13. *and of the inner parlours thereof*; where the priests ate of the holy things; all these seem to be buildings against the wall of the temple round about, 1 Kings vi. 5. *and of the place of the mercy-seat*; the holy of holies, where that, with the cherubim over it, and the ark under it, were placed.

Ver. 12. *And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit*, &c.] By the spirit of God, who gave him the whole form of the temple, and all things relative to it; just as God shewed to Moses the pattern of the ta-

bernacle in the mount; the Targum is, by the spirit of prophecy that was with him. The Jews suppose that Samuel the prophet was first made acquainted with it, and he made it known to David: *of the courts of the house of the Lord;* the outward court, the court of the priests, *&c. and of all the chambers round about:* see 1 Kings vi. 5. *of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things;* of the difference of which, see ch. xxvi. 20.

Ver. 13. *And also for the courses of the priests and Levites,* &c.] Where they should serve, of which, as fixed and ordered by David, see ch. xxiv. xxv. xxvi. *and for all the work of the service of the house of the Lord;* they should be employed in: *and for all the vessels of service in the house of the Lord;* which they should use therein.

Ver. 14. He gave *of gold by weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service,* &c.] Whatever was to be made of gold, David was directed by the spirit of God what weight or quantity of gold should be made use of in making it, as appears from some following instances: silver also *for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service:* so likewise whatever instruments or vessels, for the service of the temple, were to be made of silver, he had a direction from the spirit of God what weight each was to be of, or what quantity of silver was to be used in it, and this he gave; according to Jacob Jehudah Leon [t], the vessels of gold were 340,000, the vessels of silver 470,000, in all 810,000.

Ver. 15. *Even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof,* &c.] These candlesticks were ten, and each had seven lamps, and were placed five on one side the Mosaic candlestick, and five on the other, as say the Jews, see 1 Kings vii. 49. and the weight of gold for each candlestick, according to the above writer [u], was 100 pounds; and for both candlesticks and lamps, David, by the spirit of God, was directed to give: *and for the candlesticks of silver, by weight,* both *for the candlestick, and* also *for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick;* the weight of silver for them was fixed; of these we nowhere else read. Kimchi thinks these were for the chambers of the priests, to give them light when they ate and lay there.

Ver. 16. *And by weight* he gave *gold for the tables of shew-bread, for every table,* &c.] For though there were but one table for the shew-bread in the tabernacle of Moses, there were ten in the temple of Solomon, 2 Chron. iv. 8. and each of them contained 100 pounds in weight [w]: *and* likewise *silver for the tables of silver;* these were placed in the court, as Jarchi thinks, on which they flayed the sacrifices; or, as Kimchi, on which they slew them, and laid the flesh of the burnt-offerings on them, which he gathers from Ezek. xl. 39.

Ver. 17. *Also pure gold for the flesh-hooks,* &c.] To take the pieces of flesh out of the pots, in which they were boiled: *and the bowls and the cups: and for the golden basins* he gave gold *by weight for every basin;* which were vessels made use of for the receiving and sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices: likewise silver *by weight for every basin of silver;* for it seems some of them were of silver, as others were of gold.

Ver. 18. *And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight,* &c.] This was also 100 pounds weight in gold, with which it was to be overlaid [x]: *and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubim;* which were two large ones, besides those which Moses made; and these were not made of gold, as they were, but overlaid with it, see 1 Kings vi. 23—28. which with them made four; and to which the four living creatures in Ezekiel's vision allude, and make the *mercavah*, or chariot, the Jews so much speak of, perhaps from this and other like phrases; and the Lord sitting here as in a chariot, not only denotes the glory and splendour of the Shechinah, or divine Majesty; but, as some observe, his readiness to ride off and depart, when displeased and provoked, see Ezek. x. 18, 19. *that spread out* their wings, *and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord;* not that spread their wings over the ark, and covered it, that the Mosaic cherubim did; but these spread their wings before it from wall to wall, so that it could not be seen by any that turned aside the vail, and even by the high-priest when he entered into the holy of holies: the ark, with the cherubim, which were on that, weighed 200 pounds of pure gold, according to the above writer [z].

Ver. 19. *All this,* said David, *the Lord made me understand in writing by* his *hand upon me,* &c.] Either by an impulse of his spirit on him, whereby it was as it were written on his mind, and as clearly represented to him, as if he had it in writing before him; though the Jews think that all was first made known to Samuel, or some other prophet, who delivered it to David in writing, as from the Lord: but I see not why it may not be understood that David had the pattern of the temple, and all things relative to it, by an hand-writing from the Lord himself, through the ministry of angels, as Moses received the two tables, the hand-writing of the Lord, from himself; for the words, as they lie in order in the Hebrew text, are, the whole of this *in writing from the hand of the Lord, unto me, he made me to understand:* even *all the works of this pattern;* the particulars of which are given before.

Ver. 20. *And David said to Solomon his son, be strong, and of good courage, and do* it, *&c.*] See the note on ver. 10. *fear not, nor be dismayed;* that thou shalt meet with any opposition in the work, or not be able to finish it for want of materials and workmen, or money to pay them: *for the Lord God,* even *my God,* will be *with thee;* to guide and direct, prosper and succeed; the Targum is, "the Word of the "Lord God, my God, will be thy help:" *he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee;* a promise made to Joshua, and is applicable to every good man in whatsoever good work he is concerned, Josh. i. 5. Heb.

[t] Relation of Memorable Things in the Tabernacle and Temple, ch. 4. p. 19.
[u] Ibid. p. 20.
[w] Jacob Leon, ibid.
[x] Ibid.
[z] Ibid.

xiii. 5. *until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord;* built the temple, and all the apartments of it, and courts belonging to it, and made and provided all the utensils and vessels necessary for the service and worship of God.

Ver. 21. *And, behold, all the courses of the priests and the Levites,* &c.] Which David had lately fixed to take their turns in the temple, when built: even they shall be with thee *for all the service of the house of God;* to advise and assist him in every thing relating to the service of the sanctuary, which they might be supposed best to understand: *and there shall be with thee, for all manner of workmanship, every willing skilful man for any manner of service;* men that were not only well-skilled in all manner of curious work that was necessary for the service of the house, but were willing to employ their skill to the uttermost for it, and such David had provided, ch. xxii. 15. *also the princes and all the people* will be *wholly at thy commandment;* to do whatever he should order, whether to overlook the workmen, or to contribute to the expenses of the work.

C H A P. XXIX.

THIS chapter relates how largely and liberally David, besides what he had before done, and his princes, offered towards defraying the expenses of building the temple, ver. 1—8. and the joy and thankfulness that he and his people expressed on that account, attended with prayers for Solomon, and offering sacrifices unto the Lord, ver. 9—21. and the chapter is closed, and so the book, with an account of the second unction of Solomon, the placing him on the throne, and the submission of all ranks of men unto him, and of the death of David, ver. 22—30.

Ver. 1. *Furthermore, David the king said unto all the congregation,* &c.] Having finished what he had to say to Solomon, he addressed the congregation again: *Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen;* both to be king, and to build the temple: is yet *young and tender;* see ch. xxii. 5. *and the work* is *great;* both of governing so great a people, and of building so magnificent a temple, especially the latter is meant: *for the palace* is *not for man;* for any mortal king, though ever so great: *but for the Lord God;* the Targum is, " but for the Word of the Lord God," who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and therefore is to be built as with the greatest exactness, according to the pattern he himself has given, so with the greatest splendour and magnificence.

Ver. 2. *Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God,* &c.] According to the utmost of his ability for the building and decorating of it: *the gold* for the things to be made of *gold;* as the candlesticks, shew-bread tables, &c. *and the silver for* things *of silver;* as for basins, &c. *and the brass for* things *of brass;* as the brasen altar, brasen laver, &c. *and iron for* things *of iron;* for nails, hinges, &c. *and wood for* things *of wood;* for rafters, cielings, floors, &c. *onyx-stones;* the Targum, stones of beryl: *and* stones *to be set;* other precious stones to be set in gold and silver: *glistering stones;* the Targum, emeralds; the word is used for stibium, or black lead, with which women painted their eyes; and so may signify black stones, like black lead; as white marble is after mentioned, perhaps black is here meant, or such stones Solomon paved the ways with leading to Jerusalem [y]: but as such stones are not very glistering, there seems to be no reason for such an epithet; unless the stone *phengites* should be meant, which was a clear bright stone, and served for looking-glasses. Domitian the Roman emperor, when under suspicion of being murdered by persons he had offended, garnished the porticos of his palace with this stone, which was of such brightness, that by the images formed in it he could see what was behind him [z]; and so Lucian speaks [a] of Astarte having a splendid stone about her, called λυχνὶς, which in the night gave much light to the temple, but shone weakly in the day-time, and looked like fire: *and of divers colours;* that is, stones of divers colours, as jaspers, amethysts, &c. Kimchi interprets it of embroidered clothes, and garments of needle-work, and in these precious stones were sometimes inserted: *and all manner of precious stones;* as pearls, diamonds, &c. it is hard to say what all these precious stones were for; Jarchi and Kimchi think they were to decorate the walls overlaid with gold, in which they were set; it is certain they were for garnishing and beautifying the house, see 2 Chron. iii. 6. *and marble stones in abundance;* for pillars, tables, and pavement, as Jarchi; this was Parian marble, according to the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; the whitest of marble [b], found in the island of Paros, and which agrees with the word here used.

Ver. 3. *Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God,* &c.] Had a good will to it, and was earnestly desirous of having it built, and that in a grand manner: *I have of my own proper good;* which he had treasured up for his own use: *of gold and silver,* even that *I have given to the house of my God;* to build or ornament it, or make vessels for it: *over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house;* for the building of the temple, which is made mention of in the preceding chapter.

Ver. 4. Even 3,000 *talents of gold,* &c.] Which, according to Scheuchzer [c], amount to 36,660,000 ducats of gold; and, according to Brerewood [d], to 13,500,000 pounds of our money: *of the gold of Ophir;* which was reckoned the best gold; not Ophir in India, which was not known till Solomon's time, but in Arabia, as Bochart [e] has shewn; so Eupolemus [f], an Heathen writer, says, that David having built ships

[y] Joseph. Antiqu. l. 8. c. 7. sect. 4.
[z] Sueton. Vit. Domitian. c. 14. Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 22. Isidor. Origin. l. 16. c. 4.
[a] De Dea Syria.
[b] —— Pario marmore purius. Horat. Carmin. l. 1. ode 19.
[c] Physica Sacra, vol. 4. p. 621.
[d] De Ponder. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 5.
[e] Phaleg. l. 2. c. 27. col. 140.
[f] Apud Euseb. Evangel. Præpar. l. 9. c. 30. p. 447.

at Achan, a city of Arabia, sent miners to Urphe (supposed to be the same with Ophir) in the island of the Red sea, abounding with gold, and from thence fetched it, see the note on 1 Kings ix. 28. and that he was able to give so great a sum out of his own substance, Dr. Prideaux [g] thinks, can only be accounted for by his great returns from this traffic; since these 3,000 talents, according to him, amounted to 21 millions, and 600,000 pounds sterling: *and 7,000 talents of refined silver*; amounting, according to Scheuchzer [h], to 31,500,000 imperials, or rix-dollars; and, according to Brerewood [i], to 2,625,000 pounds of our money: *to overlay the walls of the houses* withal; the gold was to overlay the walls of the holy and most holy place, the silver to overlay the walls of the chambers built around the temple.

Ver. 5. *The gold for* things *of gold, the silver for* things *of silver*, &c.] The one for what was to be overlaid with gold, the other for what was to be overlaid with silver: *and for all manner of work* to be made *by the hands of artificers*: what remained was to be made use of in employing artificers in making vessels for the temple that were needful: *and who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord*; or *fill his hand* [k]? and give largely and liberally towards building an house for the service and worship, honour and glory, of God; and David, having set so good an example, could with the better grace recommend the good work to his nobles and people, and which had its desired effect, as follows.

Ver. 6. *Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel*, &c.] The princes of the 12 tribes: *and the captains of thousands, and of hundreds, with the rulers over the king's work*: who were now assembled, ch. xxviii. 1. *offered willingly*; and cheerfully; needed no more arguments to press them to it, but at once readily communicated.

Ver. 7. *And gave for the service of the house of God*, &c.] For building and adorning it, and providing proper utensils for it: *of gold 5,000 talents*: which, according to Scheuchzer [l], came to 61,100,000 ducats of gold: and these, with *the 10,000 drachms*; make of our money, according to Brerewood [m], 22,507,500 pounds; some reckon a drachm at two ducats and a half, and somewhat more [n]: *and of silver* 10,000 *talents*; which, according to the former writer, amounted to 450,000,000 imperials, or rix-dollars; and, according to the latter, they made of our money 3,750,000 pounds: *and of brass* 18,000 *talents, and* 100,000 *talents of iron*; the weight of each of which were so much.

Ver. 8. *And they with whom* precious *stones were found*, &c.] Such as are mentioned ver. 2. *gave* them *to the treasure of the house of the Lord*; to be laid up there: *by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite*; who, and his sons, had the care of that treasury, ch. xxvi. 21, 22.

Ver. 9. *Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly*, &c.] They were not only glad that they had it to offer, but that they had hearts to do it; they found themselves quite free to the work, and saw it was so with others, which gave them extreme pleasure: *because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord*; not grudgingly, but cheerfully; not pressed and urged to it; not by constraint, but freely, and that with a pure view to the honour and glory of God: *and David the king also rejoiced with great joy*; it made his heart glad exceedingly, now he was old, and just going out of the world, to see this good work in such forwardness, on which his heart had been so much set; it gave him reason to believe it would be set about in good earnest, be carried on with vigour, and brought to perfection.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation*, &c.] To whose goodness he ascribed both the ability and willingness of him, and his people, to offer after such a manner; he knew it was God that wrought in them both to will and to do, and therefore gave him the glory of it: *and David said, blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever*; the phrase, *our father*, does not belong to the God of Israel, their father by covenant and adoption, but to Israel, or Jacob, the ancestor of the Jewish nation; who is made mention of on this occasion, he being the first that spoke of building an house for God, as some Jewish writers, Jarchi and Kimchi, observe, see Gen. xxviii. 22.

Ver. 11. *Thine, O Lord*, is *the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty*, &c.] That is, either God is possessed of all greatness and immensity, of dignity of nature, and of all perfections; of almighty power, of excellent glory, of superiority to all beings, and of honour, and majesty, and all that grandeur, might, and honour in men, and victory over others; the majestic appearance they make, and exaltation above others they have, are all of God: *for all* that is *in the heaven and in the earth* is thine; they are both made by him, and all that is in them, and therefore he has the sole right unto them: *thine* is *the kingdom, O Lord*; of nature and Providence; he has the sole dominion over all creatures, and the sovereign disposal of all things: *and thou art exalted as head above all*; men on earth, and angels in heaven.

Ver. 12. *Both riches and honour* come *of thee*, &c.] Whatever of either the children of men have is not owing to their merits, nor to their diligence and industry, and wise conduct, but to the providence of God, Eccl. ix. 11. Psal. lxxv. 6, 7. so the gods with the Heathens are said [o] to be givers of riches: *and thou reignest over all*; governest the world by wisdom, and disposest all things in it for the best: *in thine hand* is *power and might*; to do whatsoever he pleaseth: *and in thine hand* it is *to make great*; in worldly things, and so in spiritual: *and to give strength unto all*; against their enemies, and to do the will and work of God; of all which David had had an experience.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name*.] That he that was so great, and so much above them, should take notice of them, and bestow so many great and good things on them.

[g] Connection, par. 1. p. 5, 6.
[h] Ut supra.
[i] Ut supra.
[k] למלאות ידו implent manum suam, V. L. ut impleat manum suam, Vatablus, Piscator.
[l] Ut supra.
[m] Ut supra.
[n] Eisenschmidius apud Scheuchzer. ib. p. 625.
[o] Πλουτοδόται, Hesiod. Opera, ver. 124. see ver. 316.

Ver. 14. *But who am I,* &c.] Originally dust and ashes, a sinful creature, unworthy to receive any thing from God, and of having the honour of doing any thing for him: *and what is my people:* subject to him, the least of all people, separated from the nations round about them, and despised by them: *that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?* that they, who were a poor people, some years ago brought out of Egyptian bondage, should now be possessed of such an affluence, and have such a generous heart and liberal spirit given them, as to contribute in so large and liberal a manner as they had done; all was owing to the goodness of God to them, and the efficacy of his grace upon them: *for all things come of thee;* all good things, temporal and spiritual; the Lord is the fountain of goodness, and father of mercies: *and of thine own have we given thee:* for there is nothing a man has but he has received from the Lord, and therefore can give nothing to him but his own, see Rom. xi. 35, 36.

Ver. 15. *For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers,* &c.] For though they were in possession of the land of Canaan, yet they held it not in their own right, but as the Lord's, who said, *the land is mine,* Lev. xxv. 23. they were but tenants in it, and were not to abide long here; they belonged to another city and country; the consideration of which might tend to set them loose to worldly things, and the more easily to part with them for the service of God, and the honour of his name: *our days on the earth are as a shadow:* man's life is expressed by days, not months and years, being so short; and by days on earth, in distinction from the days of heaven, or eternity; and these said to be as a shadow, of a short continuance, empty, mutable, and uncertain, dark and obscure, quickly gone, like the shadow of the sun; and not only like that, or of a mountain, tree or wall; but, as the Targum, of a bird that is flying, which passes away at once: *and there is none abiding:* not long, much less always, being but sojourners as before; so Cato in Cicero[z] is represented as saying, "I depart "out of this life as from an inn, and not an house; "for nature has given us an inn to sojourn, not a place "to dwell in:" or there is *no hope* or *expectation*[a]; of living long, of recalling time, and of avoiding death.

Ver. 16. *O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared,* &c.] Of gold, silver, &c. that he and his people had provided and contributed: the gold, according to Jacob Leon[b], amounted to 59,766 tons of gold, and 46,123 gilders, each ton to be reckoned at least 1,000 pounds sterling; the silver, reduced to the value of gold, made 46,337 tons, and 250 gilders; but both, according to Witsius[c], amounted to 20,585 tons of gold; and if the talents were talents of the sanctuary, and they double the common talents, as some say they were, it was as much more, and may well be expressed by *all this store,* besides the brass, iron, &c. *to build thee an house for thine holy name;* to perform holy and religious worship in it, for the glory of his name: cometh *of thine hand, and* is *all thine own:* this he repents, that God might have all the glory of all they had and did.

Ver. 17. *I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart,* &c.] Searchest it, and knowest it perfectly, whether what is done is from it: *and hast pleasure in uprightness;* in what is done in sincerity and uprightness of heart: *as for me, in the uprightness of my heart I have willingly offered all these things;* for the truth of which he could appeal to the heart-searching God: *and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee:* he judged by what they did, and their manner of doing it, that it was done in the uprightness of their hearts also, as his were, which gave him sensible joy and pleasure.

Ver. 18. *O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers,* &c.] The ancestors of the Jewish nation, whose covenant-God the Lord was, and who had ever been mindful of his promise to them, with respect to them their seed: *keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people;* let the same disposition of mind always continue in them to serve the Lord their God: *and prepare their heart unto thee;* incline and dispose their minds always to fear the Lord, and obey his will.

Ver. 19. *And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes,* &c.] All the laws of God, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, even to observe them cordially and sincerely: *and to do all* those things; he had suggested to him particularly: *and to build the palace for the which I have made provision;* as before declared.

Ver. 20. *And David said to all the congregation,* &c.] Consisting of princes, captains, and officers, ch. xxviii. 1. *now bless the Lord your God;* as he had done, for putting it into the power of their hands, and into their hearts, to do what they had: *and all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers;* some one as the mouth of the rest put up a thanksgiving to God, as David directed, to which they all assented, and in which they all joined: *and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord and the king;* the one with religious worship, the other with civil; the Syriac and Arabic versions more plainly distinguish, *they worshipped the Lord, and blessed David the king;* though some think Solomon, now made king, is meant.

Ver. 21. *And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the Lord,* &c.] David and the congregation: *and offered burnt-offerings unto the Lord on the morrow after that day;* not having time enough on that day to perform, at least not all of them; and these they offered on the altar David had erected in the threshing-floor of Araunah, by the order of God, where afterwards the temple was built: *even 1,000 bullocks, 1,000 rams, and 1,000 lambs, with their burnt-offerings;* and meat-offerings also, both which always went along with them: *and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel;* whom they represented; these last were peace-offerings, part of which the offerers had for themselves and friends to feast on, as these did, as follows.

Ver. 22. *And they did eat and drink before the Lord on that day with great gladness,* &c.] Before the ark of the Lord, which was in the tabernacle David had pitched for it: *and they made Solomon the son of David*

[z] De Senectute, c. 23.

[a] אין מקוה non est expectatio sive spes, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Michaelis.

[b] Relation of Memorable Things in the Tabernacle and Temple, ch. 3. p. 14, 15.

[c] Miscellan. tom. 2. p. 258.

king the second time; the first was upon Adonijah's rebellion, and was done in the presence only of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; but this was done by and in the presence of all the great personages in the land: *and anointed* him *unto the Lord to be the chief governor;* under his father during his life-time, and then to reign in his own right: *and Zadok to be priest:* high-priest; which office yet he did not exercise till after the death of David, when Abiathar was thrust out by Solomon.

Ver. 23. *Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord,* &c.] Who had given it to him, and established him on it, and whose vicegerent he was, and over whose people he ruled: *as king instead of David;* he was viceroy to him in his life-time, and succeeded him at his death, when he had the full power of government: *and prospered;* his reign was happy and peaceable: *and all Israel obeyed him;* at once; whereas it was some time, even years, before all Israel obeyed David.

Ver. 24. *And all the princes and the mighty men,* &c.] The princes of the tribes, and the officers of the army: *and all the sons likewise of King David;* as many as were living: and though they were elder than Solomon, they *submitted to Solomon the king;* or *gave the hand under*[1] him, promised obedience, and swore allegiance to him, see Gen. xxiv. 2, 9.

Ver. 25. *And the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly before all Israel,* &c.] By giving him such a large share of wisdom and understanding in government: *and bestowed upon him such royal majesty;* not only such wealth and riches, but such honour and reverence, as *had not been on any king before him in Israel;* not on Saul, nor even on David.

Ver. 26. *Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel.*] As before related in this book, and in the second book of Samuel; his reign being long and glorious.

Ver. 27. *And the time that he reigned over Israel was 40 years,* &c.] See 1 Kings ii. 11.

Ver. 28. *And he died in a good old age,* &c.] Being 70 years of age: *full of days, riches, and honour;* had as much of either of them as he could wish for; and having enough, he sought after, and was taken to the possession of, eternal life, durable riches, and honours, and glory, that fade not away: *and Solomon his son reigned in his stead;* in full power and authority.

Ver. 29. *Now the acts of David the king, first and last,* &c.] All that he did that was memorable, both before he was king, and when king in Hebron, and then in Jerusalem: *behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer;* which were journals of his life and actions, begun by Samuel, and carried on by Nathan and Gad; out of which what is recorded in canonical Scripture was taken by divine direction, and preserved, whilst other writings are lost; or rather the book of Samuel designs the first book of Samuel, and the books of Nathan and Gad the second book of Samuel, by whom it was written.

Ver. 30. *With all his reign and his might,* &c.] The whole of it, and the mighty valiant acts done by him, the battles he fought, and the victories he obtained: *and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and all the kingdoms of the countries;* things that were done in his time in Israel, and in the nations round about subdued by him, as Moab, Ammon, Syria, and Philistia.

THE SECOND BOOK

OF

THE CHRONICLES.

THIS, and the preceding, were but one book originally, but divided into two because of the largeness of it, so that this is only a continuation of the former history; that ends at the death of David; this begins with the reign of Solomon, goes through that, and the reigns of all the kings of the house of David; of the kings of Judah only, after the separation of the ten tribes, quite down to the captivity of Judah in Babylon, and reaches to the deliverance of the Jews from thence by Cyrus, and contains an history of 479 years. It treats not at all of the kings of Israel, after the separation, only of the kings of Judah, through whom the line of the Messiah was drawn; and though it omits several things recorded of them in the book of Kings, yet it gives abundance of anecdotes not to be met with there, which are of great use and advantage in history to know.

[1] ויתנו יד תחת dederunt manum sub Selomoh, Pagninus, Montanus, Michaelis.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter relates, how that Solomon being confirmed in his kingdom, went to Gibeon to sacrifice, ver. 1—6. that the Lord appeared there to him, and what passed between them, ver. 7—12. and that when he returned from thence to Jerusalem, he increased in splendour, wealth, and riches, ver. 13—17.

Ver. 1. *And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom*, &c.] Well settled and established on the throne of his father, after the death of some persons, from whom he might expect trouble, see 1 Kings ii. 46. *and the Lord God was with him:* directing and instructing him, prospering and succeeding him: the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord "was his help:" *and magnified him exceedingly;* see 1 Chron. xxix. 25.

Ver. 2. *Then Solomon spake unto all Israel*, &c.] To their representatives about going to Gibeon to sacrifice, as the next words shew: so Jarchi and Kimchi observe: *to the captains of thousands, and of hundreds, to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel, the chief of the fathers;* whom he had convened on this occasion; though some think this is the same congregation gathered by his father, by whom he was anointed and made king, and that he spoke of this to them before they broke up, 1 Chron. xxviii. 1. and xxix. 22. which seems not so probable, since it was after the death of his father, after he had been king some time, and even after his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, that what follows was done, see 1 Kings iii. 1—4.

Ver. 3. *So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that* was *at Gibeon*, &c.] They agreed to his motion, and went with him thither, see 1 Kings iii. 4. *for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the Lord had made in the wilderness;* by the Lord's direction; where was also the altar of the Lord, and so most proper to offer sacrifice on, which was what Solomon went thither to do; see 1 Chron. xxi. 29.

Ver. 4. *But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim*, &c.] See 2 Sam. vi. 2, 17.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, the brasen altar that Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made*, &c.] According to the pattern given by Moses, at the direction of God, Exod. xxxviii. 1. *he put before the tabernacle of the congregation:* either David, or rather Solomon; though it seems best to read the words as in the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, *and there it was before the tabernacle;* for it was always there: *and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it;* to sacrifice unto it; or rather sought *unto him*, the Lord, before whose tabernacle the altar was, so Gussetius [a].

Ver. 6. *And Solomon went up thither*, &c.] To the high place at Gibeon: *to the brasen altar before the Lord;* where he used to be, and accept the sacrifices of his people, though the ark, the symbol of his presence, was not there: *which was at the tabernacle of the congregation;* that is, which altar was there; or rather *who*, that is, God, was there, as Osiander, hearing the prayers of his people, and accepting their offerings: *and offered* 1,000 *offerings upon it;* by the priests, see 1 Kings iii. 4.

Ver. 7. *In that night did God appear unto Solomon*, &c.] From hence to the end of ver. 12 it is the same with 1 Kings iii. 5—13. see the notes there.

Ver. 13. *Then Solomon came* from his journey *to the high place that* was *at Gibeon*, &c.] Or rather without the supplement, the words may be read as in the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, *Solomon came from the high places*, having sacrificed there, so Vatablus; ל being put for מ, as R. Jonah observes [b]; but the Targum agrees with us, he "came to the high "place which is in Gibeon, and from thence to Jerusalem;" and to the same purpose Kimchi; having been there, he came to Jerusalem: *from before the tabernacle of the congregation;* which was at Gibeon, where he had been sacrificing: *and reigned over Israel;* in great splendour and prosperity. From hence, to the end of the chapter, the same things are said as in 1 Kings x. 26—29. see the notes there.

CHAP. II.

SOLOMON intending to build a temple for God, and a palace for himself, sent to Hiram, king of Tyre, to furnish him with materials and workmen, ver. 1—10. to which Hiram returned an agreeable answer, ver. 11—16. and for this service Solomon numbered all the strangers in Israel, ver. 17, 18.

Ver. 1. *And Solomon determined to build an house for the name of the Lord*, &c.] For the worship and service of God, and for his honour and glory, being directed, enjoined, and encouraged to it by his father David: *and an house for his kingdom;* for a royal palace for him, and his successors, first the one, and then the other; and in this order they were built.

Ver. 2. *And Solomon told out* 70,000 *men*, &c.] Of whom, and the difference of the last number in this text from 1 Kings v. 15, 16. see the notes there.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon sent to Huram king of Tyre*, &c.] The same with Hiram, 1 Kings v. 1. and from whence it appears, that Huram first sent a letter to Solomon to congratulate him on his accession to the throne, which is not taken notice of here: *as thou didst deal with my father, and didst send him cedars to*

[a] Comment. Ebr. p. 197.

[b] Apud Kimchium. in loc.

build him an house to dwell therein; see 1 Chron. xiv. 1. even so deal with me; which words are a supplement.

Ver. 4. *Behold, I build an house to the name of the Lord my God*, &c.] Am about to do it, and determined upon it, see ver. 1. *to dedicate it to him*: to set it apart for sacred service to him: and *to burn before him sweet incense*; on the altar of incense: *and for the continual shew-bread*; the loaves of shew-bread, which were continually on the shew-bread table; which, and the altar of incense, both were set in the holy place in the tabernacle, and so to be in the temple: *and for the burnt-offerings morning and evening*; the daily sacrifice: *on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the Lord our God*: at which seasons, besides the daily sacrifice, additional burnt-offerings were offered, and all on the brasen altar in the court: *this is an ordinance for ever unto Israel*; to offer the above sacrifices, even for a long time to come, until the Messiah comes; and therefore Solomon suggests, as Jarchi and Kimchi think, that a good strong house ought to be built.

Ver. 5. *And the house which I build is great*, &c.] Not so very large, though that, with all apartments and courts belonging to it, he intended to build, was so; but because magnificent in its structure and decorations: *for great is our God above all gods*; and therefore ought to have a temple to exceed all others, as the temple at Jerusalem did.

Ver. 6. *But who is able to build him an house*, &c.] Suitable to the greatness of his majesty, especially as he dwells not in temples made with hands: *seeing the heaven, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain him?* see 1 Kings viii. 27. *who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?* since God was an immense and infinite Being, he would have Hiram to understand that he had no thought of building an house, in which he could be circumscribed and contained, only a place in which he might be worshipped, and sacrifices offered to him.

Ver. 7. *Send now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron*, &c.] There being many things relating to the temple about to be built, and vessels to be put into it, which were to be made of those metals: *and in purple, and crimson, and blue*; used in making the vails for it, hung up in different places: *and that can skill to grave*; in wood or stone: *with the cunning men that are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom my father David did provide*; see 1 Chron. xxii. 15.

Ver. 8. *Send me also cedar-trees, fir-trees, and algum-trees, out of Lebanon*, &c.] Of the two first of these, and which Hiram sent, see 1 Kings v. 10. The algum-trees are the same with the almug-trees, 1 Kings x. 11, 12. by a transposition of letters; these could not be coral, as some Jewish writers think, which grows in the sea, for these were in Lebanon; nor Brasil, as Kimchi, so called from a place of this name, which at this time was not known; though there were trees of almug afterwards brought from Ophir in India, as appears from the above-quoted place, as well as from Arabia; and it seems, as Beckius[a] observes, to be an Arabic word, by the article *al* prefixed to it: *for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon*; better than his: *and, behold, my servants* shall be *with thy servants*; to help and assist them in what they can, and to learn of them, see 1 Kings v. 6.

Ver. 9. *Even to prepare me timber in abundance*, &c.] Since he would want a large quantity for raftering, cieling, wainscoting, and flooring the temple: *for the house which I am about to build* shall be *wonderful great*; as to its structure and ornaments.

Ver. 10. *Behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber*, 20,000 *measures of beaten wheat*, &c.] Meaning, not what was beaten out of the husk with the flail, as some; nor bruised or half-broke for pottage, as others; but ground into flour, as R. Jonah[d] interprets it; or rather, perhaps, it should be rendered *food*[e], that is, for his household, as in 1 Kings v. 11. and the hire of these servants is proposed to be given in this way, because wheat was scarce with the Tyrians, and they were obliged to have it from the Jews, Acts xii. 20. Ezek xxvii. 17. *and* 20,000 *measures of barley*; the measures of both these were the cor, of which see 1 Kings v. 11. *and* 20,000 *baths of wine, and* 20,000 *baths of oil*; which measure was the tenth part of a cor. According to the Ethiopians, a man might consume four of these measures in the space of a month[f].

Ver. 11. *Then Huram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon*, &c.] In which letter he told him he had considered the contents of his, and would grant him all that he desired, see 1 Kings v. 8. *because the Lord hath loved his people; he hath made thee king over them*; which are much the same words the queen of Sheba said to Solomon, 1 Kings x. 9. see the note there.

Ver. 12. *Huram said, moreover, blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth*, &c.] Huram seems to have had some good notions of the divine Being, not only as the God of the people of Israel, in a peculiar sense, but as the Former and Maker of all things: *who hath given to David the king a wise son, endued with prudence and understanding*; see 1 Kings v. 7. *that might build an house for the Lord, and for his kingdom*; as in ver. 1.

Ver. 13. *And now I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding*, &c.] In such things as Solomon required he should, ver. 7. *of Huram my father's*; a workman of his, whom he employed, and so might be depended upon as a good artificer; though rather Huram is the artificer's name, and *Abi*, we render *my father*, his surname, that is, *Huram Abi*; and this is the opinion of several learned men[g], and is very probable; for certain it is, that his name was Huram or Hiram, 1 Kings vii. 13. and so he is called *Huram his father*, or *Huram Abif*, ch. iv. 16.

Ver. 14. *The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan*, &c.] Here follows an account of the descent of the artificer, and of his skill in working; of what seeming disagreement there may be in this account, with that in 1 Kings vii. 14. see the note there.

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[a] In Targum in loc.
[d] Apud Kimchium in loc.
[e] So Kimchi, מכת pro מכלת inscuria librariorum, Schindler. Lex. Pentaglott. col. 75.
[f] Ludolf. Lexic. Ethiop. p. 197.
[g] Luther, Emanuel Sa, Piscator, Schmidt, Beckius in Targum in loc.

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Ver. 15. *Now therefore, the wheat, and the barley, the oil, and the wine, which my lord hath spoken of*, &c.] In his letter to him, ver. 10. as for the phrase *my lord*, which some think is used, because Hiram was tributary to Solomon, it may only be a respectful way of speaking: *let him send unto his servants*; Hiram accepted thereof as a proper reward for the work of his servants.

Ver. 16. *And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need*, &c.] Both cedar and fir, 1 Kings v. 8, 10. *and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to Joppa*; a port in the Mediterranean sea, the same that Jonah went down to, see the note on 1 Kings v. 9. *and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem*; in land-carriages, about 40 miles off.

Ver. 17. *And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel*, &c.] Which, according to Kimchi, were the remains of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites, see ch. viii. 8. yet not idolaters, or they would not have been suffered by David and Solomon to have dwelt in the land, but were such as were become proselytes of the gate: *after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them*; not at the time Israel was numbered by him, but in order to provide workmen for the building of the temple, 1 Chron. xxii. 2. *and they were found* 153,600; men able to bear burdens, and hew timber.

Ver. 18. *And he set* 70,000 *of them*, &c.] Which is repeated from ver. 2. to shew how the above number of strangers were disposed of; 70,000 of them bearers of burdens, 80,000 of them hewers of wood, and 3,600 overseers of the workmen, in all 153,600; an emblem of the Gentiles employed in building the spiritual temple, the church, Zech. vi. 15.

CHAP. III. IV.

THESE two chapters give an account of the building of the temple, of the materials, parts, and form of it, and of things belonging to it, and which agrees with 1 Kings vi. and vii. see the notes there; only here, ch. iii. ver. 1. mention is made of the particular place where it was built, Mount Moriah; of which see the notes on Gen. xxii. ver. 2. and 1 Chron. xxii. 1. The dimensions of the house, as the Targum rightly explains, ver. 3. are said to be after *the first measure*, either of that of the tabernacle by Moses, or rather of that of the pattern David gave to Solomon, 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. though some understand it of the greater cubit: the holy place is called *the greater house*, ver. 5. being twice as long as the holy of holies; in ver. 6. we are informed what the precious stones were for, which David and his princes gave for the temple, 1 Chron. xxix. 2, 8. that they were to decorate the house; and also what sort of gold was used in overlaying it, gold of Parvaim, which some interpret of Peru [h], in America; but it is a question whether that was then known, or, if it was, must go by another name, since Peru is a late name given by the Spaniards, at their conquest of it. Bochart [i] takes it to be Taprobane, an island in the Indian sea, as if it was Taph Parvan or Provan, the shore of Parvan. Kircher [k] is of opinion it is the same with Javaim, the isles of Java in the same sea, from whence was gold, which is not very likely. Waserus [l] thinks Parvaim is the name of a town which is by Pliny [m] corruptly called Parbacia, which was in the land of Havilah, or the kingdom of the Charazenes, where was the best gold, Gen. ii. 11, 12. though others suppose it to be the same with Ophir, by removing the first letter of the word, to which Pfeiffer [n] inclines, and is as probable as any; and much more probable than what the Jews [o] say, that this gold was so called, because it was red like the blood of *parim*, oxen: in ver. 8. the quantity of gold, with which the most holy place was overlaid, is given, 600 talents: of which see the note on 1 Kings vi. 21. in ver. 9. we read of the nails with which the plates of gold were fastened to the boards, nowhere else mentioned, except in the Vulgate Latin version of 1 Kings vi. 21. *he fastened the plates with golden nails*; which version perhaps is rightest; the weight of which were 50 shekels of gold; that is, according to the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, each nail weighed so much, which amounted to 75 pounds of our money [p]. Eupolemus, an Heathen writer [q], speaks of these nails, which he makes to be silver ones; and says they were of the weight of a talent, in the form of a woman's breast, and in number four, with which the plates of gold were fastened, which were of five cubits; I suppose he means there were four of these nails in every plate of five cubits: in ch. iv. 1. an account is given of an *altar of brass*, made by Solomon, we have not elsewhere, only referred to 1 Kings viii. 64. and ix. 25. whether this was only covered with brass, as that made by Moses was, as some [r] think; or whether of massy brass, as Dr. Lightfoot [s] because not to be removed as that was, is not certain; the altar of the second temple was of stones unpolished, according to the Misnah [t], with which agrees 1 Maccab. iv. 46, 47. and so Philo [u]: 20 *cubits* was *the length thereof*; *and* 20 *cubits the breadth thereof*, *and* 10 *cubits the height thereof*; it was four times as big in its square as that of Moses, and three times higher, and a cubit over, see the note

[h] Erasm. Schmid. de America Orat. ad Calc. Pindar. p. 261. Montani Phaleg. in Calc. Jac. Capellus in loc.
[i] Phaleg. l. 2. c. 27. & Canaan, l. 1. c. 46. col. 692. Braunius de Vest. Sacerd. Heb. p. 221.
[k] Prodrom. Copt. c. 4. p. 119.
[l] De Antiqu. Num. Heb. l. 1. c. 6.
[m] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 28.
[n] Difficil. Script. Sacr. cent. 3. loc. 16. p. 247.
[o] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 45. 1. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 41. 4. Shemot Rabba, sect. 39. fol. 136. 4.
[p] Brerewood de Ponder. &c. c. 5.
[q] Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 34. p. 450.
[r] Cunæus de Rep. Heb. l. 2. c. 5.
[s] Prospect of the Temple, ch. 34. p. 2029. So Villalpandus.
[t] Middot, c. 3. sect. 4.
[u] De Victimis, p. 850.

on Exod. xxvii. 1. Hecatæus [*], an Heathen writer, speaks of this altar as four-square, and made of whole and unpolished stones, each side of which was 20 cubits, but the height of it he makes to be 12 cubits, in which he mistakes. It weighed, according to Jacob Leon [x], 7,000 arobas of brass, each aroba containing 25 pounds. The rest of the chapter agrees with the account in the book of Kings.

CHAP. V. VI.

THE words with which ch. v. begins are the same with 1 Kings vii. 51. and what is contained in that and ch. vi. is much the same with 1 Kings viii. on which see the notes; the blessing of Solomon on the people of Israel, which is there, is here omitted, and two verses are here added, much the same with Psal. cxxxii. 8, 9, 10. see the notes there.

CHAP. VII.

IN this chapter is an account of the Lord's acceptance of the sacrifices offered at the dedication of the temple by fire, to the great surprise and encouragement of the people, ver. 1—7. and of the feast kept on that account, and the feast of tabernacles, ver. 8—12. and of the Lord's appearance to Solomon, giving an answer to his prayer, ver. 13—22.

Ver. 1. *Now when Solomon had made an end of praying*, &c.] The prayer recorded in the preceding chapter: *the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices*; which was the token God gave of his acceptance of them, of which there had been several instances before, Lev. ix. 24. 1 Kings xviii. 38. 1 Chron. xxi. 26. *and the glory of the Lord filled the house*; the glory of the Shechinah of the Lord, as the Targum, see 1 Kings viii. 11.

Ver. 2. *And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord*, &c.] They went in to carry the ark thither, but not being able to stand to minister, they came out, and could not re-enter: *because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house*; both the holy place, and the holy of holies, see 1 Kings viii. 10, 11.

Ver. 3. *And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down*, &c.] From heaven upon the sacrifice, and consumed it, which was all visible to the eye; or it may be this was a distinct fire from the former, since it seems to have come down upon the house, and so may denote a bright, shining, glorious light; the same with what follows: *and the glory of the Lord upon the house*; for not only the house was filled with the glory, but there was a bright stream of light and glory over it, very dazzling and surprising: *they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement*; of the great court, where they were assembled: *and worshipped and praised the Lord*; worshipped him by praising him: saying, *for he is good*; in his nature, promises, and blessings; is good, and does good: *for his mercy endureth for ever*; this was the close of their song of praise.

Ver. 4, 5. *Then the king and all the people*, &c.] Of these two verses, see the notes on 1 Kings viii. 62, 63.

Ver. 6. *And the priests waited on their offices*, &c.] Performed them, some in offering sacrifices, others in blowing trumpets, as it may be explained from the latter part of the verse: *the Levites also with instruments of music of the Lord, which David the king had made to praise the Lord*; under a divine direction, on which the Levites played to the songs of praise offered to the Lord, and by which they made music sacred to him: *because his mercy endureth for ever*; which, as it was the close of their songs of praise, was the cause of them: *when David praised by their ministry*; the songs sung being composed by him, and the instruments they played upon being of his invention, and used by his order: *and the priests sounded trumpets before them*; or rather over-against them, that is, over-against the Levites, as they were singing and playing on the instruments of music: *and all Israel stood*; whilst this sacred and delightful service was performing, they both stood up, and stood by the priests and Levites, and joined with them in praising the Lord.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, Solomon hallowed the middle of the court*, &c.] From hence, to the end of ver. 10, is the same with 1 Kings viii. 64, 65, 66. see the notes there; only mention is made in ver. 9 of the dedication of the altar, as if distinct from the dedication of the house, and hallowing the middle of the court, see Numb. vii. 10. in imitation of which the Heathens dedicated their altars, in which they used ashes and water, as Pausanias [y] relates, and had also feasts, as here, at the dedication of their temples [z], in which they have been imitated by Christians; and many of our country feasts, as they are called, were first kept at the dedication of churches to such and such a saint.

Ver. 11. *Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord*, &c.] With which begins 1 Kings xi. 1. see the notes there.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night*, &c.] From hence, to the end of the chapter, much the same things are related as in 1 Kings ix. 2—9. see the notes there; excepting ver. 13—15. which contain an answer to the particular requests made by Solomon in case of a famine or pestilence, that when the people of Israel should humble themselves in prayer and supplication, the Lord would be attentive to them, and for-

[*] Apud Euseb. Evangel. Præpar. l. 9. c. 4. p. 408.
[x] Relation of Memorable Things in the Temple, ch. 4. p. 20.
[y] Eliac. 1. sive, l. 5. p. 312.
[z] Plin. Ep. l. 4. ep. 1.

give them, ch. vi. 20—30. and which is given as a specimen, and as encouragement to expect the same treatment in all other cases mentioned in Solomon's prayer, they so behaving.

C H A P. VIII.

THIS chapter contains much the same, with a little variation, as what is related in 1 Kings ix. 10. to the end.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass at the end of 20 years, &c.*] See the note on 1 Kings ix. 10.

Ver. 2. *That the cities which Huram had restored to Solomon, &c.*] Which Solomon first gave to him, but he not liking them, returned them to him, 1 Kings ix. 12. *Solomon built them;* or rebuilt them, being very much out of repair, which might be one reason of Huram's not accepting them: *and caused the children of Israel to dwell there;* they being inhabited by others, the remains of the Canaanites perhaps; see ver. 7.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, &c.*] In an hostile manner, which is the only instance of any warlike expedition of Solomon's. This was Cœle-syria, which though subdued in the times of David, perhaps rebelled, and now Solomon went forth to reduce it: *and prevailed against it;* took it.

Ver. 4. *And built Tadmor in the wilderness, &c.*] Of which see the notes on 1 Kings ix. 18. *and all the store-houses which he built in Hamath;* a country in Syria, which he made himself master of, and where he laid up store of provison and ammunition to keep it, should any attempt be made to rescue it out of his hands. According to an Arabic writer [a], Solomon in the 24th year of his reign having demolished Antioch, built seven cities, of which Tadmor was one.

Ver. 5. *Also he built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, &c.*] Only mention is made of the latter in 1 Kings ix. 17. *fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars;* fortified cities in the tribe of Ephraim.

Ver. 6. *And Baalath, &c.*] See 1 Kings ix. 18. From hence, to the end of ver. 11. it is the same with 1 Kings ix. 19—24. see the notes there.

Ver. 12. *Then Solomon offered burnt-offerings to the Lord, &c.*] Meaning not barely at the time he rebuilt the above cities, for it was his constant practice: *on the altar of the Lord, which he had built before the porch;* the brasen altar, which was at the entrance into the temple, within the court; of which see ch. iv. 1.

Ver. 13. *Even after a certain rate every day, according to the commandment of Moses, &c.*] The daily sacrifice, morning and evening, Exod. xxix. 38, 39. *on the sabbaths, and on the new moons;* when there were additional sacrifices, Numb. xxviii. 9, &c. *and on the solemn feasts three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles;* which serves to explain the three times in 1 Kings ix. 25.

Ver. 14. *And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, &c.*] The 24 courses which served weekly in their turns, 1 Chron. xxiv. *and the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required;* who also had their courses by lot, to sing the praises of God, when the priests sacrificed, or blew the trumpets, 1 Chron. xxv. *the porters also by their courses at every gate;* from hence Dr. Lightfoot concludes that these were divided into 24 classes, as the priests and Levite singers were: *for so had David the man of God commanded,* 1 Chron. xxvi. who in all these affairs acted as a prophet, under the inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit of God.

Ver. 15. *And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites, &c.*] The priests and Levites departed not from it, not from the commandment of Solomon, according to the order of David, but in all things obeyed it: *concerning any matter;* which related to the office of either of them, sacrificers, singers, or porters: *or concerning the treasures;* such of the Levites as had the care of them were faithful to their trust, see 1 Chron. xxvi. 20, &c.

Ver. 16. *Now all the work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the Lord, and until it was finished, &c.*] The materials were prepared, and the money for the expenses; and even the very stones and timber were made fit for the building, so that there was nothing to retard the completion of it: *so the house of God was perfected;* in the space of seven years, in all the parts, and according to the form and pattern of it, see 1 Kings vi. 38.

Ver. 17. *Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, &c.*] Being now at leisure to look after his navy, to carry on merchandise; and of this, and the following verse, and the reconciliation of them with 1 Kings ix. 26, 27, 28. see the notes there.

C H A P. IX. X.

THE ixth chapter is the same with 1 Kings x. see the notes there, excepting ver. 26, which agrees with 1 Kings iv. 21. and ver. 29, 30, 31. the same with 1 Kings xi. 41, 42, 43, only in ver. 29 it is more largely expressed that the acts of Solomon's reign were written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer, against Jeroboam the son of Nebat; or rather *concerning Jeroboam,* as the Septuagint and some other versions [b], in which Iddo is called Joel; and by Theodoret said to be the same that prophesied of Jeroboam and his altar, 1 Kings xiii. 1. see the note there; the

[a] Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. dyn. 3. p. 53.

[b] על [illegible] Sept. de, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

books mentioned are since lost: and ch. x. is not only in sense the same, but is expressed almost in the self-same words as 1 Kings xii. 1—19. so that there needs not any thing to be added to the notes there, which the reader is referred to.

CHAP. XI.

IN this chapter are related the preparations Rehoboam made to regain the ten tribes that revolted from him, but was forbid making the attempt by a prophet of the Lord, which he paid a regard unto, ver. 1—4. the fortification of several cities in Judah and Benjamin for his defence, ver. 5—12. the resort of several priests and Levites to him from Jeroboam, which served to strengthen his kingdom, ver. 13—17. and an account of his wives, and of his children, and of his disposal of them, ver. 18—23.

Ver. 1. *And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem,* &c.] After he had been at Shechem, and had given his answer to the request of the men of Israel, upon which they revolted from him: this and the three following verses are the same with 1 Kings xii. 21—24. see the notes there.

Ver. 5. *And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem,* &c.] The metropolis of Judah, and the capital city of his kingdom: *and built cities for defence in Judah;* that is, rebuilt, enlarged, and fortified them: for otherwise they were built before, though neglected before the revolt of the ten tribes; but now it became necessary to make them more capacious and strong, to protect his people, and defend himself against Israel; for though he was forbid to act offensively, and therefore contented himself to abide in Jerusalem, and not go forth to war; yet he might lawfully put himself into a condition of defence.

Ver. 6. *He built even Beth-lehem,* &c.] The place of our Lord's birth, about 6 miles from Jerusalem: *and Etam;* another city in the tribe of Judah; see 1 Chron. iv. 32. there was a rock of this name, Judg. xv. 8. and a fountain from whence waters were conveyed into the pool at Jerusalem, spoken of in Jewish writings [b]: *and Tekoah;* of which place Amos the prophet was, and which was about 12 miles from Jerusalem. Rauwolff [c] speaks of it as a fortified place now; he says it has a strong and mighty castle, built on a great and high hill.

Ver. 7. *And Beth-zur, and Shocho, and Adullam.*] All in the tribe of Judah, of which see Josh. xv. 35, 58.

Ver. 8. *And Gath,* &c.] Which cannot be that Gath which was one of the principalities of the Philistines, but a city in the tribe of Judah; though of it we nowhere else read; unless this is the same with Moresheth-gath, Mic. i. 14. which is probable, since it follows: *and Mareshah:* the birth-place of Micah the prophet, Mic. i. 1, 15. *and Ziph;* there were two cities of this name in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 24, 55.

Ver. 9. *And Adoraim,* &c.] Called by Josephus [d] Adora, which he mentions along with Mareshah, or Marissa: *and Lachish;* a royal city in the time of the Canaanites, and which fell to the lot of Judah, Josh. xii. 11. and xv. 39. *and Azekah;* a city situated in the plain of Judah, Josh. x. 10. and xv. 35.

Ver. 10. *And Zorah,* &c.] The same with Zoreah, Josh. xv. 33. *and Aijalon:* there was a city of the tribe of Dan of this name, in the valley of which the moon stood still in the times of Joshua, Josh. x. 10. and xix. 42. but whether the same with this, and now belonging to Judah, or another of the same name, is not certain: *and Hebron;* a city in the mountainous part of Judah, and a city of refuge, about 20 miles from Jerusalem, Josh. xv. 54. and xx. 7. *which are in Judah and in Benjamin fenced cities;* as they were now made by Rehoboam.

Ver. 11. *And he fortified the strong holds,* &c.] Of these and other cities: *and put captains in them;* garrisons of soldiers, with captains over them to defend them: *and store of victual, and of oil and wine;* that they might be able to hold out a siege, should they be attacked.

Ver. 12. *And in every several city* he put *shields and spears,* &c.] Furnished them with these and perhaps other pieces of armour, these being put for all, to defend themselves with against an enemy, and to annoy them: *and made them exceeding strong;* so that they could not be easily taken: *having Judah and Benjamin on his side;* which tribes cleaved to one another, and to Rehoboam, and to the kings of the house of David, in after-times, as well as to the true religion.

Ver. 13. *And the priests and the Levites,* that were *in all Israel,* &c.] In the ten tribes, in the cities assigned to them therein: *resorted to him out of all their coasts;* as to their rightful sovereign, and chiefly for the sake of the service of the sanctuary at Jerusalem.

Ver. 14. *For the Levites left their suburbs and their possession,* &c.] The cities and the fields adjacent to them, which were given them in the several tribes, and were in all 48; see Josh. xxi. 1—41. *and came to Judah and Jerusalem;* to the cities of Judah, which belonged to the Levites; and to Jerusalem, where they exercised their functions: *for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from exercising the priest's office unto the Lord;* neither suffering them to go to Jerusalem in their courses, as they used to do by turns, nor to perform their office in their own dwellings, according to the law of God, in teaching and instructing the people.

Ver. 15. *And he ordained him priests for the high places,* &c.] Of such who were not of the tribe of Levi, and family of Aaron; see 1 Kings xii. 31. *and for the devils;* demons in the shape of goats, as this word signifies, in which form many of the Heathen deities were worshipped; idols of whatsoever kind are so called; for whosoever worships them worships not God, but devils, 1 Cor. x. 22. the images which Jero-

[b] Cippi Heb. p. 10.
[c] Travels, par. 3. c. 22. p. 321. Ed. Ray.
[d] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 9. sect. 1.

boam set up may be meant, and the next clause may be rendered as explanative of them: *even for the calves which he had made;* one of which he set up at Dan, and the other at Beth-el, 1 Kings xii. 28, 29.

Ver. 16. *And after them out of all the tribes of Israel,* &c.] Besides the priests and Levites, and after their example, many of the common people, out of all the ten tribes: *such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel;* to seek his face and favour, where he was to be found; to worship him according to his revealed will, and to receive doctrine or instruction from him, as the Targum: *came to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the Lord God of their fathers;* to sacrifice where only sacrifices were to be offered up, and by the priests of the Lord, who were gone thither, and to their fathers' God, whom the ten tribes had revolted from.

Ver. 17. *So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah,* &c.] Made it more numerous, and in a better condition to defend itself: *and made Rehoboam son of Solomon strong three years;* established him on the throne, strengthened the government in his hands, and were the means of preserving him in the pure worship of God for the space of time mentioned, the reason of which follows: *for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon;* in their good ways, which were according to the rule of the divine word; and which, as they refer to the whole of David's life and reign, some particular actions excepted, so to the former part of Solomon's reign, before he fell into idolatry, and to the latter part of it after his repentance; for that he did repent is by some concluded from hence, and may be more strongly from the book of Ecclesiastes, written by him in his old age. This is to be understood both of Rehoboam and his people, who after three years forsook the law of the Lord, ch. xii. 1.

Ver. 18. *And Rehoboam took him Mahalath, the daughter of Jerimoth, the son of David, to wife,* &c.] Of which son of David we nowhere else read; perhaps he might be the son of one of his concubines, or he might have two names: *and Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse;* who was David's eldest brother, 1 Sam. xvii. 13, 28. She must be a granddaughter or great-granddaughter of his.

Ver. 19. *Which bare him children,* &c.] Or, *and she bore him* [d]; for it is said only of one of them, the other perhaps died without children; this may refer to the last-mentioned, Abihail, whose children were *Jeush, and Shamariah, and Zaham;* who perhaps all died in their father's life-time, since the first-born of an after-wife succeeded him.

Ver. 20. *And after he took Maacah the daughter of Absalom,* &c.] Thought by some to be Absalom the son of David, his father's brother, and his uncle, and so married his cousin; but Absalom seems to have had but one daughter, whose name was Tamar, 2 Sam. xiv. 27. and the name of this man is different from his; he is called Abishalom, 1 Kings 15, 2. *and Uriel of Gibeah;* ch. xiii. 2. of the tribe of Benjamin, whereas Absalom was of the tribe of Judah: *which bare him Abijah, and Atthai, and Ziza, and Shelomith;* Abijah the first-born, and who was successor in the kingdom, is the same with Abijam, 1 Kings xiv. 31. of the rest we nowhere else read.

Ver. 21. *And Rehoboam loved Maacah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and his concubines,* &c.] Who is called Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel, ch. xiii. 2. *for he took 18 wives and 60 concubines;* led thereunto by the example of his father Solomon, contrary to the command of God, Deut. xvii. 17. *and begat 28 sons and 60 daughters;* to have many children was reckoned a great blessing, but it was not honourable to have them in such a way.

Ver. 22. *And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maacah the chief,* &c.] The chief of all his sons, head over them, being the son of his most beloved wife, and her first-born however, and perhaps might be of a greater capacity than the rest of his children: *to be ruler among his brethren;* or over them; gave him greater authority, and intrusted him with more power, set him above them, and treated him as heir-apparent to the crown: for he thought *to make him king;* either to take him into partnership in the throne with him in his life-time, or to appoint and declare him to be his successor.

Ver. 23. *And he dealt wisely,* &c.] Acted a prudent part, in order to execute his scheme, and particularly by disposing of his other sons in different parts of his kingdom, as follows: or *he made him* his son *Abijah to understand* [e]; he taught and instructed him in the art of government, took a particular care of his education, that he might be fitted for it; and he might instruct him how to behave towards his brethren, for the present and hereafter, as well as towards all the people in general: or *he* (Abijah) *understood* [f]; had more understanding and wisdom than all the children of Rehoboam; though it seems best to interpret it of Rehoboam himself, since it follows: *and disposed of all his children throughout all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, unto every fenced city;* to be governors thereof, in whose hands he could better trust them than in any other; or else, by thus separating them, they would not be able to enter into combination against Abijah; but then he must at the same time appoint some persons to watch and observe them; or otherwise, having such strong places in their possession, they might rebel against him; the Targum is, "he built and repaired "the cities, and appointed of all his children through- "out all the countries of the house of Judah, to all the "fortified cities;" that is, to have the command of them: *and he gave them victual in abundance;* that they might have no reason to complain, and might be able to hold out a siege against an enemy, should they be invested: *and he desired many wives;* either for himself, or rather for his son, since he himself had many; or *Abijah desired,* or *asked* [g] *many wives* of their parents, or of those who had the dispose of them, in imitation of his father.

[d] ותלד peperit, Pagninus, Montanus.
[e] ויבן erudire faciebat, Pagninus, Grotius; docuit, Vatablus.
[f] Intellexit, Piscator.

[g] וישאל petivit, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; postularit, Piscator.

CHAP. XII.

REHOBOAM and his people forsaking the law of the Lord, Shishak king of Egypt is suffered to invade his land, and take his fenced cities, ver. 1—4. upon which a prophet of the Lord was sent to him and his princes, to shew them the reason of it; whereupon they humbled themselves, and the Lord was pleased not to suffer the enemy utterly to destroy them, yet to reduce them to servitude, and take away their riches, ver. 5—12. and the chapter is closed with an account of the reign and death of Rehoboam, ver. 13—16.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom,* &c.] Or when the kingdom of Rehoboam was established; the tribes of Judah and Benjamin being firmly attached to him, and great numbers from the other tribes coming over to him, and things going on peaceably and prosperously during the three years that he and his people abode by the pure worship of God: *and had strengthened himself;* built fortified cities for the defence of himself and kingdom, ch. xi. 5—12. *he forsook the law of the Lord;* after he had reigned three years, and was become strong, and thought himself safe and secure on the throne, trusting to his strength: *and all Israel with him;* the greater part of them following the example of their king; of this defection, and the sins they fell into, see 1 Kings xiv. 22, 23, 24.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass in the fifth year of Rehoboam,* &c.] In the fourth year, the apostacy of him and his people began; and, in the year following, what is next related happened, as a punishment of it: *Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem;* of whom see 1 Kings xi. 40. and xiv. 25. *because they transgressed against the Lord;* transgressed the law of the Lord by falling into idolatry and other abominable evils; the Targum is, "against the Word of the "Lord."

Ver. 3. *With 1,200 chariots, and 60,000 horsemen; and the people were without number,* &c.] The foot-soldiers; their number, according to Josephus[h] was 400,000: *that came with him out of Egypt;* the above numerous army came from thence with him, which was famous for horses and chariots of war, see Exod. xiv. 7, 28. what follow seem to have joined him after he came out of Egypt, or whom he subdued in his way; the Lubim or Lybians, inhabitants of Lybia, a country near Egypt the same with the Lehabim; of whom see Gen. x. 13. *the Sukkiim;* who were either the Scenite Arabs, who dwelt in tents, as this word signifies; or the Troglodytes, according to the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, who dwelt in dens and caves, in which sense the word Succah is sometimes used, Job xxxviii. 40. Psal. x. 9. and in their country was a town called Suchæ, mentioned by Pliny[i]; they inhabited near the Red sea; and if Shishak is the same with Sesostris, as is thought, these people were subdued by him, as Herodotus[k] and Strabo[l] testify: *and the Ethiopians;* some think these were the Cushite Arabs, and that Sesostris came into Arabia is testified by the above writers; though rather the proper Ethiopians are meant, since they are joined with the Lubim or Africans; and since, as Herodotus[m] says, he ruled over Ethiopia; and Diodorus Siculus[n] says he fought with them, and obliged them to pay him tribute.

Ver. 4. *And he took the fenced cities which* pertained *to Judah,* &c.] Which Rehoboam had lately built, and placed his sons in them, ch. xi. 5—12, 23. these he took without any opposition: *and came to Jerusalem;* there being no army to oppose him; and so Sesostris took many countries without fighting, and among the rest Phœnicia, as Manetho[o] relates, in which Judea may be included.

Ver. 5. *Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam,* &c.] The same as in ch. xi. 2. there called the man of God: *and to the princes of Judah that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak;* through fear of him, and for safety and protection from him, and to consult what was to be done at this critical juncture, whether to fight him, or make peace with him on the best terms they could: *and said unto them, thus saith the Lord, ye have forsaken me;* his law, his word, worship, and ordinances, ver. 1. *and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak;* suffered him to invade their land, take their fenced cities, and come up to Jerusalem without any opposition, as a punishment of their apostacy; and to explain this providence to them, and call them to repentance, was the prophet sent.

Ver. 6. *Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves,* &c.] Both by words acknowledging their sins, and the justice of God, and by deeds, perhaps putting on sackcloth, as was usual on such occasions, and betaking themselves to fasting and prayer: *and they said, the Lord* is *righteous;* in giving them up into the hand of their enemies, seeing they had forsaken him, and sinned against him.

Ver. 7. *And when the Lord saw that they humbled themselves,* &c.] Though but externally; the Lord takes notice of external humiliation, as he did of Ahab's, 1 Kings xxi. 29. *the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, they have humbled themselves, therefore I will not destroy them;* not now, at least not altogether, ver. 12. *but I will grant them some deliverance;* yet not a complete one, for they were brought into servitude by Shishak, ver. 8. or only for a short time: *and my wrath shall not be poured out against Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak;* that is, to the uttermost; that was reserved to another time, and to be done by another hand, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

Ver. 8. *Nevertheless, they shall be his servants,* &c.]

[h] Antiqu. l. 8. c. 10. sect. 2.
[i] Nat. Hist. l. 6 c. 29.
[k] Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 102.
[l] Geograph. l. 16. p. 529.
[m] Ut supra, c. 110.
[n] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 50.
[o] Apud Joseph, contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 15.

Tributaries to the king of Egypt: *that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries:* the difference between them, how easy the one, which they might perform without taxes and tributes, and how hard and heavy the other, through the exactions and exorbitant demands of those to whom they became subjects.

Ver. 9. *So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem,* &c.] The Vulgate Latin version is, "departed from Jerusalem," as he did, having taken it, and spoiled it of its riches, and settled a yearly tax on the inhabitants of the land; of this, and the two following verses, see the notes on 1 Kings xiv. 26, 27, 28.

Ver. 12. *And when he humbled himself,* &c.] That is, Rehoboam; or broke his heart, as the Targum, was of a contrite spirit seemingly, for it was merely external: *the wrath of the Lord turned from him:* which appeared by the departure of Shishak's army: *that he would not destroy him altogether:* or make an utter destruction of him and his people: *and also in Judah things went well:* prospered and succeeded after this affair of Shishak was over: or *in Judah there were good things*[p]; there were some good men, priests, Levites, and many of the common people, that did good things, kept up and abode by the pure worship and service of God; and which was another reason why the Lord would not destroy them altogether now, see Gen. xviii. 31, 32.

Ver. 13. *So Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem,* &c.] Fortified that yet more for the defence of himself, after Shishak departed: *and reigned,* twelve years more, for he reigned in all seventeen, and this was in his fifth year; of what follows in this verse, see the note on 1 Kings xiv. 21.

Ver. 14. *And he did evil,* &c.] Committed idolatry, relapsed into that, his humiliation not being hearty and sincere: *because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord:* by prayer and supplication, and by an attendance on the service and worship of God; for though he did these things outwardly, yet not sincerely and heartily; he did not engage in them seriously and in good earnest, with affection and fervour.

Ver. 15, 16. *Now the acts of Rehoboam,* &c.] Of these two verses, see the notes on 1 Kings xiv. 29, 30, 31.

CHAP. XIII.

THIS chapter begins with the reign of Abijah, ver. 1, 2. gives an account of a battle between him and Jeroboam, previous to which Abijah made a speech to Jeroboam and his army, to vindicate his own cause, encourage his own soldiers, and intimidate the enemy, and dissuade them from fighting, ver. 3—12. and in the mean while Jeroboam laid an ambush for him, which greatly distressed him, ver. 13, 14. nevertheless he obtained a complete victory over him, ver. 15—20. and the chapter is concluded with some account of his family and reign, ver. 21, 22.

Ver. 1. *Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.*] See the note on 1 Kings xv. 1.

Ver. 2. *He reigned three years in Jerusalem,* &c.] See the note on 1 Kings xv. 2. *his mother's name also was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah;* see ch. xi. 20. and the note on 1 Kings xv. 2. *and there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam;* and in this chapter is an account of a battle fought between them, not recorded in the book of Kings.

Ver. 3. *And Abijah set the battle in array, with an army of valiant man of war,* even 400,000 *chosen men,* &c.] Collected such an army of select men, led them into his enemy's country, and set them in order of battle: *and Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him, with* 800,000 *chosen men,* being *mighty men of valour;* double the number of Abijah's army, he having ten tribes to collect out of, and Abijah but two.

Ver. 4. *And Abijah stood upon Mount Zemaraim, which is in Mount Ephraim,* &c.] Which might have its name from a city of Benjamin of this name, to which it was near, though within the borders of Ephraim, Josh. xviii. 22. formerly inhabited by the Zemarites, from whence it might have its name, Gen. x. 18. here Abijah stood, that he might be the better heard by the armies pitched in the valley; and very probably he desired a parley, and it was granted, otherwise he would not have been safe in the position in which he was: *and said, hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel:* as many as were now gathered together, and which were a great number.

Ver. 5. *Ought you not to know,* &c.] They did know what he afterwards says, but he would have them consider and acknowledge it: *that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever;* to him and his seed, particularly to the Messiah, that should spring from him; but whether Abijah had this in view is a question, see 2 Sam. vii. 13, 16. *even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt?* that is, a perpetual one, which was inviolable, and never to be made void; called so, because salt preserves from corruption and putrefaction, and because made use of in sacrifices offered when covenants were made; the Targum is, "as salt waters, which never lose their saltness.

Ver. 6. *Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up,* &c.] Notwithstanding it was well known the kingdom was entailed on the posterity of David by an everlasting covenant; Abijah calls Jeroboam Solomon's servant, by way of great contempt, as Jarchi observes, he being the general receiver of his tax in the tribe of Ephraim, 1 Kings xi. 28. *and hath rebelled against his lord;* his rightful king and sovereign; the charge is no less than high treason.

Ver. 7. *And there are gathered unto him vain men,* &c.] Void of the fear of God, and all that is good: *the children of Belial;* men unprofitable, good for nothing, or that had cast off the yoke of the law of

[p] דברים טובים opera bona, V. L. res bonæ, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Rambachius.

God, were lawless and abandoned persons: *and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon;* rejected his government of them; went into a strong opposition to him, and set up another king over them: *when Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted; and could not withstand them:* not that he was young in years, for he was 41 years of age when he began to reign; though Joshua is called a young man when he is supposed to be between 50 and 60 years of age, Exod. xxxiii. 11. and though *adolescentia* and *juventus* are both used in Latin writers for *youth*, yet Varro[s] distinguishes them, and makes the former to begin at the year 15, and continue to the year 30, and the latter to begin at 30, and end at 45; so that, according to this, Rehoboam was then in his stage of youth; but perhaps the meaning here is, that he was young in the kingdom, scarcely settled on his throne, and the advantage of that was taken; nor was he cowardly and fearful; and if Abijah meant that by *tender-heartedness*, he not only reproached but belied his father; for he would have fought with Israel in order to have reduced them to obedience, but was forbidden by the Lord; if, by *tender-hearted*, he means that he had a tender regard to the command of God, it is true; but that seems not to be his sense, but the former.

Ver. 8. *And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David,* &c.] To oppose them, prevail over them, and get it out of their hands, which is delivered to them by the Lord, as the Targum: *and ye be a great multitude;* of which they boasted, and in which they trusted, being ten tribes to two, and in this army two to one: *and* there are *with you golden calves which Jeroboam made you for gods;* or, *but*[t] *there are with you*, &c. which Abijah suggests would be so far from helping them, that they would be their ruin, they having, by the worship of them, provoked the Lord against them.

Ver. 9. *Have ye not cast out the priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites,* &c.] Because they would not sacrifice to his idols, and that they might not instruct the people in the pure worship of God, and that he and his people might be free from the payment of tithes, first-fruits, *&c.* and their cities fall into his hands: *and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of* other *lands?* after the manner of the Gentiles, without any regard to any particular tribe, which God had appointed those to be taken from: *so that whosoever cometh to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams;* which were five more than what were required by the law of Moses for the consecration of a priest, Exod. xxix. 1. the same *may be a priest of* them that are *no gods;* by nature, only nominal and fictitious deities, as the calves were, which had no divinity in them, see 1 Kings xiii. 31.

Ver. 10. *But as for us, the Lord* is *our God,* &c.] The Word of the Lord, as the Targum; we know and acknowledge no other; not the calves at Dan and Beth-el, nor any other idols, only the one living and true God: *and we have not forsaken him;* his laws, statutes, ordinances, and worship; for though Abijah was not a religious man, yet it seems the form of religion was kept up, and temple-service was observed in his days: *and the priests which minister unto the Lord;* by offering sacrifices, and burning incense: are *the sons of Aaron;* and they only: *and the Levites* wait *upon* their *business;* some in singing songs of praise, vocally and instrumentally, others in keeping the doors of the temple and the treasures of the house of God, and others in assisting the priests at the altar.

Ver. 11. *And they burn unto the Lord, every morning and every evening, burnt sacrifices and sweet incense,* &c.] That is, the priests; the one they did on the altar of burnt-offering, and the other on the altar of incense, and both every day, morning and evening: *the shew-bread also* set they in order *upon the pure table;* the shew-bread table, every sabbath-day, when they took the old bread off, which had stood there a week: *and the candlestick of gold, with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening;* these were lighted every evening, and dressed every morning; and though there were ten tables and ten candlesticks in Solomon's temple, yet only one of each was used at a time; and therefore from hence it is not to be concluded that all the rest were taken away by Shishak: *for we keep the charge of the Lord our God;* observe all the rites and ceremonies, laws, and ordinances enjoined by him; the Targum is, "the charge of the Word of the Lord our God:" *but ye have forsaken him;* his fear or worship, as the same paraphrase.

Ver. 12. *And, behold, God himself* is *with us for* our *Captain,* &c.] To go before our armies, and fight our battles for us: *and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you;* which was one use of the trumpets, that the people might be remembered by the Lord, and saved from their enemies, Numb. x. 9. so that this circumstance was against Jeroboam and his army, and for Abijah and his: *O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers;* for fighting against his people, that retained the pure worship of him, was fighting against him: *for you shall not prosper;* he seems to be assured of victory.

Ver. 13. *But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them,* &c.] Whilst Abijah was making his oration, he detached a party from his army, which got about, and lay in ambush, behind the army of Abijah: *so they were before Judah;* Jeroboam and the greater part of his army: *and the ambushment* was *behind them;* which Jeroboam had sent thither.

Ver. 14. *And when Judah looked back,* &c.] On hearing a noise behind them: *behold, the battle* was *before and behind;* men were set in battle-array, and the battle was begun, and an attack made upon them both ways: *and they cried unto the Lord;* for help against their enemies, and to deliver them out of their hands: *and the priests sounded with the trumpets;* to inspire them with cheerfulness, and to suggest to them that God was with them, and they need not be afraid.

Ver. 15. *Then the men of Judah gave a shout,* &c.] Taking heart at the sound of the trumpets, and in order to encourage one another, and intimidate the enemy; see the note on 1 Sam. xvii. 20. *and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote*

[s] Apud Stockium in voce נער, p. 688.

[t] So Grotius, Schmidt, and others.

Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah: possessed them with a panic, so that they fled at once, as follows.

Ver. 16. *And the children of Israel fled before Judah,* &c.] Were in such a fright and consternation, that they could not stand their ground, or engage at all; but took to flight immediately: *and God delivered them into their hand;* to be taken and slain by them.

Ver. 17. *And Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter,* &c.] As they fled, pursuing them: *so there fell down slain of Israel* 500,000 *chosen men:* such a slaughter as is not to be met with in any history, as Josephus [t] observes; though Abarbinel wonders he should say so, and affirms that he had read of larger numbers slain at once; but he is the only man that ever pretended to it; Jerom [u] makes the number but 50,000, and some copies of the Vulgate Latin [w], and Josephus Ben Gorion, as Abarbinel [x] relates; but the true Josephus, the Targum, and all the ancient versions, agree with the Hebrew text; more than half Jeroboam's army was cut off, and 100,000 more than Abijah had in his.

Ver. 18. *Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time,* &c.] Humbled and weakened, but not reduced to the government of the house of David: *and the children of Judah prevailed;* or grew strong: *because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers:* trusted in him, and not in an arm of flesh; the Targum is, "in the Word of the Lord God of their "fathers."

Ver. 19. *And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam,* &c.] As he and his army fled: *and took cities from him;* the following ones: *Beth-el with the towns thereof;* the villages adjoining to it; here one of the calves was set up, which either Jeroboam took care to remove before this place fell into the hands of Abijah, or Abijah let it remain, and did not destroy it: *and Jeshanah with the towns thereof;* which Reland [y] thinks is the same that is called by Jerom [z] Jethaba: *and Ephraim with the towns thereof;* a city so called, thought to be the same that is mentioned in John xi. 54. see the note there; it is here called, in the Targum, Ephron; so Jerom [a] calls it, and says it was Sichem.

Ver. 20. *Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah,* &c.] So as to bring an army into the field against him, and fight him: *and the Lord struck him:* by some Jewish writers [b], this is interpreted of Abijah; and the reason of his being stricken, they say, was because he did not destroy the calf when he took Beth-el; but it is best to understand it of Jeroboam, since Abijah is afterwards said to wax mighty: *and he died;* not immediately, for he lived two years after Abijah, 1 Kings xiv. 20. and 15. 9. but continued under a lingering disease he was smitten with, and which issued in his death.

Ver. 21. *But Abijah waxed mighty,* &c.] In his kingdom, increasing in riches and numbers, power and authority, and in his family: *and married* 14 *wives, and begat* 22 *sons and* 16 *daughters;* not after the above battle, nor since he began to reign; for he reigned but three years; but he, no doubt, married wives and had children before he came to the throne, as he might have others after.

Ver. 22. *And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings,* &c.] Not only his warlike actions, and his course of life, but some remarkable sayings of his, he being a man of wisdom and eloquence, as his above speech shews; are *written in the story of the prophet Iddo;* who might write the history of his own times; see 1 Kings xv. 7.

C H A P. XIV.

THIS chapter relates the death of Abijah, and the succession of Asa in his stead, ver. 1. gives a good character of the latter for his reformation in religion, and for the care he took for the safety and protection of his subjects, ver. 2—8. and an account is given of a large army of Ethiopians that came against him, over whom he crying to the Lord, and trusting in him, by his help obtained a complete victory, ver. 9—15.

Ver. 1. *So Abijah slept with his fathers,* see 1 Kings xv. 8. *and Asa his son reigned in his stead; in his days the land was quiet* 10 *years;* the Targum is, the land of Israel; but much better the Septuagint, the land of Judah; these 10 years, in which it had rest from war, were the first three years of Asa's reign, and the first seven of Baasha's, according to Jarchi, and which seems right; after which there was war between them all their days, see 1 Kings xv. 32, 33.

Ver. 2. *And Asa did* that which was *good and right,* &c.] See 1 Kings xv. 11.

Ver. 3. *For he took away the altars of the strange gods,* &c.] Or of a strange people, of the Zidonians, Ammonites, and Moabites, which had remained from the times of Solomon, and which he built for his wives, 1 Kings xi. 7, 8. *and the high places;* built for idols; for as for those on which the true God was worshipped, they were not removed in his days, 1 Kings xv. 14. *and brake down the images;* or statues, or pillars, erected to the honour of idols, and on which the images of them were placed: *and cut down the groves;* in the midst of which they stood.

Ver. 4. *And commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers,* &c.] To pray to him, and him only, and attend his worship and service; this he did by a public edict: *and to do the law and the commandment:* to observe all the laws of God, moral, ceremonial, and civil.

Ver. 5. *Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images,* &c.] Perhaps the high

t Antiqu. l. 8. c. 11. sect. 3.
u Trad. Heb. fol. 44. M.
w So that of Sixtus V. in James's Corruption of the Fathers, p. 294.
x Comment. in 1 Reg. xv. 6. fol. 250. 2.

y Palestin. Illustrat. p. 861.
z De loc. Heb. fol. 92 L.
a Trad. Heb. fol. 85 A.
b Bereshit Rabba, sect. 65. fol. 58. 3. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 15.

places in ver. 3 design only the high places and altars in Jerusalem, and near it; these in all the rest of the cities of the land; the *images* were, as the word signifies, *sun-images*, either made in the form of the sun, or dedicated to it, or temples for it; see the note on Lev. xxvi. 30. *and the kingdom was quiet before him*: he had no foreign enemy to molest him, and so took that opportunity to reform divine worship, and in that he met with no opposition from his people.

Ver. 6. *And he built fenced cities in Judah*, &c.] For his defence against the kingdom of Israel and other nations, as Rehoboam had done before him; and which might have been demolished by Shishak king of Egypt, when he took them, ch. xi. 5—12. and xii. 4. *for the land had rest*; according to the Targum, the land of Israel rested, and gave no disturbance to the kingdom of Judah, not having recovered the blow given them by Abijah; but it is rather to be understood of the land of Judah, which, as it did not attempt the reduction of the 10 tribes, so it was neither attacked by them, nor any other enemy: *and he had no war in those years*; in the 10 years mentioned, ver. 1. neither with Israel nor any other nation: *because the Lord had given him rest*; that he might be at leisure to do the above things; all rest is from the Lord, civil, spiritual, and eternal.

Ver. 7. *Therefore he said unto Judah*, &c.] To the nobles and principal men of the kingdom: *let us build these cities*: which he, no doubt, particularly mentioned by name, and pointed at; that is, repair and fortify them, and put them into a better condition of defence: *and make about them walls and towers, gates and bars*; which are always made to fortified places, to protect the inhabitants, and keep out an enemy: *while the land is yet before us*; in our power, no enemy in it, nor any to hinder or molest: *because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side*; had set up his pure worship, reformed abuses in it, and removed idolatry from it, and closely attended to the service of the sanctuary, which was well-pleasing to God; the happy effect of which they experienced, rest from all their enemies round about them: *so that they built, and prospered*; they began, and went on, and finished, there being nothing to hinder them.

Ver. 8. *And Asa had an army* of men *that bare targets and spears, out of Judah* 300,000, &c.] These were armed with a large sort of shield, to protect them, and with spears, to push at an enemy when they came near them, and to close quarters with them: *and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows*, 280,000; these had also a lesser sort of shields, to defend their bodies, and bows and arrows, to annoy an enemy at a distance: *all these were mighty men of valour*; able-bodied men, valiant and courageous; perhaps Asa gathered these together, on hearing that the Ethiopians were preparing to attack him, as follows.

Ver. 9. *And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian, with an host of* 1,000,000, *and* 300 *chariots*, &c.] According to Josephus [b], this army consisted of 900,000 foot, and 100,000 horsemen, and certain it is there were horsemen among them, ch. xvi. 8. some say these were not the Ethiopians in Africa, beyond Egypt, being, as is said, too far off for such an army to travel, and it would be hard to say what should induce them to it; and besides it is urged, the king of Egypt would never have suffered them to pass through his dominions, as they must to come to Judea; but that they were the Cushite Arabs, that inhabited Midian, part of Arabia Petræa, and Arabia Felix, near Judæa, see the note on Numb. xii. 1. but since this great host consisted of Lubim or Lybians, inhabitants of Africa, as well as of Ethiopians, ch. xvi. 8. these Ethiopians seem to be rather those in Africa, who were masters of Egypt and Lybia, as well as Ethiopia, quickly after the death of Shishak, or Sesostris, see ch. xii. 2, 3. which accounts for the largeness of this army, and their passage through Egypt: that there were two sorts of Ethiopians, the western and eastern ones, the one that dwelt in Africa, the other in Asia, appears clearly from Homer [c], Herodotus [d], and Heliodorus [e], the former of which seem here meant: nor need this army be thought incredible, especially since they were joined by the Lubim or Lybians, and assisted by the Philistines, as appears by what follows; besides, the two armies of Israel and Judah we read of in the preceding chapter, when put together, exceed this; see also ch. xvii. 14—18. so the armies of Tamerlane and Bajazet, that of the former being 1,600,000, and that of the latter 1,400,000 [f]: *and came unto Mareshah*; a city in the tribe of Judah, on the borders of it, ch. xi. 8.

Ver. 10. *Then Asa went out against him*, &c.] Notwithstanding he brought so great an army with him: *and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah*; where the Ethiopians were; he did not stay till they got further into his country, but marched against them when on the frontiers of it, and chose the valley to pitch in, as being more to the advantage of his smaller army; see Judg. i. 17.

Ver. 11. *And Asa cried unto the Lord his God*, &c.] Or prayed, as the Targum, with vehemence, being in distress; this he did before the battle began, at the head of his army, and for the encouragement of it: *and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help*; nothing can hinder from helping, his power being superior to all others, and even infinite, and none besides him could: *whether with many, or with them that have no power*; numbers make no difference with him, nor the condition they are in; whether numerous and mighty, or few and feeble; he can as easily help the one as the other, see 1 Sam. xiv. 6. *help us, O Lord our God*; who are few and weak in comparison of the enemy: *for we rest on thee*; trust in thee, and rely upon thee for help; the Targum is, "on thy Word we lean:" *and in thy name we go against this multitude*; expressing faith in him, expecting help from him, encouraging and strengthening themselves in him, going forth not in their own name and strength, but in his; the Targum is, "in the name of the Word of the Lord:" *O Lord, thou art our God*; and thou only we know, and serve no other, and we are thy people, called by thy name:

[b] Antiqu. l. 8. c. 12. sect. 1.
[c] Odyss. 1. ver. 23, 24.
[d] Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 69, 70.
[e] Ethiopic. l. 9. c. 6.
[f] Laonic. Chalcocond. de rebus Turc. l. 3. p. 98, 102.

let not man prevail against thee: for should this enemy prevail against them, it would be interpreted prevailing against their God.

Ver. 12. *So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah*, &c.] With consternation and terror: they were thrown into a panic: *and the Ethiopians fled*: before them, just as Jeroboam and Israel had, as related in the preceding chapter, ver. 15, 16.

Ver. 13. *And Asa, and the people that were with him, pursued them unto Gerar*, &c.] A city of the Philistines, Gen. xx. 1. *and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves*: they were thrown into such a fright, and into so much confusion, that they could not put themselves in order, and rally again; or there fell such a vast number of them, that there were scarce any remaining alive, which seems to be the sense of the words used: *for they were destroyed before the Lord, and before his host*; the army of Israel, which the Lord was, as it were, the Commander of, fought for, and led them in the pursuit, and gave them victory; or it may mean an host of angels, employed in destroying this great army; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions of ver. 12 read, "the angel of the Lord smote the Ethiopians:" *and they carried away very much spoil*: which they found in their camp, and with their slain; even much gold and silver, as Josephus[a] says.

Ver. 14. *And they smote all the cities round about Gerar*, &c.] The cities of the Philistines, who were auxiliaries and confederates with these Ethiopians, and colonies from them, according to Theodoret, and who says, about Eleutheropolis was a place, called, in his time, Geraron Saton: *for the fear of the Lord came upon them*: so that they had no power to defend themselves, and oppose the men of Judah: *and they spoiled all the cities*: of the goods and substance that were in them: *for there was exceeding much spoil in them*; great wealth and riches of one kind or another.

Ver. 15. *They smote also the tents of cattle*, &c.] The people that dwelt in tents for the sake of the pasturage of their cattle; the Scenite Arabs, so called from dwelling in tents: *and carried away sheep*; which those Arabs were feeding in Palestine, and which this great army brought with them for their support: *and camels in abundance*: which is another circumstance proving them to be Arabs, who abounded with camels: *and returned to Jerusalem*; with their spoil, and with great joy.

CHAP. XV.

ASA returning from the battle, and with the spoil of the enemy, was met by a prophet of the Lord, who encouraged him to go on with the work of reformation, promising the presence and help of God with him, ver. 1—7. which inspired him with fresh courage, and he went about the work with great alacrity; and having offered sacrifices, he and his people entered into a solemn covenant with the Lord, to serve him, ver. 8—15. upon which he destroyed his mother's idol, brought the dedicated things into the house of God, and the effect of this was peace for a long time, ver. 16—19.

Ver. 1. *And the spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded*, &c.] The same with Iddo, as Hillerus[b] thinks; and some suppose this to be the name of the son as well as the father, but called Azariah, to distinguish him from him, see ver. 8. on whom came, as the Targum, the spirit of prophecy, instructing him what to say to Asa; and the Jews say[1] he is the same with Iddo, and he the same that was sent to Jeroboam, to reprove him for the altar he built.

Ver. 2. *And he went out to meet Asa*, &c.] From Jerusalem, as Asa was coming to it: *and said unto him, hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin*: the principal inhabitants of which tribes had been collected, and went to this war, and were now returning: *the Lord is with you, while ye be with him*; it was a clear case he had been with them, in giving them the victory over the Ethiopians; and as long as they continued in the service of God, and abode by his pure worship, they might expect he would yet be with them, otherwise not: *and if ye seek him, he will be found of you*; you will see his face, and enjoy his favour, and have his presence, and help from him in every time of need, when they sought him by prayer and supplication, as Asa had, and attended his worship and ordinances: *but if ye forsake him*; his laws and his service: *he will forsake you*; and leave you to fall into the hands of your enemies.

Ver. 3. *Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God*, &c.] The fear, worship, and service of him being greatly neglected by them for a long time; what period of time is referred to is not expressed, whether past, present, or to come, but left to be supplied; the Targum refers this to the time of the separation of the ten tribes, and the days of Jeroboam, when the calves were worshipped, and not the true God, and the teaching priests of the Lord were cast out, and the law of the Lord, especially with respect to worship, was not regarded, in which it is followed by many interpreters; others think it refers to time to come, and to what would be the case, should they forsake the Lord; and was fulfilled in the Babylonish captivity, see Hos. iii. 4. and the Jews[k] say, that "Oded prophesied that the days should come, "when Israel would be *without the true God*, since "judgment should not be done in the world: *and without a teaching priest*; since the high-priesthood should "cease, (see Heb. vii. 12.) *and without the law*; since the "sanhedrim should cease;" but according to our supplement, and which seems rightest, it refers to time past; not to the case of the ten tribes from the times of Jeroboam; nor to the case of Judah from the times of Rehoboam; but to times more remote, even the times of the judges, when they worshipped Baal and Ashtaroth, and not the true God, Judg. ii. 10, 11. yet at

[a] Ut supra, sect. 2.
[b] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 458.

[1] In Hieron. Trad. Heb. in Paralipom. fol. 84. L. & 85. A.
[k] Vajikra Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 160. 4.

the same time suggesting, that should the present inhabitants of Judah go into the same practices, their case would be like theirs, described in the following verses: *and without a teaching priest*; as they were under the judges, from the times of Phinehas to those of Eli, which was a long space of time: *and without law*; every man doing as he pleased, there being no king in Israel, nor any regard paid to the law of God, moral or ceremonial, Judg. xvii. 6.

Ver. 4. *But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel*, &c.] When being carried captive by neighbouring nations, and oppressed; and they cried unto the Lord, and repented of their sins, and turned from them to him: *and sought him*; by prayer and supplication: *he was found of them*; and appeared for their help and deliverance, of which there are many instances in the book of Judges.

Ver. 5. *And in those times* there was *no peace to him that went out nor to him that came in*, &c.] There was no safety in going abroad for travellers from one part to another on account of trade and business, the highways being infested with thieves and robbers: *but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries*; of the country-villages, which were deserted, because of the plunders and depredations of them, Judg. v. 6, 7.

Ver. 6. *And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city*, &c.] Or one tribe of another; as the Ephraimites by the Gileadites, and the tribe of Benjamin by the other tribes; and Shechem by Abimelech, Judg. ix. 45. and xii. 6. and xx. 21, 24, 44—48. *for God did vex them with all adversity*; both with foreign enemies and intestine wars; and now it is intimated that this would be their case again, should they not keep close to the Lord their God.

Ver. 7. *Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak*, &c.] Be hearty, earnest, and vigorous, and not languid and remiss in reforming the worship of God, which Asa had begun: *for your work shall be rewarded*; with peace and prosperity at home, and success against enemies abroad, of which they had had a recent instance.

Ver. 8. *And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet*, &c.] Some think that besides the above words of Azariah the son of Oded, a prophecy of Oded his father was related by him, though not recorded; but rather Oded here is the same with the son of Oded; and so the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read Azariah the son of Oded; and so does the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint version: *he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin*; which were abominable to God, and all good men; besides the images and statues he had broken before, he removed other idols that remained, being animated and emboldened by the speech of the prophet: *and out of the cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim*: the same which his father Abijah had taken from Jeroboam, ch. xiii. 19. and which perhaps, upon the approach of the Ethiopians, revolted from Asa, or were restored by them to Jeroboam, and which Asa retook upon his conquest of them: *and renewed the altar of the Lord before the porch of the Lord*; the altar of burnt-offering, which had never been repaired since it was made by Solomon; perhaps he anew overlaid it with brass, that being worn out, or become very thin in some places.

Ver. 9. *And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them*, &c.] The proselytes of the gate: *out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon*; out of all the places in those tribes that had come off to him, or had been taken by him; for otherwise these belonged to the ten tribes under the government of Jeroboam, and his successors, and the next clause explains it: *for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him*; as was clear by the victory he gave him over the Ethiopians; after that time many in the above tribes came over to him; the Targum is, "when they "saw the Word of the Lord his God was his help."

Ver. 10. *So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem*, &c.] By the order of Asa, ver. 9. *in the third month*; of the ecclesiastical year, the month Sivan, in which month was the day of Pentecost; and that very probably was the time of their gathering: *in the 15th year of the reign of Asa*; and which seems to be the year in which he fought the Ethiopians.

Ver. 11. *And they offered unto the Lord the same time*, &c.] The Targum adds, on the feast of weeks, or Pentecost: *of the spoil* which *they had brought*; from the camp of the Ethiopians, and the cities of the Philistines: 700 *oxen and* 7,000 *sheep*; partly for burnt-offerings, and partly for peace-offerings, by way of thankfulness to the Lord for the victory he had given them, and for a feast at the making of the following covenant with him.

Ver. 12. *And they entered into a covenant*, &c.] Asa and all his people; that is, as Piscator remarks, they went between the pieces of the calf cut asunder, for the confirmation of the covenant, see Jer. xxxiv. 18. *to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their soul*; to serve and worship him most truly, sincerely, and cordially.

Ver. 13. *That whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death*, &c.] That obstinately refused to worship him, and served other gods, which by the law was deserving of death, Deut. xvii. 2—6. *whether small or great, whether man or woman*; without any regard to rank or dignity, age or sex.

Ver. 14. *And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice*, &c.] As not being ashamed of the oath they took, and that there might be witnesses of it, and that it might be clear they did not equivocate in it, but expressed themselves in plain words: *and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets*; shewing that the oath was not extorted from them unwillingly, but that they took it with the utmost cheerfulness, and with all the demonstrations of joy and gladness imaginable.

Ver. 15. *And all Judah rejoiced at the oath*, &c.] The greater part of them; for some there might be who were dissemblers: *for they had sworn with all their heart*; in the sincerity and uprightness of their souls: *and sought him with their whole desire*; none being more or so desirable as he: *and he was found of them*: and favoured them with his presence: *and the Lord gave them rest round about*; from all their enemies.

Ver. 16, 17, 18. *And also* concerning *Maachah the*

mother of Asa the king, &c.] Or rather his grandmother, 1 Kings xv. 10. *he removed her from being queen;* the Septuagint version is, *that she should not minister to Astarte;* which was the goddess of the Zidonians; of this and the two next verses, see the notes on 1 Kings xv. 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 19. *And there was no* more *war unto the 35th year of the reign of Asa.*] That is, from the Ethiopian war to that time; after that there was no war with any foreign enemy; there were animosities and discords, bickerings and hostilities of some sort continually between Asa and Baasha king of Israel, as long as he lived, see 1 Kings xv. 16, 32.

CHAP. XVI.

BAASHA coming up against Judah, and building Ramah, Asa made a league with the king of Syria, and hired him to make a diversion in his favour, and cause Baasha to leave off building, which succeeded, ver. 1—6. for which he was reproved by a prophet of the Lord, with whom he was so angry for it as to put him in prison, and oppress others, ver. 7, 10. and the chapter is closed with an account of his disease and conduct under it, and of his death and burial, ver. 11—14.

Ver. 1. *In the 36th year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah*, &c.] How this is to be reconciled with the reign of Baasha, which was but 24 years, and was begun in the 3d of Asa, and therefore must have been dead near 10 years before this year of Asa's reign, see the note on 1 Kings xv. 17. where, and in the following verses, are the same things related as here, to the end of the 6th verse; for the explanation of which the reader is referred thither.

Ver. 7. *And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah*, &c.] Being sent by the Lord to reprove him: *and said unto him, because thou hast relied on the king of Syria;* on the covenant he made with him, on the promises the Syrian king made to him upon receiving his money, and so trusted to an arm of flesh, and even an Heathen king: *and not relied on the Lord thy God;* his promises, power, and providence, which he had reason to believe would have been engaged on his behalf, had he placed his confidence in him as he ought to have done: the Targum is, " and not relied on the Word of the Lord " thy God:" *therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand;* which otherwise would have fallen into it, had he left him to continue in league with the king of Israel, and not solicited him to break it; for then he would have come with him against Asa, and the Lord would have delivered him to him.

Ver. 8. *Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubim a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen?* &c.] They were no less than 1,000,000 men, and 300 chariots, ch. xiv. 9. the Lubim were the Lybians, a people near Egypt, that dwelt in Africa; according to an Arabic writer [l], they were the Nubians: *yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand;* and with equal ease could and would have delivered the Syrian army unto him, had he as then trusted in the Lord.

Ver. 9. *For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth*, &c.] The eyes of his omniscience are everywhere, and the eyes of his mercy and goodness, of his care and providence, are here and there, and in every place throughout the whole world at once, see Zech. iv. 10. *to shew himself strong in the behalf of* them *whose heart is perfect towards him;* or, as in the margin, *strongly to hold* with such, to be on their side, take their part, strengthen them, support and supply them, and to protect and defend them who are sincere and upright in heart; whose graces are sincere and unfeigned, though not complete, nor they free from sin, and who, with the heart, sincerely believe in God, in which Asa at this time failed, though otherwise his heart is said to be perfect, 1 Kings xv. 4. it was so in the general bent of it, and especially with respect to the worship of God, though there was something lacking in his faith at this time, as there often is in the best of men: *herein thou hast done foolishly;* to trust in man, and not in the Lord, to part with his money, and lose the opportunity of having the whole Syrian army fall into his hands: *therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars;* which, though we read not of, was doubtless his case; some interpret it of his posterity.

Ver. 10. *Then Asa was wroth with the seer*, &c.] For this faithful reproof of him, which was another instance of his sin and folly: *and put him in a prison-house;* in a very strait place, in which he could not turn himself, what we call *little ease;* some say it was the stocks, others a pillory he put him into: *for he was in a rage with him because of this thing;* his passion rose very high, and to which he gave way, and was his infirmity: *and Asa oppressed some of the people the same time;* by fines and imprisonments, such as perhaps expressed their disapprobation of his league with the king of Syria, and of his ill usage of the prophet.

Ver. 11. *And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last*, &c.] See the note on 1 Kings xv. 23.

Ver. 12. *And Asa in the 39th year of his reign was diseased in his feet*, &c.] This was about two years before his death, and his disease is generally thought to be the gout in his feet, and a just retaliation for putting the prophet's feet into the stocks: *until his disease* was *exceeding* great; it increased upon him, and became very severe and intolerable, and the fits were frequent, as well as the pain sharper; though the sense of the Hebrew [m] phrase may be, that his disease

[l] Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. dyn. 3. p. 57.

[m] עד למעלה usque ad supra, Montanus; usque ad summum, Vatablus; usque ad sursum, Piscator.

got upwards, into a superior part of his body, head, or stomach, which, when the gout does, it is dangerous. A very learned physician [a] is of opinion, that not the gout, but what he calls an *œdematous* swelling of the feet, is meant, which insensibly gets up into the bowels, and is successively attended with greater inconveniences; a tension of the abdomen, difficulty of breathing, very troublesome to the patient, and issues in a dropsy, and death itself: *yet in his disease he sought not to the Lord*: his seeking to physicians for help in his disease, perhaps, would not have been observed to his reproach, had he also sought unto the Lord, whom he ought to have sought in the first place; and when he applied to the physicians, he should have implored the blessing of God on their prescriptions; but he so much forgot himself as to forget the Lord: this is the first time we read of physicians among the Jews, and some think these were Heathens, and a sort of enchanters: the Jews entertained a very ill opinion of physicians; the best of them, they say [a], deserve hell, and they advise [b] men not to live in a city where the chief man is a physician; but the author of the book of Ecclesiasticus gives a great encomium of them, and exhorts to honour and esteem them, ch. xxxviii. 1—8. Julian [c] the emperor greatly honoured them, and observes, that it is justly said by the philosophers, that the art of medicine fell from heaven.

Ver. 13. *And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the 41st year of his reign.*] See 1 Kings xv. 10, 24.

Ver. 14. *And they buried him in his own sepulchres which he had made for himself in the city of David, &c.*] Where was the burying-place of the kings of Judah; here Asa had ordered a vault to be made for himself and his family, and therefore called *sepulchres*, because of the several cells therein to put separate bodies in: *and laid him in the bed*; not only laid him out, as we express it, but laid him on a bed of state, where he lay in great pomp; or the funeral-bed, which, with other nations [f], used to be strowed with sweet-smelling flowers and herbs, as follows: *which was filled with sweet odours, and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries art*; or rather confectioner or druggist; for it is a question whether there were then any such we call apothecaries; this bed was strowed with spices, myrrh, aloes, casia, cinnamon, &c. and which perhaps might be made up into a liquid, which was sprinkled over the bed and shroud in which he lay: *and they made a very great burning for him*; not that they made a great fire, and burned his body; for burning was not used with the Jews; but they burnt spices and other things in great quantity, in honour of him: see the note on Jer. xxxiv. 5. and this custom continued to the times of Herod, at whose funeral there were 500 of his domestics and freed-men bearing spices [g].

C H A P. XVII.

THIS chapter relates the accession of Jehoshaphat to the throne, his settlement on it, his piety, and reformation in religion, ver. 1—6. his care to instruct the people in the law of God, ver. 7, 8, 9. the respect shewn him by neighbouring nations, ver. 10, 11. the fortified places of his kingdom, his numerous forces and mighty men at the head of them, ver. 12—19.

Ver. 1. *And Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead, &c.*] In the stead of Asa his father: *and strengthened himself against Israel*; the ten tribes, by fortifying his cities, building castles, raising and keeping a large standing army, as the latter part of this chapter shews, and the next verse.

Ver. 2. *And he placed forces in all the fenced cities of Judah, &c.*] A considerable number of soldiers, to defend them should they be attacked: *and set garrisons in the land of Judah*; on the frontiers and borders of it, to protect it: *and in the cities of Ephraim*; soldiers to keep garrison there: *which Asa his father had taken*; see ch. xv. 8.

Ver. 3. *And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, &c.*] Guiding and directing, prospering and succeeding him in all things; he had, no doubt, his gracious presence in spiritual things, as well as his powerful and directing presence in things civil; the Targum is, "the "Word of the Lord was for his help:" *because he walked in the first ways of his father David*; which were his best; some of his last ways not being good, as in the affair of Uriah and Bathsheba, and his numbering of the people; Jehoshaphat followed him in the one, but not in the other: or, *in the ways of David and his father, the first*; the first of them both; for the latter ways of his father Asa were not so good as his first, as the preceding chapter shews; and the Septuagint version leaves out the word *David*, and so restrains it to his own father: *and sought not unto Baalim*; as did Ahab king of Israel, who now reigned there; 1 Kings xv. 24. and xvi. 32.

Ver. 4. *But sought to the Lord God of his fathers, &c.*] Prayed to him, worshipped and served him: *and walked in his commandments*; observed and kept them, moral, ceremonial, and judicial: *and not after the doings of Israel*; who worshipped the golden calves at Dan and Beth-el.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the Lord stablished the kingdom in his hand, &c.*] Piety is the best prop of government; the throne is best supported and established by truth, righteousness, and mercy; by the exercise of these Jehoshaphat was settled in his kingdom, and had a place in the hearts of his people: *and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents*; being well affected to him, as well as it was usual so to do at a prince's accession to the throne, see 1 Sam. x. 27. *and he had riches and ho-*

[a] Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 645.
[a] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 82. 1. Gloss. in ib.
[b] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 113. 1.
[c] Opera, par. 2. p. 154.

[f] Herodian. Hist. l. 4. c. 2. Vid. Kirchman. de Funer. Roman. l. 1. c. 11. & Alstorph. de Lect. Vet. c. 19. p. 151, 152.
[g] Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 1. c. 33. sect. 9.

nour in abundance; through the presents his subjects brought him, and the respect they shewed him.

Ver. 6. *And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord,* &c.] It was engaged in them, was bent and set upon them; he walked in them with great pleasure and cheerfulness, being inspired with zeal and courage; he was fearless and intrepid, and regarded not any opposition he might have, or expect to have, in the work of reformation in which he was concerned: *moreover, he took away the high places;* such as were dedicated to idols, but not those in which the true God was worshipped, ch. xx. 33. *and groves out of Judah;* where idols were placed; for though these had been removed by Asa, yet had been renewed in the latter part of his days, when more negligent of religion.

Ver. 7. *Also in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes,* &c.] That dwelt in the several parts of the kingdom; or he sent them, being with him, some of the principal men of his court; for ל may be a sign of the accusative case, as it sometimes is: even *to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah;* to see that they were taught, and oblige them to attend to the instructions that should be given them, and not mutiny and rebel against their teachers; and to let them know what was the king's pleasure on this head, and to back with their authority the priests and Levites, whose proper work it was to instruct, and who therefore were sent with them, as follows.

Ver. 8. *And with them* he sent *Levites,* &c.] With the five princes he sent nine Levites: *even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites;* of whom we nowhere else read; no doubt they were principal persons, and fit for the work they were sent about: *and with them Elishama and Jehoram, priests;* whose lips were to keep knowledge, and at whose mouth the law was to be sought, Mal. ii. 7.

Ver. 9. *And they taught in Judah,* &c.] The people their duty to God and man: *and* had *the book of the law of the Lord with them;* as the rule of their instruction, and the people's obedience; out of this they taught them, and by it confirmed what they taught, and enforced it with the divine authority: *and went about throughout all the cities of Judah;* not only their own cities, the Levitical ones, but all others: *and taught the people;* the law of the Lord, the fear and worship of God.

Ver. 10. *And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that* were *round about Judah,* &c.] Upon the ten tribes, and on foreign nations about them, as Moabites, Edomites, Syrians, Egyptians, Arabs, and Philistines; this fear, as it came from the Lord, so might be raised and increased by observing, that religion was revived in them; for they might perceive, by former observations made, that the more religious these people were, the more prosperous and formidable they were: *so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat;* to interrupt him in the work of reformation he was so intent upon.

Ver. 11. *Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents and tribute-silver,* &c.] Perhaps those of Gerar, and the parts adjacent, Asa took and spoiled, and made tributary, ch. xiv. 14. *and the Arabians brought him flocks, 7,700 rams, and 7,700 he-goats;* with which their country abounded; and these might be the Scenite Arabs, who fearing lest Jehoshaphat should fall upon them, and take away their flocks as his father had done, ch. xiv. 15. brought these presents to him.

Ver. 12. *And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly,* &c.] In wealth and riches, power and authority, in his forces and fortifications: *and he built in Judah castles, and cities of stores;* castles for the defence of his kingdom, and store-cities to lay up corn, and wine, and all provisions, in case of an invasion, or against a time of war.

Ver. 13. *And he had much business in the cities of Judah,* &c.] Partly in fortifying them, and partly in reforming the inhabitants of them: *and the men of war, mighty men of valour,* were *in Jerusalem;* or by or near unto it, so the particle is rendered, Josh. v. 13. they encamped in places adjacent to it; for such a number of men as follows, even 1,160,000, could never be contained in Jerusalem, but must be disposed of in the territories of it; nor did they wait on the king together, but in course, see ver. 19. by which it appears there is no need to suppose any mistake of the transcriber, in any or all of the following sums, as has been suggested [s].

Ver. 14. *And these* are *the numbers of them, according to the house of their fathers,* &c.] Both of the tribe of Judah and of Benjamin: and first *of Judah, the captains of thousands;* some had 1,000 men under them, and some 100: *Adnah the chief;* he was the principal commander or general of them: *and with him mighty men of valour,* 300,000; such a number was under his command.

Ver. 15. *And next to him was Jehohanan the captain,* &c.] Being of the same rank as to office, but having a lesser number of men under him; and it may respect not any kind of subordination, only nearness of place, as the Targum, "he that encamped next to him:" *and with him* 280,000; which number was but 20,000 less than the former.

Ver. 16. *And next him was Amasiah the son of Zichri,* &c.] He encamped next to him, as the Targum: *who willingly offered himself unto the Lord;* to fight the Lord's battles, and without any stipend, as some think; or, as Kimchi, he offered gold and silver to the treasures of the house of the Lord: *and with him* 200,000 *mighty men of valour;* the number was 80,000 less than the former; the whole of Judah amounted to 780,000 men.

Ver. 17. *And of Benjamin, Eliada, a mighty man of valour,* &c.] Was the chief commander: *and with armed men wit*[h] *bow and shield* 200,000; which were the armour of the tribe of Benjamin they were best skilled in, ch. xiv. 8.

Ver. 18. *And next to him* was *Jehozabad,* &c.] According to the Targum he encamped next him: *and with him* 180,000 *ready prepared for war;* being able-

[s] See Maitland's History of London, B. 3. ch. 2. p. 543.

bodied men, well disciplined, valiant, and well armed; these numbers of Judah and Benjamin put together amount to 1,160,000 men, whereas Asa only brought into the field 580,000; but it should be considered there had been a long time of peace, many had come off from the ten tribes to Judah, and the promise of multiplying the seed of Abraham was eminently fulfilled.

Ver. 19. *These waited on the king*, &c.] Not this vast number of men at one time, but in course, as David's military men waited on him, 1 Chron. xxvii. 1—15. or these several captains, with a proper number of men under them detached from the body; and they were all ready to obey the king's orders whenever he should have occasion for them: *besides those whom the king put into the fenced cities throughout Judah*; and all together, the militia of the kingdom was very numerous and formidable.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance*, &c.] Still more and more, see ch. xvii. 5. and which moved Ahab to desire friendship and affinity with him, to which Jehoshaphat agreed: *and joined affinity with Ahab*; king of Israel, married his son Joram to Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab by Jezebel of Zidon; which marriage proved of bad consequence to Jehoshaphat and his family.

Ver. 2. *And after certain years*, &c.] Two years, according to the Syriac and Arabic versions, or in the third year after the affinity was contracted, see 1 Kings xxii. 2. *he went down to Ahab to Samaria*; to pay him a visit upon the alliance, civil and matrimonial, contracted between them: *and Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him*; entertained him and his retinue in a very grand and liberal manner: *and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead*: from hence, to the end of the chapter, it is the same with 1 Kings xxii. 4—37. see the notes there.

CHAP. XIX.

JEHOSHAPHAT returning from the battle at Ramoth-gilead, was met by a prophet, who reproved him for helping the ungodly, ver. 1, 2, 3. which quickened him to a greater regard for the reformation of his kingdom, ver. 4. and he set judges in all the cities of Judah, and exhorted them to do justice, ver. 5, 6, 7. and in the city of Jerusalem he appointed priests and Levites for the same purpose, and gave them a strict charge, and animated and encouraged them to perform their office faithfully, ver. 8—11.

Ver. 1. *And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned*, &c.] From Ramoth-gilead, after Ahab was slain: *to his house in peace in Jerusalem*; to his palace there in safety, having narrowly escaped losing his life in the battle.

Ver. 2. *And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer*, &c.] The son of him that reproved Asa, for which he put him in prison, ch. xvi. 7, 10. but that did not deter this his son from reproving Jehoshaphat: *went out to meet him*; as he was returning: *and said to King Jehoshaphat, shouldest thou help the ungodly*; such an one as Ahab, an idolater, murderer, and persecutor: *and love them that hate the Lord?* his laws, worship, and ordinances, as he had; intimating, that he had done wrong, by entering into alliance and affinity with him, by shewing him friendship, and assisting him in his war against the Syrians: *therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord*; which appeared in the war of the Ammonites and Moabites with him, related in the next chapter, and in the calamities that came upon his family, his sons being slain by Jehoram that succeeded him, and his grandsons by Jehu.

Ver. 3. *Nevertheless, there are good things found in thee*, &c.] Principles of grace, righteousness, and holiness, faith, love, zeal, and other graces, true and genuine, from whence sprung many good works done by him: *in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land*; cut down the groves of trees, and destroyed the idols and images in them: *and hast prepared thine heart to seek God*; through the grace of God his heart was disposed to serve and worship the Lord, and to seek his honour and glory.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem*, &c.] And went out no more to Samaria, nor concerned himself about the affairs of Israel, but attended to his own: *and he went out again through the people*; took a tour throughout his dominions now, in his own person, as before by his princes, with the priests and Levites: *from Beer-sheba to Mount Ephraim*; Beer-sheba was the southern boundary of the land of Judah, and Mount Ephraim lay to the north, and was the northern boundary of it since the division of the kingdom: *and brought them back to the Lord God of their fathers*; from idolatry to the pure worship of God, such who had relapsed since the first reformation, or had not been influenced by it.

Ver. 5. *And he set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city*, &c.] Inferior judges in lesser courts of judicature than that at Jerusalem, and that in every city, that judgment and justice might be executed everywhere; such were appointed by David, but had been neglected, and now restored, see 1 Chron. xxvi. 29, 32.

Ver. 6. *And said to the judges, take heed what you do*, &c.] In judgment, that they judged righteous judgment according to the law of God, without partiality and respect of persons: *for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord*; not for man only, but for the Lord; and not so much for man as for the Lord, whom they represented in judgment; whose law was the rule of

their judgment, and whose glory their end, and to whom they were accountable: *who is with you in the judgment;* as to guide and direct you, so to observe how they behaved, and be a witness for or against them: the Targum is, "ye judge not before men, "but before the Word of the Lord, whose Shechinah "dwells with you in the affair of judgment."

Ver. 7. *Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you,* &c.] And act as having that before your eyes, and on your hearts: *take heed and do* it; do the commands enjoined them by him, and do judgment according to the law of God: *for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God;* none in his nature, nor in his law; none commanded nor approved of by him, and therefore none should be done by his representatives in judgment: *nor respect of persons;* whether high or low, rich or poor: *nor taking of gifts;* he accepts not the faces of men, nor receives bribes, nor should his judges; this is forbidden by him, Deut. xvi. 19.

Ver. 8. *Moreover, in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chief of the fathers of Israel,* &c.] This was the great court of judicature, consisting of princes, priests, and Levites, of ecclesiastics and political persons: for causes of both sorts were brought thither: *for the judgment of the Lord;* in things sacred, which related to the worship of God, and the support of it: *and for controversies;* of a civil kind between man and man, whether pecuniary or capital, of a more private or public kind: *when they returned to Jerusalem;* that is, this court was set up at Jerusalem, when Jehoshaphat, the priests, Levites, and chief men that went with him, returned thither.

Ver. 9. *And he charged them,* &c.] The members of the court at Jerusalem: *saying, thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart;* judge righteously and impartially, as men fearing God, true to the trust reposed in them, and sincere and upright in heart and actions, having nothing else in view but the glory of God, and the good of men.

Ver. 10. *And what cause soever shall come unto you of your brethren that dwell in their cities,* &c.] Whether sacred or civil, that should come before them by way of appeal from inferior courts in the country, where they could not be determined: *between blood and blood;* one relation and another, or with respect to shedding of blood, whether ignorantly or purposely: *between law and commandment, statutes and judgments;* not rightly understood, and so pleaded on both sides: *ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the Lord;* the persons engaged in controversy, that they take no false oath, nor bear false testimony, and act not stubbornly against any of the laws, when explained in court unto them: *and so wrath come upon you and your children;* upon judges for the neglect of their duty in giving due warning, and upon the people for not taking it when given: *this do, and ye shall not trespass;* if the above charge in all its parts is strictly attended to.

Ver. 11. *And, behold, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the Lord,* &c.] He being high-priest, presided in this court in all things sacred, or which respected the worship of God; and was present to give his advice, and direct in the determination of all such matters that should come before them, according to the laws and statutes provided in such cases; though it may be he was only a common priest that was chief over them, or the president of this court: *and Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the ruler of the house of Judah;* the prince of the tribe of Judah: *for all the king's matters;* such as related to civil government, and which were not so clearly determined by positive laws: *also the Levites shall be officers before you;* to execute the sentences that should be passed by them: *deal courageously;* fear not the faces of any, but judge righteously and faithfully: *and the Lord shall be with the good;* with good men that do good, to bestow all needful good upon them, to protect and defend them; the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord "shall be for your help, who is good."

CHAP. XX.

JEHOSHAPHAT having notice of a numerous army coming against him, ver. 1, 2, betakes himself to fasting and prayer with his people, ver. 3—13. when they were immediately assured of victory by a prophet, which filled them with joy and thankfulness, ver. 14—21. and accordingly their enemies destroyed one another, and Jehoshaphat and his people returned to Jerusalem rejoicing and praising God, ver. 22—30. and the chapter is closed with an account of the latter part of Jehoshaphat's reign, ver. 31—37.

Ver. 1. *It came to pass after this also,* &c.] After Jehoshaphat's return from Ramoth-gilead, and putting the civil and religious affairs of his people on a better footing, when he might have expected much peace and prosperity: *that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon;* both the descendants of Lot, see Psal. lxxxiii. 8. *and with them other besides the Ammonites;* a great company of Arabians, according to Josephus[1]; or *with the Meamonites,* which the Targum understands of the Idumæans or Edomites; and so do other interpreters, and which they conclude from ver. 10, 22, 23. Jarchi thinks the Amalekites are meant, who were of the race of Edom; but the notion of Kimchi seems best, that these are the people that are so called from the name of a place, Meon, and, by an inversion of letters, the same with the Meunim or Maonites, mentioned along with the Zidonians and Amalekites, Judg. x. 12. and whom the Septuagint version here calls Minæans; some[2] take them to be such who counterfeited the Ammonites in their apparel and gestures: these *came against Jehoshaphat in battle;* being instigated perhaps by the Syrians, who

[1] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 1. sect. 2.

[2] Weemse of the Moral Law, l. 2. c. 9. p. 161.

owed him ill will for assisting Ahab against them at Ramoth-gilead; for from that quarter they came, as the following verse shews.

Ver. 2. *Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat*, &c.] Deserters or spies, or some of the inhabitants of those parts where they had entered, who rode post haste to acquaint him with it: *saying, there cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea on this side Syria*; that is, beyond the Dead or Salt sea, the sea of Sodom; the Targum is, "beyond the west of "Syria," that sea being the western boundary of it: *and, behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi*; see the note on Gen. xiv. 7.

Ver. 3. *And Jehoshaphat feared*, &c.] Exceedingly, as the Targum adds, not merely because of the number of his enemies, for he had forces enough to go forth against them, see ch. xvii. 14—19. but chiefly because the Lord had told him that wrath was upon him from him, ch. xix. 2. and he might fear that this was the time for the execution of it: *and set himself to seek the Lord*; by prayer and supplication, with all seriousness, fervour, and constancy: *and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah*; a day of humiliation and mourning for sin before the Lord; when they were ordered to abstain from bodily food and labour, that they might be fit and more at leisure for spiritual exercises.

Ver. 4. *And Judah gathered themselves together to ask* help *of the Lord*; &c.] To implore his assistance against their enemies, and his protection of them; and they met not in their several cities, but at Jerusalem, as appears by what follows: *even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord*; at the temple, where was the ark, the symbol of his presence.

Ver. 5. *And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord*, &c.] In the temple, in the court of the people, where the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem were assembled, in the midst of which he stood very probably on the brasen scaffold erected by Solomon, ch. vi. 13. *before the new court*; which must be the court of the priests, for he stood in the great court, or court of the people, and before this, which might be so called, because renewed or repaired when the altar was by Asa, ch. xv. 8. Dr. Lightfoot [1] thinks it was the court of the women; but it is a question whether there was any such court in the first temple; or that the great court was then divided into two, one for the men, the other for the women.

Ver. 6. *And said, O Lord God of our fathers*, &c.] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose covenant-God he was: art *not thou God in heaven?* that dwellest and rulest there, and dost whatever thou pleasest in the armies of it: *and rulest* not *thou over all the kingdoms of the Heathens?* being King of kings, and Lord of lords, all the world over: *and in thine hand* is there not *power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?* his power being infinite, unlimited, and uncontrollable, and so not resistible by finite creatures, at least not so as to be stopped and overcome.

Ver. 7. Art *not thou our God*, &c.] In a peculiar sense, not merely as the Creator and Governor of men, but in a covenant-relation their covenant-God and Father: *who didst drive out the inhabitants of the land before thy people Israel*; the seven nations of Canaan, to make way and room for Israel: *and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?* made a deed of gift of it to them, and settled it on them till the coming of the Messiah, and that as an instance of love and friendship to Abraham; and wilt thou therefore suffer it to be taken from his seed?

Ver. 8. *And they dwelt therein*, &c.] From ages past, hitherto, since it was first given them, and they were put into the possession of it: *and have built thee a sanctuary therein for thy name*: a temple for his worship, honour, and glory, and for him to dwell in; and is a reason why it might be hoped he would protect them, especially when they prayed to him: *saying*; and he promised to hear and help them, as follows.

Ver. 9. *If when evil cometh upon us*, &c.] Any calamity, as the *sword, judgment*, or *pestilence*, or *famine*, God's four sore judgments, if by *judgment* is meant wild beasts: *we stand before this house*; in the court before the holy place, and holy of holies: *and in thy presence, for thy name* is *in this house*; called upon in it, and it was called by his name, and in which he dwelt: *and cry unto thee in our affliction*; as Solomon prayed at the dedication of it: *then thou wilt hear and help*; as the Lord promised, see 1 Kings viii. 33, 37. and ix. 3.

Ver. 10. *And now, behold, the children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Seir, whom thou wouldest not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt*, &c.] Charging them not to meddle with them, nor take any of their lands from them, Deut. ii. 5, 9, 19. *but they turned from them, and destroyed them not*; in obedience to the divine command, when it was in their power to have done it.

Ver. 11. *Behold*, I say, how *they reward us*, &c.] Evil for good: *to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit*; the land of Canaan was their inheritance, an inheritance given them by God, their covenant-God and Father, who had a right to dispose of it; and yet so given, that it was still his possession, he was the Lord and Proprietor, they but tenants under him; all which, as they were so many aggravations of the guilt of their enemies, so they were so many arguments with the Lord to protect them.

Ver. 12. *O our God, wilt thou not judge them?* &c.] Bring them to thy bar, examine these facts alleged against them, convict them of injustice, and condemn and punish them for it: *for we have no might against the great company that cometh against us*; for though the militia of the kingdom of Judah was very numerous, as described ch. xvii. yet on a sudden it might not be easy to gather it together; besides, it was nothing to put trust and confidence in; and if the Lord was not with them, their strength would be weakness, and they not able to withstand this numerous army: *neither know we what to do*; whether to attempt to muster the militia, and go out to meet them, or to shut up themselves in Jerusalem, and make the best defence they could: *but our eyes are upon thee*; for

[1] Prospect of the Temple, ch. 18. p. 1090.

advice and direction, for help and protection; the eyes of their bodies were lifted up in prayer to him, and the eyes of their souls, of faith, hope, expectation, and desire, were fastened on him.

Ver. 13. *And all Judah stood before the Lord,* &c.] Looking towards the most holy place, where the ark of his presence was, in an humble and submissive posture; waiting what would be the issue of things, what answer they should have from the Lord: *with their little ones, their wives, and their children;* they and their wives, with their children, both small and grown up, which they brought with them, that as the sight of them, now in the utmost danger, might affect them, and make them the more fervent in their supplications to God, so they might hope the Lord would have pity and compassion on them, and save them.

Ver. 14. *Then upon Jahaziel, the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jehiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite, of the sons of Asaph,* &c.] Being a man of some note, though a Levite, his genealogy is given: *came the spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation;* the spirit of prophecy from the Lord, as the Targum, as it was; for he foretold the victory that should be obtained over the enemy, and that without fighting, yea, the particular place where they should meet them; and this came upon him suddenly, whilst he was in the midst of the congregation, whilst he and they were waiting upon the Lord, and perhaps had never prophesied before; or if he had, prophecy did not come according to the will of man, but by the will of God; the spirit of God in that, as in other instances, is like the wind that blows when and where it listeth.

Ver. 15. *And he said, hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou King Jehoshaphat,* &c.] There is a climax or gradation in these words rising from the lowest to the highest; from the people of the cities in the country, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem the metropolis, and from thence to the king the supreme governor: *thus saith the Lord unto you, be not afraid, nor dismayed, by reason of this great multitude;* whose numbers were discouraging to the king, and he had taken notice of them, which this respects: *for the battle is not your's, but God's;* the cause was his, and he would espouse and maintain it; not they, but he, would fight the battle, and therefore they had nothing to fear.

Ver. 16. *To-morrow go ye down against them,* &c.] This was the fast-day, and so not proper to march out in, but on the morrow they might go out with great confidence and intrepidity; and as Jerusalem was situated on an eminence, they are directed to go down: *behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz;* a steep hill, so called from the flowers upon it: *and ye shall find them at the end of the brook;* on the bank of Kidron, according to Beckius, which seems not likely to be meant, since they went as far as the wilderness of Tekoa, ver. 20. *before the wilderness of Jeruel;* the same with that of Tekoa, or near it.

Ver. 17. *Ye shall not* need *to fight in this* battle, &c.] Since the Lord would fight for them: *set yourselves, stand ye* still; present themselves they might, as if ready to engage; and keep their ground, not giving way in the least, but would have no need to strike a stroke: *and see the salvation of the Lord with you;* which he would work for them, see Exod. xiv. 13. *and Judah, and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed;* which is repeated for the confirmation of them: *to-morrow go out against them, for the Lord* will be *with you;* to protect them, fight for them, and give them victory; the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord shall be your help."

Ver. 18. *And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground,* &c.] Not only in reverence of God, and his prophet, but as a token of his belief of what was said, and his thankfulness for it: *and all Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, fell before the Lord, worshipping him;* adoring his goodness to them, in imitation of their king.

Ver. 19. *And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites,* &c.] Who were of the posterity of Kohath, in the line of Korah: *stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high;* in high notes; they being the course in turn at this time for this service.

Ver. 20. *And they rose early in the morning,* &c.] Being confident of success, animated by what the prophet said to them: *and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa;* which, according to Jerom[u], was six miles from Beth-lehem, and nine from Jerusalem, some say twelve, beyond which was nothing but a desert; it was part of the wilderness of Judah: *and as they went forth;* out of Jerusalem, through one of the gates of it: *Jehoshaphat stood and said, believe in the Lord your God;* in the promises he had made, particularly with respect to the victory over their present enemies; the Targum is, "in the Word of the Lord your God:" *so shall you be established;* have courage and firmness of mind, as well as be safe and secure: *believe his prophets;* sent by him, and that speak in his name, particularly Jahaziel, who had predicted victory to them: *so shall ye prosper;* things will succeed to your wishes, and beyond your expectations.

Ver. 21. *And when he had consulted with the people,* &c.] His principal officers, in what order they should march, and in what manner they should form themselves, when they met the enemy, and how they should conduct as if they were to engage: *he appointed singers unto the Lord;* to sing his praise, and give him glory, as if the victory was already completed, it being so sure: *and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army;* that is, praise God, who is glorious in holiness, whose beauty lies in his holiness, and who is holy in all his ways and works: *and to say, praise the Lord, for his mercy* endureth *for ever;* with which they were to conclude their songs of praise, as David did, and whose songs they might sing; see Psal. cxxxvi.

Ver. 22. *And when they began to sing and to praise,* &c.] They sung more or less all the way they went, from the time they set out, but when they came nearer the enemy, they sung louder and louder: *the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which came against Judah;* some take them to be their own ambushments, which they set for the destruction of Judah; but the Lord turned them against their own confederates, mistaking them for Jews; so

[u] Procem. in Amos, and Comment. in ch. i. 1.

the Vulgate Latin version, "the Lord turned their "ambushments against themselves;" or rather these were angels, who appeared in the form of the Edomites, and so fell upon the Ammonites and Moabites: *and they were smitten;* by them, many of them were destroyed; hence it follows.

Ver. 23. *For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir,* &c.] Supposing that they had acted a treacherous part by them, and took on the side of their enemies: *utterly to slay and destroy them;* as they did: *and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir;* so that there were none left of them: *every one helped to destroy one another;* in their confusion mistook one another, either for Edomites or Jews, like the Midianites in the times of Gideon.

Ver. 24. *When Judah came towards the watch-tower in the wilderness,* &c.] Which might stand upon the hill or cliff of Ziz, for the sake of the direction of travellers, and the preservation of them from thieves and robbers: *they looked unto the multitude;* which they could take a view of from the top of the hill: *and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped;* all to a man slain, there was not one to be seen standing on his feet.

Ver. 25. *And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take the spoil of them,* &c.] Which was all they had to do; they had no need to fight, as they were told, the Lord had fought for them: *they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies;* rich garments on them, and gold and silver on them: *and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves;* with which their clothes, or some part of their bodies, were ornamented: *more than they could carry away;* they were so many, that they made too great a burden for them: *and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much;* it took up so much time to strip the bodies, to search for their money and jewels, rings, chains, and such-like things of value, worn by them.

Ver. 26. *And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah,* &c.] As it was afterwards called from what they did there, as follows, which was the reason of its name: *for there they blessed the Lord;* returned thanks to him for this wonderful appearance on their behalf, and gave him the glory of it; no doubt but they had given him praise before in some sort and manner, but now in a set, solemn, and public manner, with one heart and voice they united in ascribing honour, blessing, and glory to him: *therefore the name of the same place was called the valley of Berachah unto this day;* the valley of Blessing; this name it bore in the times of Ezra, the writer of this book, even after the Jews returned from the Babylonish captivity; it is thought to be the same that is called by Jerom * Cepharbarucha, which he speaks of as not far from En-gedi, see ver. 2. others will have it to be the same with the valley of Jehoshaphat, but not so likely, that seems to be nearer Jerusalem.

Ver. 27. *Then they returned, every man of Judah and of Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat at the fore-front of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy,* &c.] There to praise the Lord in the temple, as they had done in the valley: *for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies;* by giving them a complete victory, and making them masters of so much wealth and riches.

Ver. 28. *And they came to Jerusalem with psalteries, and harps, and trumpets,* &c.] The three principal instruments of music used in singing the praises of God; these they played upon as they came to the city, and entered it, and passed through it: *unto the house of the Lord;* the temple, there to offer praise and thanksgiving again.

Ver. 29. *And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of these countries,* &c.] Whose armies were slain, and all other neighbouring ones; for the word *these* is supplied: *when they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel;* and they were afraid to invade their land, or make war with them; nor did the Edomites dare to revolt in the times of Jehoshaphat.

Ver. 30. *So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet,* &c.] Both within and without; they were at peace among themselves, and none from abroad dared to molest them: *for his God gave him rest round about;* from all his enemies; the Targum has it, the Word of his God; and so, in the preceding verse, the Word of the Lord fought; and in ver. 28. the Word of the Lord made them rejoice.

Ver. 31, 32. *And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah,* &c.] Of these two verses see the notes on 1 Kings xxii. 42, 43.

Ver. 33. *Howbeit, the high places were not taken away,* &c.] The high-places, where idols were worshipped, were taken away, ch. xvii. 6. but not those where sacrifices were offered to the true God: *for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers;* to seek and serve him wholly, according to his will, to offer sacrifices to him only at Jerusalem, as the law required, Deut. xii. 5, 6, 7. they could not as yet be prevailed upon to relinquish the high places, built and made use of before the temple was; partly because they were nearer to some of them than that, and partly out of veneration for them, as being of a long time used.

Ver. 34. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last,* &c.] Those that were done at the beginning, and those that were done at the latter end of his reign: *behold, they are written in the book of Jehu, the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel;* see 1 Kings xvi. 1, 7. the same that reproved Jehoshaphat, ch. xix. 2. He wrote a book of his own times, and which was so much esteemed, according to Kimchi, that it was written with, or put along with, the book of the kings of Israel, for so he interprets the phrase; but the Targum understands it of Jehu being the king's historiographer, who had the care and oversight of the diary, journal, or annals of the kings of Israel.

Ver. 35. *And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahaziah king of Israel,* &c.] Meaning, not after the invasion of the Moabites, &c. and the slaughter of them, but after Jehoshaphat returned from Ramoth-gilead, when he was reproved by a prophet for helping the ungodly, ch. xix. 1, 2. so that it was a great aggravation of his folly and weakness, that after

* Epitaph. Paulæ.

that, and quickly after that, he should join himself to a wicked prince, though not in war, but in trade; for so it must be, since Ahaziah reigned but two years, and those not complete, see 1 Kings xxii. 51. but is here related, that Jehoshaphat's weaknesses and blemishes might be laid together: *who did very wickedly*: that is, Ahaziah, who walked in the ways of Ahab his father, and of Jezebel his mother, and of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, 1 Kings xxii. 52.

Ver. 36. *And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish*, &c.] Of which, see the note on 1 Kings xxii. 48. and though it is there said, ver. 49. that Jehoshaphat refused letting the servants of Ahaziah go with his, that was after he had been reproved for joining with him, and after the ships were broken: *and they made the ships in Ezion-geber*; of which see the note on 1 Kings ix. 26.

Ver. 37. *Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah*, &c.] A city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 44. *prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah*: an idolatrous prince, with whom he ought to have had no fellowship, even in civil things, it being both a countenancing him, and exposing himself and people to danger: *the Lord hath broken thy works*; the ships built at the joint expense of the two kings, that is, the Lord had determined to break them, and now foretold that he would; the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord hath destroyed thy "works:" *and the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish*; see the note on 1 Kings xxii. 48.

CHAP. XXI.

THIS chapter relates Jehoram's succession to the throne of Judah, and the murders and idolatries committed by him, ver. 1—7. the revolt of the Edomites from him, and some of his own people, ver. 8—11. a writing of Elijah to him, threatening a great plague to him and his family, ver. 12—15. the raising up of several enemies against him, ver. 16, 17. his sickness, death, and burial, ver. 18, 19, 20.

Ver. 1. *Now Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers*, &c.] See the note on 1 Kings xxii. 50.

Ver. 2. *And he had brethren, the sons of Jehoshaphat*, &c.] That is, Jehoram had, who succeeded him: their names follow, *Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah*: two of them were of the same name; though it may be observed, that in the Hebrew text they are somewhat distinguished, the latter is called Azariahu; Jehiel is said, by the Jews[x], to be the same with Hiel that rebuilt Jericho; indeed it was rebuilt in the times of Jehoshaphat, and was a city of the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 21. which was under his jurisdiction; but it can never be thought that he would ever suffer a son of his to rebuild it; besides, he is expressly said to be a Beth-elite, 1 Kings xvi. 34. *all these were the sons of Jehoshaphat king of Israel*: which generally, since the division of the kingdom, designs the ten tribes, but cannot be the meaning here, because Jehoshaphat was only king of two tribes, Judah and Benjamin; they were tribes of Israel indeed, and so he was king of a part of Israel; and besides, many out of the ten tribes came and settled in his kingdom, and were under his government; though some think he is so called, because he concerned himself so much for the kingdom of Israel, and more than for his own; but the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, all read king of Judah; wherefore some are of opinion that Israel is a mistake of the transcriber; but this need not be supposed, since he was of right king of Israel, and was in fact king of two tribes that belonged to Israel.

Ver. 3. *And their father gave them great gifts of silver, and of gold, and of precious things*, &c.] As jewels and precious stones; or precious garments, as the Targum, in like manner as Abraham gave to his sons, when he sent them from Isaac: *with fenced cities in Judah*; not as their own property, but he appointed them governors in them, to defend them against an enemy, and as a mark of honour to them: *but the kingdom gave he to Jehoram, because he was the first-born*: strictly observing the law in Deut. xxi. 16, 17. which was not always done; though it was reckoned by the Heathens contrary to the law of nations to give the kingdom to the younger[y].

Ver. 4. *Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father*, &c.] Succeeded him in it, and reigned alone, for he had reigned with his father some years before his death; see the note on 2 Kings viii. 16. *he strengthened himself*; in the kingdom, by some means or another closely attaching the greater part of the princes, and people of the land, unto him, when he thought himself well settled and established on the throne; though some understand it of making strong, or hardening his heart to do what is next mentioned: *and slew all his brethren with the sword*; either to get their riches into his hands, or lest, being religious princes, they should oppose his restoring idolatry, and for that reason the people should depose him, and set up one of them; and therefore he dispatched them out of the way to secure himself, and carry his point: *and divers also of the princes of Israel*; such who had removed out of the ten tribes, for the sake of religion, and therefore would never agree to the introduction of idolatry among them, for which reason Jehoram slew them; and perhaps they might express their disapprobation and abhorrence of his murder of his brethren.

Ver. 5—10. *Jehoram was 32 years old*, &c.] Of these verses, see the notes on 2 Kings viii. 17—22.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, he made high places in the mountains of Judah*, &c.] Temples and altars for idols, which, being built on mountains, had the name of high places; and these Jehoram made or rebuilt were those which had been pulled down by Asa and Jehoshaphat: *and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication*: that is, idolatry, drawing them by his own example to worship Baal, for he did what Ahab and his

[x] T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 4.

[y] Justin. e Trogo, l. 16. c. 2.

family did, ver. 6. *and compelled Judah thereto*; the inhabitants of Jerusalem falling into the same idolatrous practice with him, he forced the inhabitants of the cities, and in the country, to do the same, who it seems were not so willing and ready to comply therewith.

Ver. 12. *And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet*, &c.] Not what was written by him after his ascension to heaven, and from thence came to Jehoram, even seven years after that, as say some Jewish writers [z]; nor was it a writing from another person of the same name in those times, since of such an one we nowhere read; nor from Elisha bearing the name of Elijah, having a double portion of his spirit on him, since he is never so called; but this was a writing of Elijah's before his ascension, who, foreseeing by a spirit of prophecy what Jehoram would be guilty of, wrote this, and gave it to one of the prophets, as Kimchi suggests, and most probably to Elisha, to communicate it to him at a proper time; and who might, as the above writer intimates, think it came immediately from heaven: *saying, thus saith the Lord God of David thy father*: and from whose God he had departed, and to which ancestor of his he was so much unlike: *because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah*: neither trod in the steps of his father nor grandfather.

Ver. 13. *And hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel*, &c.] Worshipping the calves, and even Baal, with other idols, as they did: *and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a-whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab*: meaning spiritual whoredoms or idolatries: *and hast also slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself*: more religious, more humane, more prudent, and fitter for government.

Ver. 14. *Behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people*, &c.] They going into the same idolatry with himself willingly, at least great part of them, and therefore deserved to be smitten, and which would be a punishment to him: *and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods*: which should be carried captive, as the event shews.

Ver. 15. *And thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels*, &c.] Which was a just retaliation to him, for having no bowels of compassion on his brethren whom he slew: *until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day*: that continuing day after day, and even year after year, the space of two years, as appears from ver. 19.

Ver. 16. *Moreover, the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines*, &c.] Which had been depressed in the times of Jehoshaphat, to whom they brought their presents and tribute willingly, ch. xvii. 11. *and of the Arabians that were near the Ethiopians*: not the Ethiopians of Africa, as the Targum, for the Arabians were not near them, but the Chusæan Arabs or Midianites, see Numb. xii. 1. The Targum is, the Word of the Lord did this.

Ver. 17. *And they came up into Judah, and brake into it*, &c.] In an hostile manner: *and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house*; his gold, silver, and precious things, the rich furniture of his palace; no mention is made of any other plunder in the city, or the country; so that they seem to have had their principal eye to the king's palace, and the spoil of that; being so directed by the providence of God, who had stirred them up to do this as a punishment of Jehoram: *and his sons also, and his wives*; these they also carried away, all but Athaliah, who hid herself; he through his disease not being able to make any opposition, or to get any forces together to withstand them: *so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons*; the same that is called Ahaziah and Azariah, ch. xxii. 1, 6. so the prophecy in ver. 14 was fulfilled.

Ver. 18. *After all this the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease.*] What it was is not agreed upon; some take it be an *hernia*, or rupture; others, the falling of the *anus*, or a fistula in it; others, the colic, or iliac passion; but generally it is thought to be a dysentery, or bloody flux; the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord broke him."

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass that in process of time, after the end of two years*, &c.] So long he was afflicted and tortured with the above disease: *his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness*; either in like manner as Judas's did, Acts i. 18. or as in the manner the bowels of Arius are said to do, whilst sitting on the seat of the vault [a]; or perhaps only what was contained in the bowels is meant, if it was the colic: *so he died of sore diseases*; he seems to have had a complication of them, and these very painful and distressing: *and the people made no burning for him, like the burnings of his fathers*: as they did for his grandfather Asa, ch. xvi. 14. they did not burn spices or odoriferous wood, as the Targum; though his body, because of the stench of it, needed it, as Jarchi observes.

Ver. 20. *Thirty-two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years*, &c.] See 2 Kings viii. 17. *and departed without being desired*; to live, either by himself, being weary of life through the pain he endured; or by his people, he being so wicked a prince, and so ill-beloved by them, that nobody wished to have him live, but were glad to hear of his death; the meaning is, he died unlamented; his death is expressed by a departing out of this world into another, a phrase more than once used for death in the New Testament, see John xiii. 1. Phil. i. 23. *howbeit, they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings*; they shewed him some respect for the sake of his father, by burying him in the city of David, but denied him the honour of lying in the royal sepulchres, see 2 Kings viii. 24.

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[z] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 17. Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 12. 1. A. M. 3050.

[a] Sozomen. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 29, 30.

CHAP. XXII.

In this chapter we have an account of the wicked reign of Ahaziah the son of Jehoram, ver. 1—4. of his death, the occasion and manner of it, ver. 5—9. and of his mother Athaliah destroying all the seed-royal, excepting one, who was hid by the king's sister, and assuming the government to herself, ver. 10—12.

Ver. 1. *And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead*, &c.] He being the only surviving one of the sons of Jehoram, the same with Jehoahaz, ch. xxi. 17. who was saved when the rest were taken captive and slain, by his mother Athaliah, and he made his escape, and that she also escaped is clear from ver. 10. *for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp:* that is, of the Philistines, ch. xxi. 16. which band seems to be a band or company of thieves and robbers, as the Septuagint, cruel and barbarous, as the action ascribed to them shews: for they *had slain all the eldest* sons of Jehoram; the Philistines and Arabians only carried them away captives, but those slew them in cold blood: *so Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned:* being declared his successor by the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. *Forty-two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign*, &c.] In 2 Kings viii. 26. he is said to be but 22 years old at his accession to the throne, which is undoubtedly rightest; for this makes him to be two years older than his father when he died, who was 32 when he began to reign, and reigned eight years, ch. xxi. 20. different ways are taken to solve this difficulty; some refer this to Jehoram, that he was 42 when Ahaziah began to reign, but he was but 40 when he died; others to the age of Athaliah his mother, as if he was the son of one that was 42, when he himself was but 22; but no instance is given of any such way of writing, nor any just reason for it; others make these 42 years reach to the 20th of his son Joash, his age 22, his reign 1, Athaliah 6, and Joash 13; but the two principal solutions which seem most to satisfy learned men are, the one, that he was 22 when he began to reign in his father's life-time, and 42 when he began to reign in his own right; but then he must reign 20 years with his father, whereas his father reigned but eight years: to make this clear they observe [b], as Kimchi and Abarbinel, from whom this solution is taken, that he reigned eight years very happily when his son was 22, and taken on the throne with him, after which he reigned 20 more ingloriously, and died, when his son was 42; this has been greedily received by many, but without any proof: the other is, that these 42 years are not the date of the age of Ahaziah, but of the reign of the family of Omri king of Israel; so the Jewish chronology [c]; but how impertinent must the use of such a date be in the account of the reign of a king of Judah? all that can be said is, his mother was of that family, which is a trifling reason for such an unusual method of reckoning: it seems best to acknowledge a mistake of the copier, which might easily be made through a similarity of the numeral letters, מב, 42, for כב, 22 [d]; and the rather, since some copies of the Septuagint, and the Syriac and Arabic versions, read 22, as in Kings; particularly the Syriac version, used in the church of Antioch from the most early times; a copy of which Bishop Usher obtained at a very great price, and in which the number is 22, as he assures us; and that the difficulty here is owing to the carelessness of the transcribers is owned by Glassius [e], a warm advocate for the integrity of the Hebrew text, and so by Vitringa [f]: and indeed it is more to the honour of the sacred Scriptures to acknowledge here and there a mistake in the copiers, especially in the historical books, where there is sometimes a strange difference of names and numbers, than to give in to wild and distorted interpretations of them, in order to reconcile them, where there is no danger with respect to any article of faith or manners; and, as a learned man [g] has observed of the New Testament, "it is an invincible reason for the Scripture's part, "that other escapes should be so purposely and infinitely let pass, and yet no saving and substantial "part at all scarce moved out of its place; to say the "truth, these varieties of readings, in a few by-places, "do the same office to the main Scriptures, as the "variation of the compass to the whole magnet of the "earth, the mariner knows so much the better for "these how to steer his course;" and, with respect to some various readings in the Old Testament, Dr. Owen [h] observes, God has suffered this lesser variety to fall out, in or among the copies we have, for the quickening and exercising of our diligence in our search of his word: *he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri*, see 2 Kings viii. 26.

Ver. 3. *He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab*, &c.] As his father Jehoram had, ch. xxi. 6. see 2 Kings viii. 27. *for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly;* to commit idolatry, who was of that idolatrous house.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab*, &c.] See 2 Kings viii. 27. *for they were his counsellors, after the death of his father, to his destruction;* both of soul and body; for they gave him bad advice, both in religious and civil things; these were some of the family or court of the king of Israel, that his mother sent for after his father's death to be of his council.

Ver. 5, 6. *He walked also after their counsel*, &c.] Did as they advised him, as in matters of religion, so in political things, of which there is an instance in this and the next verse; of which see the notes on 2 Kings viii. 28, 29.

[b] In Hieron. Trad. Heb. in Paralip. fol. 85. E.
[c] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 17. So Ben Gersom.
[d] See Kennicott's Dissert. 1. p. 93.
[e] Philolog. Sacr. p. 114.
[f] Hypotypos. Hist. Sacr. p. 67.
[g] J. Gregory's Preface to his Works.
[h] Divine Original of the Scripture, p. 14.

Ver. 7. *And the destruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram, &c.*] Of his appointing; it was according to his purpose and decree, and was brought about by his overruling Providence, ordering the occasion and manner of it very justly for his sins: *for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi;* see 2 Kings ix. 21. *whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab:* raised up to be king of Israel for that purpose, 2 Kings ix. 6, 7, 8. the Targum is, "whom Elijah "anointed by the command of the Word of the "Lord;" but it was not Elijah, but a prophet by the order of Elisha, that anointed him, 2 Kings ix. 1, 2. and this being done by direction of the Lord, is ascribed to him.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, that when Jehu was executing judgment on the house of Ahab, &c.*] On Joram, his son, and 70 more sons, his kinsfolks, courtiers, and priests: *and found the princes of Judah, and* or *even the sons of the brethren of Ahaziah;* whose number was 42: *that ministered to Ahaziah;* had offices in his court, or in obedience to his will, went to visit the children of the king and queen of Israel: *and he slew them:* Jehu did; of the occasion, time, and place of his meeting with them, and slaying them, see 2 Kings x. 12—14.

Ver. 9. *And he sought Ahaziah, &c.*] Who fled on Joram's being wounded by Jehu: *and they caught him;* the soldiers of Jehu, who were sent after him, and bid to smite him: *for he was hid in Samaria:* either in some part of the kingdom of Samaria, or in the city itself, whither he fled: *and brought him to Jehu:* who was at Jezreel, see the note on 2 Kings ix. 27. *and when they had slain him they buried him;* not at Jezreel, but delivered him to his servants to carry him to Jerusalem, and there bury him in the sepulchres of his fathers, 2 Kings ix. 28. *because, said they, he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord with all his heart;* a grandson of his, and therefore out of respect to the memory of his name, these being religious men, ordered his burial there: *so the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom;* his brethren and their sons being slain, and his own children being young fell into the hands of Athaliah, who murdered them all, but one, hid by his aunt, and so got the government into her own hands, as may be observed in the following verses, 10, 11, 12. of which see the notes on 2 Kings xi. 1, 2, 3.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE contents of this chapter are the same with 2 Kings xi. 4—20. and need no other explanation than what may be found in the notes there, to which the reader is referred.

CHAP. XXIV.

THIS chapter begins with the reign of Joash king of Judah, son of Ahaziah, ver. 1, 2, 3, relates his concern and care to repair the temple, ver. 4—14. the death of Jehoiada the priest, during whose life he reigned well, but after his death sadly apostatized, ver. 15—19. for which, being reproved by Zechariah, he was so wroth with him as to order him to be stoned, ver. 20—22. wherefore for these evils enemies were raised up against him; he was smitten with diseases, and his servants conspired against him and slew him, and would not bury him among the kings, ver. 23—27.

Ver. 1, 2. *Joash was seven years old when he began to reign, &c.*] This, and the following verse, are the same with 2 Kings xi. 21. and xii. 1, 2. see the notes there.

Ver. 3. *And Jehoiada took for him two wives, &c.*] Not for himself; he had a wife who was aunt to King Joash, and he had sons who were concerned with him in anointing him, ch. xxii. 11. and xxiii. 11. and was now upwards of 100 years of age; but for the king, when he was at an age fit for marriage, he advised him to marry, and proposed wives to him, whom he thought would be agreeable; for, observing what mischief was done both in church and state through Jehoram's marrying Athaliah, he was desirous of preventing any such disagreeable marriage; and as the young king was in all things guided and directed by him, so he was in this; and no doubt they were good women he pitched upon, and proposed to the king; one of them was Jehoadan, ch. xxv. 1. but the name of the other we know not: *and he begat sons and daughters;* how many is not said, nor do we read of the names of any of them, but of Amaziah who succeeded him.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass after this, &c.*] After his marriage, when he was about 20 or 21 years of age, perhaps: *that Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord;* which in some places might be fallen to decay, having been built 150 years or more, and in others defaced by Athaliah, and needed ornamenting, see 2 Kings xii. 4.

Ver. 5. *And he gathered together the priests and Levites, &c.*] To communicate his mind unto, and give them a charge and instructions: *and said unto them, go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year;* what money he means is more fully explained in 2 Kings xii. 4. *and see that ye haste the matter;* for he was very desirous of having this work accomplished, it being the place of the worship of God, and where he had been preserved in his infancy: *howbeit, the Levites hastened it not;* either through negligence in them to collect the money, or backwardness in the people to give, or through an avaricious disposition to keep it, and

use it for themselves; so that it was delayed unto the 23d year of his reign, 2 Kings xii. 6.

Ver. 6. *And the king called for Jehoiada the chief,* &c.] Who was either the high-priest, or the head of his course, or, however, the chief of the priests and Levites concerned in this affair, and, indeed, was the chief or prime minister of state: *and said unto him, why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah, and out of Jerusalem, the collection;* the money to repair the house they were ordered to collect, ver. 5. according to the commandment *of Moses the servant of the Lord, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness?* for the repair of it, such as Moses required, and the people used to pay, referring to the half-shekel; or to a free-will offering of the people, Moses enjoined or directed to.

Ver. 7. *For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman,* &c.] Not Ahaziah and his brethren, in the life-time of Jehoram, but sons of Athaliah by another man, as Kimchi suggests: *had broken up the house of God;* not that they had made ruptures in it, or broke down the walls of it, but had defaced it by taking off the gold and silver upon it: *and also all the dedicated things of the house of the Lord did they bestow upon Baalim;* not strictly all, but a great many of them, as this word in many instances is used, as Kimchi observes, and with them furnished, beautified, and adorned the temple of Baal.

Ver. 8. *And at the king's commandment they made a chest,* &c.] See the note on 2 Kings xii. 9.

Ver. 9. *And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem,* &c.] By heralds appointed for the purpose: *to bring in to the Lord;* into the house of the Lord, and for the reparation of it; and so for his service, honour, and glory: *the collection* that *Moses the servant of the Lord* laid *upon Israel in the wilderness;* not to bring in the tabernacle of Moses, as the Targum here and in ver. 6. but such a voluntary gift as Moses moved the children of Israel to bring, when in the wilderness, for the service of the tabernacle.

Ver. 10. *And all the princes and all the people rejoiced,* &c.] When they heard the proclamation, and understood for what use the money was to be given, and in what manner; all was agreeable and pleasing to them: *and brought in, and cast into the chest;* through the hole that was in the lid of it, 2 Kings xii. 9. *until they had made an end:* every one had given as much as he could, or thought fit to give.

Ver. 11. *Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites,* &c.] The place where his officer or officers met, appointed for this service; very probably in one of the chambers of the temple: *and when they saw that* there was *much money:* see 2 Kings xii. 10. *the king's scribe;* or secretary: *and the high priest's officer;* his *sagan,* or deputy-priest: *came and emptied the chest;* poured out the money, and told it, and put it up in bags, 2 Kings xii. 10. *and took it, and carried it to its place again,* ver. 8. by the hands of the Levites that brought it; *and thus they did day by day;* as often as the chest was full, or they perceived there was much in it: *and gathered money in abundance;* enough to repair the house, ornament it, and furnish it with vessels that were wanting.

Ver. 12. *And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the Lord,* &c.] That is, they gave it to those who were overseers of them, to pay them with it, 2 Kings xii. 11. *and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord;* see 2 Kings xii. 12. *and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the Lord;* where it required any work of that kind.

Ver. 13. *So the workmen wrought,* &c.] The masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, and brasiers: *and the work was perfected by them;* the business of repairs was completely finished: *and they set the house of God in his state;* as it was at first: *and strengthened it;* so that it seemed as firm and stable as when first built.

Ver. 14. *And when they had finished it,* &c.] The repairs of the house, all that were necessary: *they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada:* that is, the overseers, when they had paid the workmen, brought what was left of the money collected to the king and the priest, to dispose of as they should think fit: *whereof were made vessels for the house of the Lord;* in the room of such that Athaliah and her sons had taken away, and converted to the use of Baal; for though it is said, 2 Kings xii. 13. that none were made of this money, the meaning is, that none were made of it until the work was finished, and the workmen paid: even *vessels to minister and offer* withal; which, according to Jarchi, were pestles and mortars to beat spices with; but Kimchi thinks they were small vessels with which they drew wine out of the hin for drink-offerings: *and spoons and vessels of gold and silver;* see 2 Kings xii. 13. *and they offered burnt-offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada;* the daily sacrifice, morning and evening.

Ver. 15. *But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died,* &c.] A very old man; few at this time arrived to such an age; he was a rare instance: 130 *years old* was he *when he died;* the oldest man we read of from the times of Moses, and older than he by ten years.

Ver. 16. *And they buried him in the city of David among the kings,* &c.] In honour to him, he having been the preserver of the king, and of the kingdom, and being by marriage a relation of the present king, uncle to him: *because he had done good in Israel;* in that part of it which belonged to the kingdom of the house of David: *both towards God, and towards his house;* both for the restoring the pure worship of God, and the repairs of the temple.

Ver. 17. *Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah,* &c.] Who had been secretly inclined to idolatry, but durst not discover it during the life of Jehoiada; whose influence at court was too great for them to counterwork, but when dead they came to court: *and made obeisance to the king;* bowed in a very lowly manner, fawned upon him, and flattered him. Some Jewish writers, as Kimchi observes, understand this of religious adoration, that they made a god of him, and worshipped him, pretending, as a foundation for it, his being hid six months in the temple, and preserved; but it designs no more than civil worship and homage: *then the king hearkened unto them;* discoursing with him about divine worship, which was the business they came about; desiring that they might

not be obliged to come to Jerusalem to worship, but might make use of the high places, and by that means worship what idol they pleased, which he granted to them; the Targum is, "he received their idols from "them."

Ver. 18. *And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers*, &c.] Came no more to the temple at Jerusalem, forsook the worship and service of it: *and served groves and idols;* worshipped idols in groves, which were upon high places: *and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass:* their idolatry, and particularly on these princes, the Syrian army coming against them, and destroying them, ver. 23.

Ver. 19. *Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord*, &c.] To reprove them for their sin, to warn them of their danger, to exhort them to their duty, and endeavour to restore them, and reduce them to the obedience and worship of God; such was his clemency, goodness, and condescension to them, before he executed his wrath upon them: *and they testified against them;* against their sins, and declared what would befall them, and called heaven and earth to witness for God and against them: *but they would not give ear;* to their reproofs, admonitions, cautions, and exhortations, but went on in their own ways.

Ver. 20. *And the spirit of the Lord came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest*, &c.] The spirit of prophecy, as the Targum; he was moved and influenced by it to speak what is after related: *which stood above the people;* in a desk, or sort of pulpit, in which the priests stood when they taught the people, that they might be the better heard, like that which Ezra used, Neh. viii. 4. *and said unto them, thus saith God;* being moved and directed by his spirit, he spake in his name: *why transgress ye the command of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper?* by committing idolatry, than which nothing could more hinder prosperity, both in things spiritual and temporal, in soul and body: *because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you;* because they had forsaken the worship of God, as the Targum, God had forsaken them, and was about to give them up into the hand of their enemies.

Ver. 21. *And they conspired against him*, &c.] Consulted together to take away his life, and got the order of the king to do it: *and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord;* where he had stood and reproved them; this they did before he went out, whilst in the temple; and if he is the same Zechariah, as some think, our Lord speaks of, he was slain between the temple-porch and the altar, Matt. xxiii. 35. see the note there.

Ver. 22. *Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him*, &c.] In preserving him in his infancy, and nourishing him; in settling him on the throne, and assisting him with his advice and counsel: *but slew his son;* who also assisted at his coronation, and with his father and brethren anointed him king, as is probable, ch. xxiii. 11. *and when he died, he said, the Lord look upon it, and requite it;* meaning his blood; this he said, not from a private spirit of revenge, but with a view to the glory of divine justice, and which he delivered not as a wish, or by way of imprecation, that so it might be, but as a prophecy that so it would be.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass at the end of the year*, &c.] After the death of Zechariah; so soon had his prophecy its accomplishment: *that the host of Syria came up against him;* against Joash, king of Judah, under Hazael king of Syria, or however sent by him; for some think this is a different expedition from that in 2 Kings xii. 17. though others take it to be the same: *and they came to Judah and Jerusalem;* not only came into the land of Judah, but as far as Jerusalem, the forces of Joash not being able to stop them: *and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people;* the idolatrous princes of Judah, ver. 17. which is very remarkable that they should be distinguished from the people in their destruction, who had been the chief cause of the wrath of God coming upon them: *and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus;* all the riches that were taken from them were sent to the king of Syria at Damascus; this looks as if Hazael was not with this army.

Ver. 24. *For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men*, &c.] It consisted but of few: *and the Lord delivered a very great host into their hand;* which the king of Judah and his princes had got together to oppose them: *because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers;* therefore the Lord forsook them, and gave them up into the hand of their enemies: *so they executed judgment against Joash;* were the instruments God made use of to execute his vengeance on him for his idolatry and murder.

Ver. 25. *And when they were departed from him*, &c.] Having got what wealth and spoil they could: *for they left him in great diseases;* through the wounds they gave him, and the distress they brought him into: *his own servants conspired against him, for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest;* for perhaps more than one was slain at the same time; the rest vindicating the cause of their brother, shared the same fate; or the plural is put for the singular: *and slew him on his bed;* in the house of Millo, where he lay ill of his wounds, and sick of his diseases, and could not defend himself: *and he died;* of the wounds his servants gave him: *and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings;* see 2 Kings xii. 21.

Ver. 26. *And these are they that conspired against him, Zabad the son of Shimeah an Ammonitess*, &c.] Called Jozachar, the son of Shimeah, 2 Kings xii. 21. *and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith a Moabitess;* called in the same place the son of Shomer.

Ver. 27. *Now concerning his sons*, &c.] The sons of Joash; how many they were, and what their names: *and the greatness of the burdens laid upon him;* which some understand of the hard and heavy prophecies of the Lord against him; and others of the heavy taxes and tribute imposed on him by the king of Syria; and others of the collection for the repairs of the temple, ver. 6. where the word used signifies a burden; and it follows, *and the repairing of the house of the Lord;* the whole history of that: *behold, they are written in the story of the book of the kings;* not in the canonical book so called, but in the history, commentaries, or annals of the kings of Judah now lost: *and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead;* see 2 Kings xii. 21.

CHAP. XXV.

THIS chapter begins with the reign of Amaziah, and some of the first acts of it, slaying those that killed his father, ver. 1—4. raising a large army in his own kingdom, to which he added 100,000 more he hired out of Israel, whom yet he sent home by the advice of a prophet, ver. 5—10. and with his own army marched against the Edomites, and obtained a victory over them, ver. 11, 12. but the Israelites being displeased with him for dismissing them, fell on some of his cities, and slew many in them, ver. 13. and such was his stupidity, as to worship the gods of the Edomites he had conquered, for which he was reproved by a prophet, ver. 14—16. and being elated with his victory, he sent a challenge to the king of Israel, who accepting of it, a battle ensued, in which Judah was worsted, their king taken, and treasuries spoiled, ver. 17—24. and the chapter is closed with the death and burial of Amaziah, ver. 25—28.

Ver. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Amaziah* was 25 *years old when he began to reign*, &c.] Of these verses, see the notes on 2 Kings xiv. 2, 3, 5, 6.

Ver. 5. *Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together*, &c.] The inhabitants thereof: *and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin*; he divided the people, according to their families throughout his kingdom, into thousands and hundreds, and out of their respective families appointed captains over them: *and he numbered them from* 20 *years old and above*: the usual age men were numbered at for war, to the 50th, according to Josephus; the Roman law [a] obliged none to be soldiers after 50, nor might any be dismissed before [b]; the age of military men with the Romans was from 17 to 46, or, as some, 45; but with the Persians from 20 as here to 50 [c]: *and found them* 300,000 *choice men*, able *to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield*; which shews that their number was greatly decreased since the times of Jehoshaphat, ch. xvii. occasioned by the wars under Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Joash; some copies of the Vulgate Latin [d] have only 30,000.

Ver. 6. *He hired also* 100,000 *mighty men of valour out of Israel*, &c.] The ten tribes, judging his own army not sufficient for his expedition against the Edomites he was meditating: *for* 100 *talents of silver*: which amounted to 35,300 pounds sterling, and according to Beckius [e] were about five florins and a half to each soldier.

Ver. 7. *But there came a man of God to him*, &c.] Who the Jews say [f] was the brother of the king, Amos, the father of Isaiah, but without foundation: *saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee*; to war against Edom; meaning the 100,000 men he had hired, and suggesting that to have them with him would not be to his advantage, but his detriment, for the following reason: *for the Lord is not with Israel*, to wit, *with all the children of Ephraim*: they being idolaters, worshippers of the calves; and as they had forsaken the Lord, he had forsaken them; therefore no help could be expected from them; the Targum is, " the Word of the Lord is not their help."

Ver. 8. *But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle*, &c.] An ironical expression; if thou wilt not be advised, take them with thee, and try what thou canst do; exert all thy courage, and use thy military skill, and mark the issue: *God shall make thee fall before the enemy*; notwithstanding the number of thy troops, and those of thy auxiliaries; though some take them to be spoken seriously, and read the words, *but go thou*; that is, alone, without the hired troops, and fight boldly and courageously; or otherwise *God shall make thee fall, &c. for God hath power to help and to cast down*; to help with a few, and to cast down with many; to help without the hired Israelites, and to cast down with them.

Ver. 9. *And Amaziah said to the man of God, but what shall we do for the* 100 *talents which I have given to the army of Israel?* &c.] They'll be lost, there's no demanding them back again; this he spake with some concern, as loth to lose so much money: *and the man of God answered, the Lord is able to give thee much more than this*; whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof, the gold and silver, and all the riches of it; and therefore he had no need to trouble himself about the loss of his money, which, if obedient to the will of God, he might expect it would be abundantly repaid him.

Ver. 10. *Then Amaziah separated them*, &c.] From his army, among whom they were incorporated and ranked, to wit, *the army that was come to him out of Ephraim*; which he had hired of the 10 tribes, these he singled out: *to go home again*; to their own country: *wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger*; it being a great slight put upon them, and a reproach to them, to be thus dismissed, as they thought; and especially if they understood that it was because they were idolaters; and the rather as they might have hoped to have had their share in the plunder of the Edomites.

Ver. 11. *And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people*, &c.] To go to war with the Edomites; not discouraged by the dismission of the hired troops, but trusting in the promise and power of God, he went forth with boldness and intrepidity: *and went to the valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir* 10,000; the Edomites; so called, not because they were the posterity of Seir, but because they dwelt in Seir, from whence they drove the descendants of Seir, and dwelt in their stead; see 2 Kings xiv. 7.

[a] Seneca de Brevitate Vitæ, c. 20.
[b] Liv. Hist. l. 42. c. 33.
[c] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 20.
[d] Ed. of Sixtus V. the Lovain and MSS. in James's Corruption of the Fathers, p. 295.
[e] Not. in Targum in loc.
[f] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 20. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 11. 2.

Ver. 12. *And other 10,000 left alive did the children of Judah carry away captive*, &c.] The rest of the army of the Edomites, which amounted to the same number, fell into their hands, and they took them, and carried them off: *and brought them unto the top of the rock*; very probably the same on which the city Petra, the metropolis of Edom, was built, called also Selah, 2 Kings xiv. 7. both which names signify a rock. Josephus[g] calls it the great rock in Arabia; that is, Arabia Petræa: *and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they were broken all in pieces*; burst asunder, bones broken, and limb from limb separated. This sort of punishment was inflicted by the Romans on various malefactors, by casting them down from the Tarpeian rock[h]; and in Greece, according to the Delphian law, such as were guilty of sacrilege were led to a rock, and cast down headlong from thence[i]: and now in Turkey, at a place called Constantine, a town situated on the top of a great rock, the usual way of executing great criminals is by pushing them from off the cliff[k]; see Luke iv. 29. but to use captives taken in war after this manner seems cruel and barbarous; and what should be the reason of such treatment of them is not easy to say.

Ver. 13. *But the soldiers of the army which Amaziah sent back, that they should not go with him to battle*, &c.] The 100,000 men hired out of Israel, whom he dismissed before he went against Edom: *fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even unto Beth-horon*; which, though it formerly belonged to Ephraim, had been taken by the men of Judah; they did not fall on these as they returned home, for then it would have been said from Beth-horon to Samaria: but after they had returned home, they meditated this piece of revenge for the ill treatment of them, as they reckoned it: *and smote 3,000 of them*; of the inhabitants of the cities, who rose up and opposed them: *and took much spoil*; out of them, and went their way with it.

Ver. 14. *Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites*, &c.] Instead of returning thanks to God for the victory obtained, and giving him the glory of it: *that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods*; what were the gods of the Edomites is nowhere said in Scripture; only Josephus[l] speaks of the priests of Coze, which he says was a god of the Idumæans: *and bowed himself before them, and burned incense unto them*; which was the greatest piece of sottishness and stupidity imaginable, to worship the gods of a nation conquered by him; for since they could not save them, what help could he expect from them?

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Amaziah*, &c.] Idolatry being always highly displeasing to the Lord; and this was a most provoking instance of it, that when the Lord had given him victory over his enemies, that he should forsake him, and worship their gods: *and he sent unto him a prophet*; whether the same as before, is not certain: *which said unto him, why hast thou sought after the gods of the people which could not deliver their own people out of thine hand?* and therefore it was madness in him to seek after them, and worship them.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that* the king *said unto him, art thou made of the king's council?* &c.] He was not indeed one of his privy council, made so by him, but he was appointed a counsellor to him by the Lord, the King of kings, to expostulate with him about his idolatry, and to advise him to relinquish it, to whose counsel he ought to have hearkened: *forbear, why shouldest thou be smitten?* bidding him hold his peace, and threatening him, that if he did not, he must expect to be smitten; that is, with death, as Zechariah the prophet was by the order of his father: *then the prophet forbore*; left off speaking, only added this at parting: *and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee*; being given up to hardness of heart, so as to pay no regard to the Lord and his prophets, which was a sure presage of destruction: *because thou hast done this*; committed such idolatry, and persisted in it: *and hast not hearkened to my counsel*; to reform from it.

Ver. 17. *Then Amaziah king of Judah took advice*, &c.] Not of God, nor of his prophets, but of some of his nobles like himself: *and sent to Joash—king of Israel*; of his message to him here, and his answer in the two following verses, see the notes on 2 Kings xiv. 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 20. *But Amaziah would not hear*, &c.] What the king of Israel advised him to, not to meddle to his hurt: *for it* came *of God, that he might deliver them into the hand* of their enemies; Amaziah and his army into the hands of Joash and his; this was the will of God, and was brought about by his providence; and that it might be, Amaziah was given up to blindness and hardness of heart, as a punishment of his idolatry: *because they sought after the gods of Edom*; he and his nobles, and many of the people following his example; from hence to the end of the chapter the same things are recorded as in 2 Kings xiv. 11—20. see the notes there.

CHAP. XXVI.

THIS chapter relates the good reign of Uzziah, ver. 1—5. his wars and victories, his buildings, the number of his soldiers, and his military stores, ver. 6—15. his invasion of the priest's office, in attempting to offer incense, for which he was smitten with a leprosy, which continued to his death, ver. 16—23.

Ver. 1. *Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah*, &c.] Of this and the three following verses, see the

[g] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 9. sect. 1.
[h] Liv. Hist. l. 6. c. 20. Patercul. Hist. Roman. l. 2. Aurel. Victor. de Vir. Illustr. c. 27, 79. Vid. Rycquium de Capitol. Roman. c. 4. p. 45, &c.
[i] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 11. c. 5.
[k] Pitt's Account of the Mahometans, ch. 1. p. 10.
[l] Antiqu. l. 15. c. 7. sect. 9.

notes on 2 Kings xiv. 21, 22. and xv. 2, 3. where Uzziah is called Azariah.

Ver. 5. *And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, &c.*] Not that Zechariah, the last of the prophets save one, he lived 300 years after this; nor he that Joash slew; but, as it may seem, a son of his, perhaps the same with him in Isa. viii. 2. *who had understanding in the visions of God:* who either had prophetic visions granted to him, or had divine wisdom to interpret such that others had; or, as others think, had a gift of interpreting the prophecies of others, the writings of Moses and David, &c. to which the Targum seems to agree; which paraphrases it, "who taught *in the fear of* "*the Lord*;" with which agree the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; some copies read *in the fear of God;* as an ancient manuscript mentioned by Junius, and so the Talmud[l]: *and, as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper;* in his kingdom, and against his enemies; even so long as he abode by the word, worship, and ordinances of God, of which instances are given, as follow.

Ver. 6. *And he went forth, and warred against the Philistines, &c.*] Who in the times of Jehoram broke in upon Judah, and distressed them, ch. xxi. 16, 17. *and brake down the wall of Gath;* which was one of the five principalities of the Philistines: *and the wall of Jabneh;* nowhere else mentioned in Scripture, but frequent in the Jewish writings; where the sanhedrim sometimes sat, and where was a famous university, and from whence sprung many of the Jewish rabbins; it is the same which in some writers is called Jamnia, and was a port near to Joppa; and belonged to the tribe of Dan, as Josephus[m] writes: *and the wall of Ashdod:* another of the principalities of the Philistines, the same with the Azotus of the New Testament; he dismantled all these places: *and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines;* where he placed garrisons to keep them in awe; see Amos i. 8.

Ver. 7. *And God helped him against the Philistines, &c.*] He did not do all before related of himself, and by his own strength, but by the help of God; the Targum is "the Word of the Lord helped him:" *and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gur-baal;* the same with Gerar, according to the Targum; which also belonged to the Philistines, and had a king in Abraham's time, Gen. xx. 1. the same with Askelon, another of the five principalities of the Philistines: *and the Mehunims;* or the Minæans, as the Septuagint, and whom Pliny[n] makes mention of among the Arabians; they seem to be the Scenite Arabs; see ch. xx. 1. or rather, as the Targum, those that dwelt in the plain of Maon, which was in Arabia Petræa.

Ver. 8. *And the Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah, &c.*] As tributaries to him, or, however, as desirous to live in friendship with him: *and his name spread abroad, even to the entering in of Egypt;* so far he carried his arms, and conquered the countries that lay between Palestine and Egypt: *for he strengthened* himself *exceedingly;* his kingdom and its coasts from the force of enemies.

Ver. 9. *Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner-gate, &c.*] Which was broken down by the king of Israel in his father's time, ch. xxv. 23. and which he not only repaired, but strengthened, by building a tower upon it: *and at the valley-gate;* which led to the valley, Neh. ii. 13. and iii. 13. called the valley of the dead bodies, in which they were cast, and in which the brook Kidron ran, Jer. xxxi. 40. *and at the turning* of the wall; at each of those places he built towers, which Josephus[o] says were 150 cubits high: *and fortified them;* put garrisons of soldiers into them.

Ver. 10. *Also he built towers in the desert, &c.*] In the desert of Arabia, to protect travellers from thieves and robbers, and particularly shepherds and their flocks, as appears by what follows; which a certain writer[p] thinks are the same which the Indians call pagods; not such as served for temples, but were buildings encompassed with good walls, where flocks were gathered together in case of any alarm: *and digged many wells;* for the watering of the flocks, which in those hot and desert places were of great use: *for he had much cattle, both in the low country and in the plains;* both flocks and herds: *husbandmen* also, *and vine-dressers in the mountains;* husbandmen to take care of the corn, and manure the land for that, and gather it in when ripe; and vine-dressers to prune the vines, and look after them; which were very often planted on mountains, and on which also corn grew, Psal. lxxii. 16. *and in Carmel;* a place in the tribe of Judah, where Nabal dwelt, 1 Sam. xxv. 2. or it may be put for any fruitful field: *for he loved husbandry;* not only the profit, but the exercise of it at times; and it was usual with great personages in the eastern countries to employ themselves in some such way; Saul after he was king attended the herd, 1 Sam. xi. 5. Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-master, 2 Kings iii. 4. among the Romans, Quinctius Cincinnatus and Cato Major[q] were great lovers of husbandry; and we read of one of the Chinese emperors that gave himself to husbandry, held the plough himself, broke the clods, and cast in the seed, to set an example to the whole empire[r]. Another of their emperors gave himself wholly to husbandry[s]; another chose an husbandman for his successor, and who also encouraged husbandry[t].

Ver. 11. *Moreover, Uzziah had an host of fighting men, &c.*] A standing army: *that went out to war by bands;* to annoy his enemies, and to scour the country from thieves and robbers, that came in troops to plunder: *according to the number of their account, by the hand of Jeiel the scribe;* the secretary of war, who ordered these bands, settled their number, and directed their destination: *and Maaseiah the ruler;* or officer over them, a lieutenant: *under the hand of Hananiah,* one *of the king's captains;* that had the command of them, or at least of one of them.

[l] Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. in rad. ראה.
[m] Antiqu. l. 5. c. 9. sect. 22.
[n] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 28.
[o] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 3.
[p] Agreement of Customs between the East Indians and Jews, art. 12. p. 61.
[q] In Cicero de Senectute.
[r] Martin. Sinic. Hist. l. 2. p. 326.
[s] Ib. l. 4. p. 92.
[t] Ib. l. 1. p. 29, 32.

Ver. 12. *The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were* 2,600.] Who were the commanders and principal officers of his army; and such a number supposed a large army, as follows.

Ver. 13. *And under their hand was an army*, 307,500, &c.] Which was larger than that in his father's time by 7,500, ch. xxv. 5. besides officers: *that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy;* they were ready to fight, and fight valiantly, whenever the king had any occasion for them, or the land was invaded.

Ver. 14. *And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host*, &c.] For every soldier in the army: *shields and spears;* defensive and offensive weapons, the one to cover and protect their bodies, the other to push and pierce their enemies: *and helmets, and habergeons;* the first of these were a covering for the head in the day of battle, and the other coats of mail, to defend the body: *and bows;* to shoot arrows out of: *and slings* to cast *stones;* at which the Benjaminites formerly were very expert.

Ver. 15. *And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers, and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal*, &c.] Such as with the Romans were called *catapultæ*, *ballistæ* [v], *scorpiones* [w], &c. and by this it appears that these were not first invented in Greece and Rome, but in Judea. It is said [x], that the Romans received the machine to batter cities from the Greeks, and that the Trojan horse was no other than a battering ram; but if they did, the invention of them must be ascribed, not to them, but rather to the Syrians and Phœnicians, according to Pliny [y]; though others [z] suppose the Carthaginians, who were a colony of theirs, to be the inventors of them; yet, after all, they seem to be the device of some skilful men among the Jews, in the times of Uzziah; according to Diodorus Siculus [a], they were not found out when Niniveh was besieged in the times of Sardanapalus: *and his name spread far abroad;* in distant countries, for his warlike dispositions and preparations, which made them stand in fear of him: *for he was helped until he was strong;* he was wonderfully helped by the Lord to build fortified places, raise a numerous army, and provide all sorts of armour for them, and invent such machines as would greatly annoy the enemy, whereby he became very potent, and injected dread round about him.

Ver. 16. *When he was strong*, &c.] Became great and powerful, through his victories, the enlargement of his dominions, and having a numerous army, and these well accoutred, and many fortified cities and towers: *his heart was lifted up* to his *destruction;* he grew vain and proud, elated with his flourishing circumstances, which issued in his ruin: *for he transgressed against the Lord his God;* who had helped him, and made him so great, and had bestowed so many favours upon him; the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord his God;" what his transgression was, follows: *and went into the temple of the Lord;* the holy place, into which none but the priests might enter: *to burn incense upon the altar of incense;* which stood there.

Ver. 17. *And Azariah the priest went in after him*, &c.] To hinder him from doing it, and to persuade him to go out. This was the high-priest, as appears from ver. 20. and is thought to be the same that is spoken of in 1 Chron. vi. 10. *and with him* 80 *priests of the Lord*, that were *valiant men;* not only able-bodied men, but men of spirit and courage, and zealous for the honour of God.

Ver. 18. *And they withstood Uzziah the king*, &c.] They not only stood against him, but stood about him, surrounded him, so as to hinder him from approaching the altar of incense: *and said unto him*, it appertaineth *not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord;* it did not belong to his office as a king, it was no part of it: *but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense;* and to them only; for even the Levites might not do it, only those of the tribe of Levi, that descended from Aaron, see Numb. xvi. 35. *go out of the sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed;* by going into that: *neither* shall it be *for thine honour from the Lord God;* but to his hurt, and be a brand of infamy upon him; for more is designed than is expressed, and as the event shewed.

Ver. 19. *Then Uzziah was wroth*, &c.] With the priests, and, as Josephus [b] says, threatened to kill them: *and* had *a censer in his hand to burn incense;* ready to do it, and resolved upon it: *and while he was wroth with the priests;* and expressing his indignation, and declaring what he would do to them, if they continued to oppose him: *the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense-altar;* which seems not only to describe the position of the priests, being beside the altar of incense, to keep the king from it, when the leprosy was seen by them in his forehead, but the quarter from whence the stroke invisibly came. Josephus [c] says, there was an earthquake at the same time, and a mountain was rent.

Ver. 20. *And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead*, &c.] He was leprous all over his body, no doubt, but it appeared in his forehead very remarkably, and was seen by them all, who, without doubt, informed him of his case, and of which he soon became sensible: *and they thrust him out from thence;* the holy place, he being now unfit to be in a common dwelling-house, or his own palace, and much less to be in the house of God: *yea, himself also hasted to go out, because the Lord had smitten him;* fearing, should he continue there, that something worse would befall him; the Targum is, the Word of the Lord. The leprosy was a disease sent immediately from God, as the case of Miriam, and this of Uzziah, shew; and so the Persians [d] had a notion, that those had it who sinned

[v] Cicero Tusculan Quæst. l. 2. Tacit. Hist. l. 3. c. 23.
[w] Ammian. Marcellin. l. 23.
[x] Vid. Valtrium de re militari Roman. l. 5. c. 6.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 56.
[z] Vitruvius de Architectura, l. 10. c. 19. Tertullian. de Pallio, c. 1. & Salmasius in ib. Vid. Turnebi Adversaria, l. 29. c. 15.

[a] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 112.
[b] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 4.
[c] Ibid.
[d] Herodot. Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 138.

against the sun, and for that reason, and which they accounted and worhipped as God.

Ver. 21. *And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper,* &c.] See the note on 2 Kings xv. 5. *for he was cut off from the house of the Lord;* not suffered to enter into that, because of his uncleanness: *and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land;* see 2 Kings xv. 5.

Ver. 22. *Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last,* &c.] What were done by him, both in the beginning and latter end of his reign: *did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write;* not in his own prophecy, but in the history of his own times, which was usual for every prophet to write, though now lost, see 2 Kings xv. 6.

Ver. 23. *So Uzziah slept with his fathers,* &c.] Died as they did, the same year, according to Dr. Lightfoot[e], in which he was smitten with the leprosy; and in the year of his death it was Isaiah had the vision related in Isa. vi. 1, *&c. and they buried him with his fathers;* see the note on 2 Kings xv. 7.

CHAP. XXVII.

THIS chapter treats of the reign of Jotham, which was a good one, ver. 1, 2. of his buildings and wars, ver. 3—6. and of his death and burial, ver. 7, 8, 9.

Ver. 1. *Jotham* was 25 *years old,* &c.] See the note on 2 Kings xv. 33.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right,* &c.] See the note on 2 Kings xv. 34. *howbeit, he entered not into the temple of the Lord;* to burn incense, as his father did; he did according to his good ways, but not his evil ones: *and the people did yet corruptly;* in sacrificing and burning incense in the high places, 2 Kings xv. 35. which some think Joash himself did, and is meant in the preceding clause; but the sense given is best.

Ver. 3. *He built the high gate in the house of the Lord,* &c.] See the note on 2 Kings xv. 35. *and on the wall of Ophel he built much:* which Kimchi interprets an high place; it was the eastern part of Mount Zion. Josephus[f] calls it Ophlas, and says it joined to the eastern porch of the temple; and some have thought the porch of the temple is meant; the Targum renders it a palace; it is a tradition of the Jews that it was the holy of holies[g].

Ver. 4. *Moreover, he built cities in the mountains of Judah,* &c.] In the mountainous part of it, the hill-country of Judea, Luke i. 65. *and in the forests he built castles and towers;* for the safety of travellers, and of shepherds and their flocks, see ch. xxvi. 10.

Ver. 5. *He fought also with the king of the Ammonites, and prevailed against them,* &c.] These were brought into subjection by David; but in after-times endeavoured to cast off the yoke, and even invaded the land of Judah, as in the days of Jehoshaphat, and now in the reign of Jotham, but succeeded not, see Amos i. 13. *and the children of Ammon gave him the same year* 100 *talents of silver;* he obliged them to pay this tribute annually, and which they began to pay in the present year, and amounted to 35,330*l. and* 10,000 *measures of wheat, and* 10,000 *of barley;* the measure here is the *cor,* the same with the *homer;* which, according to Godwin[h], held 45 gallons, or five bushels and five gallons, so that there must be upwards of 50,000 bushels of each of these paid to Jotham; according to Bishop Cumberland[i], a *cor,* or *homer,* held 75 wine-gallons, and upwards of five pints: *so much did the children of Ammon pay both the second year and the third;* the two following years as well as the present one; why this tribute was not continued to be paid cannot be said with certainty, whether the Ammonites refused and revolted, and could not be obliged, or whether the agreement was only for three years.

Ver. 6. *So Jotham became mighty,* &c.] Having built towers and castles, and fortified cities, and conquered his enemies: *because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God;* ordered, directed, and guided them according to the word and will of God, and walked as in the sight of God, having the fear of him continually before him.

Ver. 7. *Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars,* &c.] Not only with the Ammonites, but with the Syrians, and ten tribes, see 2 Kings xv. 37. *and his ways, lo, they are written in the books of the kings of Israel and Judah;* not in the canonical books of Kings, but in the Chronicles of the kings of both nations, see 2 Kings xv. 36.

Ver. 8. *He was* 25 *years old,* &c.] The same is repeated here as in ver. 1. and of the following verse see the note on 2 Kings xv. 38.

CHAP. XXVIII.

THIS chapter contains the reign of Ahaz, and gives an account of the idolatry he was guilty of, ver. 1—4. what calamities came upon him and his people, being delivered up into the hands of the kings of Syria and Israel, who slew many, and carried others captives, ver. 5—8. though they that were taken captive by Israel, at the admonition of a prophet, were sent back again, ver. 9—15. how also he was distressed by the

[e] Works, vol. 1. p. 99.
[f] De Bell. Jud. l. 5. c. 4, sect. 2.
[g] Vid. Hieron. Trad. Heb. in lib. Paralipom. fol. 86. A. F. G.
[h] Moses & Aaron, l. 6. c. 9.
[i] Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 2. p. 85.

Edomites and Philistines, and not helped by the king of Assyria, he sent for and made presents to, ver. 16—21. and yet went into more and greater idolatries, ver. 22—25. and the chapter is concluded with his death and burial, ver. 26, 27.

Ver. 1—4. *Ahaz was 20 years old when he began to reign,* &c.] These verses are much the same with 2 Kings xvi. 2—4. only in ver. 2 it is said, *he made also molten images for Baalim;* the several Baals or idols of the nations round about, as well as served Jeroboam's calves; see Judg. ii. 11. and he is said in ver. 3. *to burn incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom;* to Molech, the god of the Ammonites, who was worshipped there.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria,* &c.] Whose name was Rezin, 2 Kings xvi. 5. though that is an after-expedition to this, which is there related. The Lord is called the God of Ahaz, because he was so of right; he had dominion over him, and ought to have been worshipped by him; and, besides, he was so by virtue of the national covenant between God and the people Ahaz was king of; and moreover, Ahaz professed he was his God, though in an hypocritical manner, and he forsook the true worship of him: *and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus;* whereas in an after-expedition, related in 2 Kings xvi. 5. they did not succeed: *and he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel;* whose name was Pekah: *who smote him with a great slaughter;* as is next related.

Ver. 6. *For Pekah son of Remaliah,* &c.] Who was at this time king of Israel: *slew in Judah* 120,000 *in one day,* which were *all valiant men;* a great slaughter to be made at one time, and of valiant men, but not so great as that in ch. xiii. 17. *because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers;* this was not a reason with Pekah for slaying them, he himself being an idolater, but why the Lord suffered them to be slain by him.

Ver. 7. *And Zichri, a mighty man of Ephraim, slew Maaseiah the king's son,* &c.] Who therefore must have escaped being burnt in the valley of Hinnom, or only was caused to pass through the fire there, ver. 3. *and Azrikam the governor of the house;* steward or treasurer in the king's house, in the same office as Shebna was, Isa. xxii. 15. *and Elkanah that was next to the king;* prime minister of state.

Ver. 8. *And the children of Israel carried captive of their brethren* 200,000, *women, sons and daughters,* &c.] Which was a very large and unusual number to be carried captive; but having made such a slaughter of the men, and the rest being intimidated thereby, it was the more easily done: *and took away also much spoil from them;* wealth and riches out of their cities, and even from Jerusalem; for by the preceding verse it seems as if they came thither: *and brought the spoils to Samaria;* or rather *towards Samaria* [a], as some render the word; for they were not as yet come to it, nor did they bring it and their captives thither, see ver. ix. 15.

Ver. 9. *But a prophet of the Lord was there, whose name was Oded,* &c.] Not the same that was in the time of Asa, ch. xv. 1, 8. *and he went out before the host that came to Samaria;* that was coming thither; he went out of Samaria to meet them: *and said unto them, behold, because the Lord God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand;* he let them know it was not owing to their wisdom and conduct, their prowess and courage, that they had got the victory over them, but because the Lord was displeased with them for their sins, and therefore gave them up into their hands: *and ye have slain them in a rage* that *reaches up unto heaven;* that is, with an exceeding great rage and fury, and the cry of which reached to heaven also, and was displeasing to God; he suggests to them, that they had exceeded all bounds, and had not shewn that compassion to their brethren, when fallen into their hands, they ought to have done, and which therefore was resented by the God of heaven, see Zech. i. 15.

Ver. 10. *And now ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen and bondwomen unto you,* &c.] As seemed by taking and bringing captive such a number of them, contrary to the law, Lev. xxv. 39—36. but are there *not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?* for which they deserved to be chastised as well as their brethren the men of Judah, and might expect it, and especially if they used them in a barbarous manner, and contrary to the will of God.

Ver. 11. *Now hear me therefore,* &c.] And not only hear, but be obedient: *and deliver the captives again, which ye have taken of your brethren;* their women, sons and daughters, even all of them, the whole 200,000: *for the fierce wrath of God* is *upon you;* hangs over your heads, and will fall upon you, unless you do this.

Ver. 12. *Then certain of the heads of the children of Ephraim,* &c.] Of the principal men of the ten tribes, whose names follow: *Azariah the son of Johanan, Berechiah the son of Meshillemoth, and Jehizkiah the son of Shallum, and Amasa the son of Hadlai, stood up against them that came from the war;* who were bringing the captives and spoils to Samaria; but these princes, being influenced by what the prophet said, hindered their proceeding any further.

Ver. 13. *And said unto them, ye shall not bring in the captives hither,* &c.] That is, into Samaria, near which it seems they now were: *for whereas we have offended against the Lord* already; by exceeding in their cruelty against their brethren of Judah, as well as by worshipping the calves: *ye intend to add more to our sins and to our trespass;* by making slaves of those they had taken captives, which was against the express law of God: *for our trespass is great;* which they had committed already, by their idolatrous practices: *and there is fierce wrath against Israel;* which they perceived by what the prophet had said.

Ver. 14. *So the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and the congregation.*] Which were come out of Samaria to meet them; such an effect had the words of the prophet, and the princes, upon them, that they not only left the captives with them, but the spoil, to dispose of, as they thought fit.

Ver. 15. *And the men that were expressed by name*

[a] לשמרון versus Samariam, Piscator, Rambachius.

rose up, &c.] Either those before named, ver. 12. as Jarchi, and so the Vulgate Latin version; or such as they pitched upon, nominated, and appointed: *and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them:* put clothes on their backs, and shoes on their feet, who either were taken or carried away before they could put on their garments, or had been stripped of them: *and gave them to eat, and drink, and anointed them;* not only fed them, being hungry and thirsty, but anointed them for refreshment after travelling; the Targum is, *washed them*, from dirt and filth contracted by travelling: *and carried all the feeble of them on asses:* women and children that were not able to walk afoot so far back again: *and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm-trees, to their brethren;* a city on the borders both of Judah and Israel, and famous for the number of palm-trees near it, see Judg. i. 16. in all which these inhabitants of Samaria acted the part of the good Samaritan, Luke x. 33, 34. *then they returned to Samaria:* the prophet, with the princes, and the army, and the whole congregation.

Ver. 16. *At that time did King Ahaz send to the kings of Assyria to help him.*] To Tiglath-pileser, and his son, see 2 Kings xvi. 7. and the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read in the singular, and so the Targum.

Ver. 17. *For again the Edomites had come*, &c.] As in the days of Jehoshaphat, ch. xx. 10. *and smitten Judah, and carried away captives:* taking the advantage of the weak and low condition Ahaz was in, and which was the reason of his sending to the king of Assyria.

Ver. 18. *The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the low country*, &c.] Which lay nearest to them, as Sharon, Lydda, Joppa, &c. in revenge of what Uzziah had done to them, ch. xxvi. 6, 7. *and of the south of Judah;* they penetrated as far as that, from the west to the south of the land: *and had taken Beth-shemesh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shocho, with the villages thereof, and Timnah with the villages thereof;* of which see Josh. xv. 10, 35, 41, 57. and xix. 42. and *Gimzo also, and the villages thereof;* which though nowhere else mentioned in Scripture, yet we frequently read in Jewish writings [l] of Nahum, a man of Ganizu, which perhaps is the same place with this: *and they dwelt there;* kept them in their hands, and inhabited them.

Ver. 19. *For the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel*, &c.] Because of his impieties and idolatries, which the people by his example went into; he is called king of Israel, because he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and because he ruled over two of the tribes of Israel, and of right was king over all Israel, as David and Solomon his ancestors were; though the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, and Syriac versions, read, king of Judah; and so the Targum: *for he made Judah naked;* stripped them of their religion, and the worship of God, and so of the divine protection, whereby they were exposed to their enemies, see Exod. xxxii. 25. the Targum is, "for the house of Judah "ceased from the worship of the Lord;" *transgressed sore against the Lord:* by committing gross idolatry; the same Targum is, "they dealt falsely with the "Word of the Lord."

Ver. 20. *And Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria came unto him*, &c.] Not to Jerusalem, but to Damascus, where he made a diversion in his favour, and took that city, and where Ahaz met him, 2 Kings xvi. 9. *and distressed him, but strengthened him not;* exhausted his treasures, and laid a tribute upon him, but did not help him against the Edomites and Philistines, or recover for him the cities they had taken from him; and, in taking Damascus, he served himself more than Ahaz, and paved the way for seizing upon the ten tribes.

Ver. 21. *For Ahaz took away a portion out of the house of the Lord, and out of the house of the king, and of the princes*, &c.] A part out of the treasures of the temple, and a part out of his own treasures, and another which he levied upon his nobles: *and gave it unto the king of Assyria;* sent it to him as a present, to engage him on his side, and assist him against his enemies, 2 Kings xvi. 8. *but he helped him not;* see the note on the preceding verse.

Ver. 22. *And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord*, &c.] By increasing his idolatries, as appears by what he did, in imitation of what he saw at Damascus, where he had an interview with the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xvi. 10—16. *this is that King Ahaz;* that monster of iniquity, than whom there was none worse, nor any so bad, of all the kings of Judah.

Ver. 23. *For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him*, &c.] As he foolishly imagined, that they might do him no more hurt; as it is said of the Indians, that they worship the devil, that he may not hurt them; but that a king of Judah should do this is monstrous stupidity; rather therefore the meaning may be, that he worshipped the gods of those that smote him, those of the men or soldiers of Damascus [m], see ver. 5. for the spirit of God would never ascribe the smiting of him to idols, though he himself might; *and he said, because the gods of the kings of Syria help them;* which looks as if this was before Damascus was taken by the king of Assyria, and when Rezin king of Syria prevailed over Ahaz: *therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me;* against the Edomites and Philistines; wherefore rather to this, his idolatry, respect is had in ver. 22. *but they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel;* the worship of them was the cause of all the calamities that came upon that part of Israel of which he was king.

Ver. 24. *And gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God*, &c.] And converted them to his own use, sold them, or melted the gold and silver, of which they were, and made money of them, his treasures being exhausted: *and shut up the doors of the house of the Lord;* that the people might not come and worship there, but on the high places he made: *and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem;* that the priests might sacrifice there, and not in the temple.

Ver. 25. *And in every city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto the gods*, &c.] The gods of

[l] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 21. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 108. 2, &c.

[m] So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

Damascus, and other idols; this he did to prevent their coming to Jerusalem to worship.

Ver. 26, 27. *Now the rest of his acts*, &c.] Of these two verses, see the notes on 2 Kings xvi. 19, 20.

CHAP. XXIX.

THIS chapter begins with the good reign of Hezekiah, who upon his accession to the throne opened the doors of the temple, ver. 1—3. summoned the priests and Levites, and exhorted them to purge the temple, and restore the worship of it, ver. 4—11. who accordingly set about the work immediately, and cleansed the temple, and, when they had done, reported it to the king, ver. 12—19. upon which he, with the princes, went into the temple and offered sacrifices, ver. 20—24. and ordered singers to sing at the offering of burnt-offerings, ver. 25—30. when he and his people offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings in great abundance, ver. 31—36.

Ver. 1, 2. *Hezekiah began to reign*, &c.] Of these two verses, see the notes on 2 Kings xviii. 2, 3.

Ver. 3. *He in the first year of his reign, in the first month*, &c.] And, as appears from ver. 17, on the first day of the month: *opened the doors of the house of the Lord;* which his father had shut, ch. xxviii. 24. *and repaired them;* or strengthened them, the hinges, and other parts of them, being loosened and weakened; and ornamented them by overlaying them with gold, the plates of which very probably his father had taken off; for, certain it is, Hezekiah overlaid them, and very probably at this time, see 2 Kings xviii. 16.

Ver. 4. *And he brought in the priests and Levites*, &c.] The persons that officiated in the service of the temple: *and gathered them together into the east street;* which led to the eastern gate of the temple.

Ver. 5. *And said unto them, hear me, ye Levites; sanctify yourselves*, &c.] By washing their bodies and their garments, that no pollution might attend them in their service, see Isa. lii. 11. *and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers;* by carrying out of it all manner of uncleanness, as they did, ver. 16. *and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy* place; or the abomination; the altar, like that at Damascus, which Ahaz, removing the altar of the Lord, had placed in the court of the priests; or, as Kimchi thinks, an idol, which he had set upon that altar.

Ver. 6. *For our fathers have transgressed, and done that which* was *evil in the eyes of the Lord our God*, &c.] Meaning their more immediate ancestors, his father and theirs, who had committed idolatry; which is a great trespass, and than which there is not a greater evil in the sight of God, nor more provoking to him: *and have forsaken him;* his word, worship, and ordinances: *and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord;* the temple, by neglecting that, and the service of it, and attending the high places: *and turned* their *backs;* upon it; though some think this refers to a rite or custom, introduced by Ahaz before he shut up the temple, that instead of looking to the west, when they worshipped, where was the ark of the Lord, he ordered them to turn their faces to the east, where his altar stood.

Ver. 7. *Also they have shut up the doors of the porch*, &c.] So that there was no entering into the temple, ch. xxviii. 24. *and put out the lamps;* for the priests not being able to go in morning and evening to light them, and dress them, they in course went out; the Jews say [*], that on the 18th of Ab, which answers to part of July and August, the western lamp was extinct in the days of Ahaz, for which a fast was kept on that day: *and have not burnt incense, nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy* place *unto the God of Israel;* but had done these in the high places to idols, ch. xxviii. 3, 4, 24, 25.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem*, &c.] As appeared, by suffering the Syrians, and Israelites, and Edomites, and Philistines, to come upon them, and distress them, as the history of the preceding chapter shews: *and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes;* such desolation and destruction were made among them, as not only threw them into a stupor, that they knew not what to do, but were amazing to all their neighbours, and caused them to hiss at them, which they could not but be sensible of.

Ver. 9. *For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword*, &c.] Of the kings of Syria and Israel, even great numbers of them, ch. xxviii. 5, 6. *and our sons and our daughters and our wives* are *in captivity for this;* for this idolatry; or they *were*, though afterwards dismissed, ch. xxviii. 8, 15. and some of them were still in captivity, perhaps such as were carried captive by the Edomites, ch. xxviii. 17.

Ver. 10. *Now* it is *in mine heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel*, &c.] To renew one, as Asa and Jehoiada had done, promising to serve the Lord, and worship him according to his will: *that his fierce wrath might be turned from us;* under the tokens of which they still continued, and might expect it to break forth in other instances, unless a reformation was made.

Ver. 11. *My sons*, &c.] So, as the father of his people, he bespeaks them in the most tender and affectionate manner: *be not now negligent;* backward to this good work, slothful, sluggish, and remiss in it; according to Jarchi and Kimchi, the word has the signification of error, and the sense may be, don't continue in the error in which you have been, in neglecting the service of God: *for the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense;* on the altar of incense, which was the work of the priests, and for which they were selected from the rest of their bre-

[*] Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. c. 580. sect. 2.

thren; and Hezekiah's discourse was directed to them, as well as to the Levites, ver. 4, 5.

Ver. 12—14. *Then the Levites arose*, &c.] Whose names are mentioned; of the Kohathites two, Mahath the son of Amashai, and Joel the son of Azariah; of the Merarites two, Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel; of the Gershonites two, Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah; and of the family of Elizaphan, a Kohathite, two, Shimri and Jehiel; and of the family of Asaph, one of the chief singers in the times of David, two, Zechariah and Mattaniah; and of the family of Heman, another principal singer in the same times, two, Jehiel and Shimei; and of the family of Jeduthun, the third principal singer, the same with Ethan, two, Shemaiah and Uzziel, in all 14.

Ver. 15. *And they gathered their brethren, and sanctified themselves*, &c.] As they were bid, see ver. 5. *and came, according to the commandment of the king, by the word of the Lord, to cleanse the house of the Lord*: for this, which the king commanded, was by the Lord, and they came to do this work, in obedience to both.

Ver. 16. *And the priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord, to cleanse it*, &c.] Into the holy place, where the candlesticks and shew-bread tables stood, into which none but priests might enter, but not into the most holy place, the innermost of all; for none but the high-priest might go into that, and only on the day of atonement; though in case of necessity, as for repairs, others might go into it, and so perhaps now to cleanse it, if any pollution was there: *and brought out all the uncleanness that they found in the temple of the Lord into the court of the house of the Lord*; into the court of the priests, where the Levites might be, and were: *and the Levites took it, to carry it out abroad into the brook Kidron*; which ran through the valley of the son of Hinnom, into which all unclean things, and the filth of the temple and sacrifices, were usually carried and cast, see 2 Kings xxiii. 12.

Ver. 17. *Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify*, &c.] Either of the reign of King Hezekiah, or rather of the year; the month Ab or Nisan, as the Targum expresses it: *and on the eighth of the month came they to the porch of the Lord*; they seem to have begun cleansing the inner part of the temple first, and so came forward until they came to the porch which led into it: *so they sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days*; the holy place, and it may be the most holy place, and the court of the priests: *and on the 16th day of the first month they made an end*; it took them eight days more to cleanse the outward porch, and the buildings and chambers belonging to the temple; according to Jarchi, it required so much time, because Ahaz had framed pictures of idols upon the walls of the temple, which could not be defaced sooner.

Ver. 18. *Then they went in to Hezekiah the king*, &c.] In his palace: *and said, we have cleansed all the house of the Lord*; the several parts of it, and apartments belonging to it: *and the altar of burnt-offering, with all the vessels thereof*; which they cleansed and scoured, and put in their proper place, and which Ahaz had removed: *and the shew-bread table, with all the vessels thereof*; which had lain neglected and profaned, but were now put in order.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, all the vessels which King Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression*, &c.] Not that he threw them away, being valuable, as made of gold and silver; but, as Kimchi interprets it, he removed them, and converted them to idolatrous uses; or, as the Targum, he defiled or profaned them, and made them abominable by strange idols: *have we prepared and sanctified, and, behold, they are before the altar of the Lord*; they had cleaned them, and fitted them for service, and had put them where they were ready for use; though the Targum is, "we have laid "them aside, and hid them, and prepared others in "their room," as unfit for divine service; and which is the sense of other Jewish writers*.

Ver. 20. *Then Hezekiah the king rose early*, &c.] Took the first opportunity to attend the worship of God, and set an example to his people: *and gathered the rulers of the city*; the elders of the people, the chief magistrates in Jerusalem: and *went up to the house of the Lord*; the temple, to worship there.

Ver. 21. *And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he-goats, for a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah*, &c.] To make atonement in a typical way, having respect to the sacrifice of the Messiah, for the sins of the king, his family and court, among whom idolatry had prevailed in the times of his father; and for the cleansing of the temple, which had been polluted by the idolatries of Ahaz; and for the expiation of the whole land; seven of each sort are ordered, though only one goat was required for a sin-offering by the law, because of the multitude of transgressions that had been committed, and because of the length of time in which sacrifices had been neglected: *and he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer them on the altar of the Lord*; the altar of burnt-offerings, whose business it was to do it.

Ver. 22. *So they killed the bullocks*, &c.] The seven bullocks, that is, the priests killed them: *and the priests received the blood*; into basins provided for that purpose: *and sprinkled it on the altar*; according to the law of Moses, Lev. i. 5. and so they did with the rams and lambs.

Ver. 23. *And they brought forth the he-goats for the sin-offering before the king and the congregation*, &c.] Which were to make atonement for the sins of both: *and they laid their hands on them*; signifying thereby that they were vicarious sacrifices to be offered up in their own room and stead, and that they deserved to die, as these creatures would: transferring as it were hereby their sins unto them, for which they were to be sacrificed, and to make atonement, as an emblem of the imputation of the sins of the Lord's people to Christ, sacrificed in their stead.

Ver. 24. *And the priests killed them*, &c.] The seven he-goats; for of the killing of the bullocks, rams, and lambs, mention is made before, ver. 2. *and*

* T. Bab. Avodah Zarah, fol. 54. 2.

they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make atonement for all Israel; typical of the reconciliation and atonement made for the whole spiritual Israel of God by the sacrifice of Christ: *for the king commanded* that *the burnt-offering, and the sin-offering*, should be made *for all Israel*; not only for the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and for as many of the rest of the tribes as were come over to them, and dwelt among them; but even for the ten tribes also, sadly guilty of idolatry, and for whose reformation and good this pious prince was concerned, see ch. xxx. 1.

Ver. 25. *And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps*, &c.] To play upon, which were the three principal instruments of music used in religious worship, and what had been disused in the times of Ahaz: *according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet*: this sort of music was not commanded by the law of Moses, but was directed to by David under a divine influence, and was approved of by the prophets of the Lord here mentioned: *for so was the commandment of the Lord by his prophets*: the Targum is, " for by the Word of the Lord was " the commandment by the hand of the prophets."

Ver. 26. *And the Levites stood with the instruments of David*, &c.] Which were invented, directed, and ordered to be used by him, and are the same as in the preceding verse: *and the priests with the trumpets*; which were made by the direction of Moses, according to the order of God, Numb. x. 2.

Ver. 27. *And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar*, &c.] Which was wholly devoted to the Lord, and was an acknowledgment of his sovereignty over them, and of his goodness to them: *and when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began* also *with trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel*: and this was done at the time of the pouring out of the drink-offering, which always attended the burnt-offering; for this is a rule with the Jews, that they don't say the song but over the drink-offering *.

Ver. 28. *And all the congregation worshipped*, &c.] Bowed their heads as a token of divine adoration: *and the singers sang*: both with vocal and instrumental music, who were the Levites: *and the trumpeters sounded*: their silver trumpets; these were the priests: and *all* this continued *until the burnt-offering was finished*; with all appertaining to it, the meat and drink offerings.

Ver. 29. *And when they had made an end of offering*, &c.] Both the sin-offering and the burnt-offering: *the king and all* that were *with him bowed themselves and worshipped*; towards the place where the ark was, giving thanks for the purging of the temple, and restoring the worship of it.

Ver. 30. *Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord, with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer*, &c.] Making use of psalms composed by the one and the other; Jarchi takes it to be the 105th psalm, which begins, *O give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name*; as in 1 Chron. xvi. 7, 8. *and they sang praises with gladness*; the king and all the people: *and they bowed their heads and worshipped*; made another adoration of the Divine Being, as deeply impressed with a sense of his greatness and goodness.

Ver. 31. *Then Hezekiah answered and said*, &c.] Or proceeded to say, as follows: *now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the Lord*; having entered anew on the performance of their office, filling their hands with sacrifices, as the words signify: *come near, and bring sacrifices and thank-offerings into the house of the Lord*; which the people were to put into their hands to offer for them: *and the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank-offerings*; peace-offerings, part of which the offerers had to feast on with their friends, so expressing their joy and thankfulness on this occasion: *and as many as were of a free heart burnt-offerings*; of which they had no share, but were wholly the Lord's; and which was a greater proof of their liberality, and so of their sincere and cordial thankfulness.

Ver. 32. *And the number of the burnt-offerings which the congregation brought were 70 bullocks, 100 rams*, and 200 *lambs*: *all these* were *for a burnt-offering to the Lord*.] Of which they had no part to feast on, but were wholly devoted to the Lord, by way of thankfulness to him.

Ver. 33. *And the consecrated things*, &c.] Which were devoted for peace-offerings, of which the owners had a part: were 600 *oxen, and* 3,000 *sheep*: which was a much lesser number than what were offered upon occasion in the times of David and Solomon, the nation being poorer; and besides, these were only the oblation of two tribes, they of all Israel.

Ver. 34. *But the priests were too few, so that they could not flay all the burnt-offerings*, &c.] Take off the skins of them, which used to be done by the priests, Lev. i. 6. *wherefore their brethren the Levites did help them till the work was ended*; assisted in the flaying of the sacrifices, until they had gone through the service of this time, and the skins of all the sacrifices were flayed off: *and until the* other *priests had sanctified themselves*; who had been negligent of it, or had defiled themselves by idolatry: *for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests*; were more ready to do it, and did it with greater cheerfulness and good will; were not backward to do it, but did it at once.

Ver. 35. *And also the burnt-offerings* were *in abundance, with the fat of the peace-offerings, and the drink-offerings, for every burnt-offering*, &c.] Besides the abundance of burnt-offerings, whose skins were to be taken off, there were meat-offerings and drink-offerings to each, which required many hands to prepare them; and also the fat of the peace-offerings was to be burnt; which, all together, occasioned a great deal of business: *so the service of the house of the Lord was set in order*: both for sacrifice and singing: a good beginning was made, and there was a good foundation laid to proceed on.

Ver. 36. *And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people*, &c.] To see things go on so well, which foreboded good unto them: and particularly *that God had prepared the people*; disposed and directed their hearts in

* T. Bab. Eracin, fol. 12. 1.

such a manner as to yield such a cheerful obedience to the will of God, and shew such a hearty regard to his worship and service, and the restoration of it: *for the thing was done suddenly*: whereby it the more appeared that they were under a divine influence, which so quickly and powerfully wrought upon them to engage in this work, and needed not arguments and persuasions to bring them to it.

C H A P. XXX.

HEZEKIAH having consulted his nobles about keeping the passover the second month, and determined upon it, sent messengers throughout Israel and Judah, to acquaint them with it, at which some mocked, and others seriously attended to it, ver. 1—12. so it was celebrated in a solemn manner, though some were not qualified for it according to the law, and for whose pardon Hezekiah prayed, and it was granted, ver. 13—20. also the feast of unleavened bread was kept seven days, and a festival of seven days more was likewise observed with great joy and gladness, ver. 21—27.

Ver. 1. *And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah*, &c.] Sent messengers to them, not only to the subjects of his own kingdom, Judah, but to all the Israelites that dwelt in it, who were come thither for the sake of religion, and the worship of God: *and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh*: which are put for all the ten tribes, as appears from ver. 10, 11. and are distinguished from Israel in the preceding clause: *that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem*: not that he laid his commands upon them to come, they not being his subjects, namely, those of the ten tribes; but he hereby admonished them of their duty, and gave them a kind invitation, signifying the doors of the temple were open for them, and they were welcome to come thither: *to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel*: to the glory of his name, who was the common Lord of them all, and whose command it was to keep the passover, and that at Jerusalem, and nowhere else, see Deut. xvi. 1—6.

Ver. 2. *For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem*, &c.] He and his nobles, and the great sanhedrim or senate of the nation, had consulted together: *to keep the passover in the second month*: in the month Ijar, as the Targum, because they could not keep it in the first month, as it should have been kept, according to the law of God, for the reasons following.

Ver. 3. *For they could not keep it at the time*, &c.] In the month Nisan, as the Targum adds, on the 14th day of the month, as the law enjoined, because the cleansing of the temple was not finished until the 16th day, see ch. xxix. 17. and, besides this, two other reasons follow: *because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently*: that is, a sufficient number of them were not sanctified, to slay all the passover-lambs the people that came to the feast would want: *neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem*; they had no notice of it, nor summons for it; and it was required that, at such a time, all the males in the land should appear at Jerusalem; but this custom having been long disused, it required time to acquaint them of the revival of it.

Ver. 4. *And the thing pleased the king, and all the congregation*.] They all unanimously agreed to it, and determined it should be done.

Ver. 5. *So they established a decree, to make proclamation throughout all Israel*, &c.] Passed a vote, that heralds should be appointed and sent to proclaim it throughout the land, that all might know it, and none plead ignorance: *from Beer-sheba even to Dan*; the one being the southern and the other the northern boundary of the whole land of Israel: *that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem*; the only proper place where it was to be kept: *for they had not done it of a long time* in such sort *as it was written*; as prescribed in the law; those of the ten tribes had not observed it from the time of the schism of Jeroboam, and many in the kingdom of Judah had neglected it, at least had not kept it as the law required; for the phrase which we render *of a long time* rather respects a multitude of persons than length of time, who had been very deficient in their observance of this ordinance; the Targum is, that "many had not done it in its time, in "Nisan," and suggests that it was kept twice this year, first in Nisan by a few, and now again in the second month Ijar, and which is the sense of some Talmudic writers[r], but has no foundation in the text.

Ver. 6. *So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah*, &c.] Both through the kingdoms of the ten tribes of Israel, and the kingdom of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin: *and according to the commandment of the king, saying*; so they were ordered by the king to say, when they delivered the letters which by the king's commandment they carried; or this was the purport of them, as follows, especially of those that were sent to the ten tribes: *ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel*; from whom they had revolted, and from whose worship they had departed, by setting up and serving the calves at Dan and Beth-el: *and he will return to the remnant of you that are escaped out of the hand of the king of Assyria*; Pul and Tiglath-pileser, who had both invaded their land, and the latter had taken many of their cities, and carried the inhabitants captive, 2 Kings xv. 19, 29.

Ver. 7. *And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers*, &c.] By worshipping the calves, and neglecting the service of God in the temple at Jerusa-

[r] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 12. 2.

lem; the Targum is, "which acted deceitfully with "the Word of the Lord their God:" who *therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see;* some part of the land of Israel being already made desolate by the kings of Assyria, which was very visible.

Ver. 8. *Now be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were,* &c.] Obstinate and refractory, like heifers unaccustomed to the yoke, which draw back from it, and will not submit to it: but *yield yourselves unto the Lord;* be subject unto him, or *give the hand*[s] to him, as a token of subjection and homage, or of entering into covenant with him, promising for the future to serve and obey him: *and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever;* set apart for worship and service, until the Messiah should come: *and serve the Lord your God:* there, in the temple, according to his prescribed will: *that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you;* which had already broke out, in suffering the Assyrians to invade their land, and distress them.

Ver. 9. *For if ye turn again unto the Lord,* &c.] To the fear or worship of the Lord, as the Targum: *your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land;* who had been carried away by Tiglath-pileser, see Psal. cvi. 46. *for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful;* so he had proclaimed his name, as they must know, Exod. xxxiv. 6. *and will not turn away his face from you;* in wrath and anger; or withdraw his Shechinah from you, as the Targum; his gracious and glorious presence: *if ye return unto him;* his fear and worship, as the same paraphrase.

Ver. 10. *So the posts passed from city to city, through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun,* &c.] Through all the ten tribes, not being hindered or forbid by Hoshea king of Israel, who was one of the best of their kings, and was very willing his people should go and worship at Jerusalem if they thought fit; so that they had no excuse to make, as before, that they were forbid by their king going thither; and which it is very probable Hezekiah knew, and therefore took the freedom to send posts throughout his kingdom: *but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them;* the messengers that brought the letters, the contents of which they despised, and paid no regard to; this was the behaviour of many, and probably of the greater part, but not of all, as follows.

Ver. 11. *Nevertheless, divers of Asher, and Manasseh, and of Zebulun, humbled themselves,* &c.] Confessed their idolatries and impieties, and expressed sorrow and repentance for them, and were willing to obey the commands of God, and attend his worship and ordinances: *and came to Jerusalem;* to keep the passover.

Ver. 12. *Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart,* &c.] To make them unanimous in this service, hearty and willing to it, to a man, which was owing to the power and efficacy of divine grace: *to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the Lord;* to keep the passover, which they did not only in obedience to their superiors, and their orders, but considering these as agreeable to the word and will of God.

Ver. 13. *And there assembled at Jerusalem much people,* &c.] Out of the several tribes: *to keep the feast of unleavened bread;* the passover, which was eaten with unleavened bread: *in the second month;* the month Ijar: *a very great congregation;* such as had not been seen on such an occasion for many years.

Ver. 14. *And they arose,* &c.] Before they slew and ate the passover: *and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem;* which Ahaz had set up in every corner of Jerusalem, to offer sacrifices upon, ch. xxviii. 24. *and all the altars for incense took they away;* for as there were some to offer sacrifices on, there were others to burn incense upon, not to the Lord, but to idols, as the Targum adds: *and cast them into the brook Kidron;* having reduced them to dust and ashes, see ch. xxix. 16.

Ver. 15. *Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month,* &c.] For though they could not keep it in the month in which it should have been kept, for the reasons before given, yet they kept it on the day of the month in which it was observed: *and the priests and the Levites were ashamed;* of their negligence and backwardness to service, and to fit themselves for it, when they saw the people so forward and ready to attend to it: *and they sanctified themselves;* by washing their bodies and their garments: *and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the Lord;* to be offered up on the altar of burnt-offerings, to expiate their own sins, and the sins of the people; though some take these to be the passover-offerings; but they were not offered until the 15th day, and besides were peace-offerings, mentioned ver. 22. rather these were the daily sacrifices.

Ver. 16. *And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God,* &c.] The priests in their place, and the Levites in theirs, in which they were ordered to stand when they offered sacrifice: *the priests sprinkled the blood,* which they received *of the hand of the Levites;* the blood either of the burnt-offerings before mentioned, or of the passover-lambs, which the Levites slew, and received the blood of them in basins; and which the priests took of them, and sprinkled, not on the door-posts of houses, as in Egypt, but on the altar round about, and which none but priests might do, Lev. i. 5.

Ver. 17. *For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified,* &c.] Or purified from uncleanness, contracted either by idolatry, or through such things which, according to the ceremonial law, made them unclean, and from which they had not now time to cleanse themselves according to the law: *therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one* that was *not clean, to sanctify* them *unto the Lord;* this they did for the masters of families, who were ceremonially unclean, who otherwise might have killed their passover-lambs themselves, see Exod. xii. 6. but now the Levites did it for them, that their passovers might be sanctified and consecrated to the Lord; for, as Philo the Jew says[t], one day in a year the whole sacrificed, every one acted as a priest, and

[s] תנו יד date manum, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[t] De Vita Mosis, l. 3. p. 686. & de Decalogo, p. 766.

brought and slew his own sacrifice, meaning at the passover.

Ver. 18. *For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun,* &c.] All which were of the ten tribes, where idolatry had prevailed for a long time: *had not cleansed themselves;* from impurity contracted by idolatry and other things: *yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written;* because they ate it in their uncleanness, which was not according to the law, that required that such should be clean that ate of any holy things, see John xviii. 28. but since these people came a great way off, and there was no deferring it to another month, the king chose rather they should be admitted to eat of it, though in their uncleanness: *but Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, the good Lord pardon every one;* God, who is gracious and merciful, and of his goodness, grace, and mercy, forgive such who, though ceremonially unclean, ate of the passover, and especially since they were sincere and cordial in their services; and therefore he hoped that this breach of the ceremonial law would not be laid to their charge. Goodness is such a well-known attribute of God, that the very Heathens ascribe it to their deities; hence we read of a temple of the *good god*, the gods being the givers of good things to men; Jupiter, or Jove, the supreme god, is supposed to be meant[*].

Ver. 19. *That prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers,* &c.] Who was heartily desirous of worshipping God, and observing his ordinances, which had been enjoined their fathers, and they had kept: though Aben Ezra, as Kimchi observes, refers this to Hezekiah, whose *whole heart he directed*, or *prepared to seek the Lord*, &c. by prayer and supplication for every one of the said persons: *though he be not* cleansed *according to the purification of the sanctuary;* according to the ceremonial law, which the service of the temple required; since, though they were attended with a ceremonial impurity, had a moral purity, and their hearts were right with God.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah,* &c.] Heard his prayer, and accepted of it, and granted what he desired: *and healed his people;* that is, forgave their sins, as Kimchi interprets it; forgiveness being expressed by healing, for which he refers to Psal. xli. 4. to which may be added Psal. ciii. 3. Mal. iv. 2. and which was known either by a prophet sent to declare it, or by not punishing them for their offence.

Ver. 21. *And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness,* &c.] Which, according to the law of Moses, were always to follow the passover, Exod. xii. 18, 19. *and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day,* singing *with loud instruments unto the Lord;* or *instruments of strength*[†]; so called not from the matter of them, or manner in which they were made, but either from the sound of them, as our version, or from the strength and power of God, which they set forth in praise; the Targum is, "with instruments of praise," and so the word is sometimes used, see Psal. viii. 3. compared with Matt. xxi. 16. the priests blew with trumpets, and the Levites played on harps, psalteries, &c. and this they did every day when the sacrifices were offered, during the seven days of unleavened bread.

Ver. 22. *And Hezekiah spake comfortably to all the Levites,* &c.] Or *to the heart*[‡] of them, such things as were very encouraging to them to go on in the work and worship of God, commending their singing, exhorting them to diligence in instructing the people, promising them his favour and protection: even those *that taught the good knowledge of the Lord;* who instructed the people well in his word, worship, and ordinances; though some restrain this to their skill in singing the praises of God, both vocally and instrumentally, and their abilities and diligence in teaching others: *and they did eat throughout the feast;* or did eat the feast; that is, the sacrifices of it; not the Levites only, but the king, and all the congregation: *offering peace-offerings;* part of which belonged to the Lord, another part to the priests, and a third to the offerers, on which they feasted with their friends; and this they did throughout all the seven days of the feast: *and making confession to the Lord God of their fathers;* confessing their sins of omission and commission they had been guilty of; owning the goodness, grace, and mercy of God towards them; blessing and praising his name for the restoration of his worship and ordinances among them.

Ver. 23. *And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days,* &c.] They consulted among themselves, and with the king and his nobles about it, who all agreed to it: *and they kept* other *seven days with gladness;* not altogether in the same manner they had kept the preceding seven days; they did not slay and eat passover-lambs, nor did they eat unleavened bread, but offered peace-offerings, and feasted upon them; and sung the praises of God, and attended to the instructions of the priests and Levites, being in a very agreeable frame of mind for religious exercises.

Ver. 24. *For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation* 1,000 *bullocks, and* 7,000 *sheep,* &c.] He separated them, as Kimchi interprets it, from his own herds and flocks; or out of his own substance, at his own expense purchased them; or lifted them up, as the word signifies, as heave-offerings to the Lord; and gave them to the people for thank-offerings to feast upon: *and the princes gave to the congregation* 1,000 *bullocks, and* 10,000 *sheep;* for the same purposes, following the king's example: *and a great number of priests sanctified themselves;* besides those who had before, that they might be fit to offer this great number of sacrifices.

Ver. 25. *And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and Levites,* &c.] The people that were gathered together out of the several cities of Judah, which no doubt was the largest congregation, with whom the priests and Levites are joined, as being of

[*] Pausan. Arcadica, sive, l. 8. p. 515. Vid. Ciceronem de Nat. Deor. l. 3. prope finem.

[†] בכלי עז cum instrumentis fortitudinis, Vatablus.

[‡] על לב ad cor, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

that kingdom, and dwellers in Jerusalem, where their office lay: *and all the congregation that came out of Israel:* out of the ten tribes, particularly Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, ver. 18. *and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced;* the proselytes, even such as were circumcised, who ate of the passover, and kept the feast of unleavened bread, as well as the other days of rejoicing, the former of which none might partake of but circumcised persons; and it can hardly be thought that any other would come out of Israel on such an occasion, see Exod. xii. 48.

Ver. 26. *So there was great joy in Jerusalem,* &c.] Not merely carnal, expressed in eating and drinking, and making merry with one another, but spiritual, on account of the restoration of temple-service, and the feasts of the Lord: *for since the time of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel,* there was *not the like in Jerusalem:* not the like joy, so spiritual, sincere, and hearty; nor such a number of persons rejoicing together on such an occasion; nor for so many days together, which were as many as at the dedication of the temple by Solomon.

Ver. 27. *Then the priests the Levites arose,* &c.] The priests who were of the tribe of Levi; for there were some in Israel that were not, but were made of any of the people, as in the times of Jeroboam; though some supply the copulative *and:* so the Targum: *and blessed the people;* which was the proper work and business of the priests to do; though, whilst they were blessing, the Levites might be singing: *and their voice was heard;* meaning not by the people, though undoubtedly it was, but by the Lord; the Targum is, "their prayer was heard or received;" for the blessing was delivered in a petitionary way, Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26. and was no other than a request that God would bless them, which he did: *and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling-place,* even *unto heaven;* see Psal. iii. 4. and xviii. 6. by what means it was known their prayer was heard and accepted cannot be said; there might be some visible token of it, as the people were dismissed, and departed.

CHAP. XXXI.

THIS chapter begins with the destruction of idolatrous worship, the appointment of the courses of the priests and Levites, and the royal bounty for sacrifices, ver. 1, 2, 3. next follows the order Hezekiah gave, that the people at Jerusalem, and throughout the land, should make the proper provision for the priests and Levites, as the law directed; and which was cheerfully complied with, and the first-fruits and tithes were brought in, in great abundance, insomuch that there was enough, and plenty left, ver. 4—10. wherefore chambers were prepared in the temple to lay it up in, and persons appointed to be the overseers of it, and to distribute it faithfully to their brethren and their families, to small and great, ver. 11—19. and the chapter is closed in praise of the works of Hezekiah, and the success that attended him, ver. 20, 21.

Ver. 1. *Now when all this was finished,* &c.] The temple cleansed, the priests and Levites sanctified, the passover and feast of unleavened bread observed, and other seven days of rejoicing kept: *all Israel* that were *present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin;* which had been erected by Ahaz, ch. xxviii. 2, 25. at or about this time also the brasen serpent was broke to pieces, 2 Kings xviii. 4. *in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all:* which must be understood of such cities in those tribes that had been taken in former times by the kings of Judah from the kings of Israel; or such as were now in the hands of the Assyrians, who might not concern themselves in matters of religion; or this might be done at the connivance of Hoshea king of Israel, who had no regard to any other idolatry than the worship of the calves; and besides, having met with trouble from the Assyrians, and fearing more, might be willing to have his kingdom cleared of idolatry, in hope the divine displeasure would be removed: *then all the children of Israel returned every man to his possession into their own cities;* and not till then, when all monuments of idolatry were removed.

Ver. 2. *And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests, and the Levites after their courses,* &c.] As they were fixed by David, and were in the times of Jehoshaphat, and had been since interrupted, and which Hezekiah now restored, and placed them in their regular order: *every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt-offerings, and for peace-offerings, to minister and to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the Lord;* or camp of the Lord, where they were posted, and lay as an host encamped, to keep the watch of the house of the Lord; the priests, they were appointed to offer the sacrifices of every sort; the Levites to minister to them in what they needed and required of them, and others of them to be singers in time of service, and others to be porters at the gate.

Ver. 3. He appointed *also the king's portion of his substance,* &c.] Out of his own treasury, of his royal bounty, over and above what was usual for kings to give for their own sacrifices, the treasury of the temple being exhausted, and the people being brought into low circumstances in the last reign: *for the burnt-offerings,* to wit, *for the morning and evening burnt-offerings;* the daily sacrifice offered morning and evening, which had been neglected, but now revived: *and the burnt-offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts;* when beside the daily sacrifice there were additional ones: *as it is written in the law of the Lord;* in Numb. xxviii. 9—31. and xxix. 1—40.

Ver. 4. *Moreover, he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites,* &c.] What was assigned unto them

by the law of God by tithes, first-fruits, *&c. that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord;* in the study of it; that they might gain greater knowledge of it themselves, and be better able to instruct the people, which of late had been much neglected; and that they might be more at leisure for such service, and be free from all worldly business, care, and distraction of mind, was the design of this edict.

Ver. 5. *And as soon as the commandment came abroad,* &c.] Not only was published in the city of Jerusalem, but the report of it, or rather that itself, was spread throughout the cities of Judah: *the children of Israel brought in abundance the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey;* the three first of these are expressed in the law, Deut. xviii. 4. but not honey; wherefore the Targum here, and the Jewish writers in general, interpret it of the *dubsa* of the palm-tree, as they call it, the fruit and liquor of that, which is of a sweet taste, and which the Scenite Arabs called *dabusa*, as Pliny * from Juba relates; for so it should be read, and not *dabulan* or *dablan*, as in some copies: but though honey was forbid to be used in sacrifice, it was not forbidden to be eaten; and as the land of Judea abounded with honey, properly so called, the priests might have the first-fruits of that as of other liquors; see the note on Deut. viii. 8. *and of all the increase of the field:* of the trees of it, vines, fig-trees, pomegranates, *&c.* as Kimchi; *and the tithe of all* things; even of herbs, as the same writer, and so the Talmud [x], which were free from tithes by the law, see Matt. xxiii. 23. *brought they in abundantly;* even of all that their vineyards, oliveyards, and fields produced.

Ver. 6. *And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah,* &c.] As for the supplement *concerning,* I see no need of it; the sense is, that when the king's edict was known by the inhabitants of the cities in the country, as well as at Jerusalem: *they also brought in the tithes of oxen, and sheep;* according to the law in Lev. xxvii. 32. *and the tithe of holy things,* which were *consecrated unto the Lord their God;* which Jarchi understands of the second tithe the Levites were to give to the priests; but Kimchi of things consecrated to sacred uses, and no longer for their own, and which were even free from tithing: *and laid* them *by heaps;* heaps upon heaps, such large quantities were brought in.

Ver. 7. *In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps,* &c.] The month Sivan, as the Targum, in which month was the feast of Pentecost, called the feast of the harvest, Exod. xxiii. 16. for then barley-harvest was ended, and wheat-harvest began, and the first-fruits were brought: *and finished them in the seventh month;* the month Tisri, as the Targum, in which was the feast of tabernacles, sometimes called the feast of in-gathering, of the fruits of the earth, the wine, oil, *&c.* and so a proper time for bringing the tithes of all.

Ver. 8. *And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps,* &c.] Of the tithes and first-fruits: *they blessed the Lord;* for the great increase of the fruits of the earth, and for making the people so willing to bring in the dues to the priests and Levites: *and his people Israel;* wished all happiness and prosperity to them, being found in the way of their duty.

Ver. 9. *Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.*] How they came to be so large, or why they let them lie where they did.

Ver. 10. *And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him,* &c.] Who was the high-priest of the family of Eleazar, in the line of Zadok, made high-priest in Solomon's time, when Abiathar was thrust out; Jarchi takes him to be the same Azariah that was in the days of Uzziah, ch. xxvi. 17. *and said, since* the people *began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty;* which were now four months since; and the priests and Levites, and their families, had partaken of them, and eat to satiety, and yet there was great plenty remaining: *for the Lord hath blessed his people;* the Targum is, "the Word of the Lord has blessed "them," given them large crops this year, and a ready willing mind to bring in what is due for the service of the temple: *and that which is left* is *this great store;* the heaps the king and princes saw, and inquired about; or what is left is for the great multitude of the priests and Levites, and their families, both at Jerusalem, and in the cities in the country; so Kimchi interprets it.

Ver. 11. *Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers in the house of the Lord,* &c.] Either to build new ones, or fit up those that were built: *and they prepared* them; got them ready to lay up the stores in.

Ver. 12. *And brought in the offerings, and the tithes, and the dedicated things, faithfully,* &c.] Kept nothing back for their own private use, but faithfully delivered in and laid up the whole that was brought which remained; this was done by the priests and Levites, in whose hands and care they were: *over which Cononiah the Levite* was *ruler, and Shimei his brother* was *the next;* these two had the charge and care of the whole, the one as deputy to the other.

Ver. 13. *And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Asahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Ismachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah,* were *overseers under the hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother,* &c.] These ten were assistants to the other two, were under them, and at their command, and were to be ready at hand to do what they should order and direct them: *at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the house of God;* these were fixed in their post under the other two by the king and the high-priest, to whom also the other two were accountable.

Ver. 14. *And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the porter towards the east,* &c.] At the east gate of the temple; see 1 Chron. xxvi. 17. *was over the free-will offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the Lord;* to the priests and Levites, for whose use they were; or to deliver out the fine flour, oil, and wine, and frankincense, for the meat and drink offerings: *and the most holy things;* which belonged to the priests only to eat of, as the remainder of the meat-offerings, the sin and trespass offerings, and the shew-bread.

* Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 4.

[x] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 55. 1.

Ver. 15. *And next to him were Eden and Minjamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, &c.*] As Kore was the principal, and his business lay chiefly with the priests in the temple, and in Jerusalem, these men under him were employed in distributing to the priests, *in the cities of the priests;* in the several parts of the country: *in* their *set office:* or faithfully: *to give to their brethren by courses, as well to the great as to the small;* to communicate of the stores under their hands, according to their several courses, both priests and Levites, and to all in their families, small and great.

Ver. 16. *Beside their genealogy of males, from three years old and upwards,* &c.] Their office was not only to give to the priests, but to those of their males in their genealogy, who were three years old and upwards; for under that age, according to Kimchi, they were not fit to come into the temple; nor have they knowledge to keep what is put into their hands; nor fit to handle offerings, lest they should defile them; but at that age they might be taught how to hold them, and be used to it; but as for females, he says, they were not admitted at any age: even *unto every one that entereth into the house of the Lord;* of the said age, and in the genealogy and register of the priests: *his daily portion for their service in their charges, according to their courses;* food for every day, in consideration of their service in their several wards, according to their courses in turn.

Ver. 16. *Both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers,* &c.] As to the priests registered according to their families from the age before observed, a portion was given: so to *the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, in their charges, by their courses;* for though originally they were not admitted into the tabernacle till twenty-five years of age, nor to officiate till thirty, but in David's time they were allowed at twenty years of age and upwards, 1 Chron. xxiii. 24.

Ver. 18. *And to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation,* &c.] These were all genealogized and registered, wives and children, sons and daughters, whether small or grown up; and a portion was distributed to them according to their number, greater or lesser: *for in their set office they sanctified themselves in holiness;* which is to be understood either of the overseers, who, in their set office, faithfully distributed the holy things to the persons before described; or else to the priests and Levites, to whom, and to whose families, the distribution was made, because they wholly devoted themselves to the holy service of God.

Ver. 19. *Also of the sons of Aaron the priests,* which were *in the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city,* &c.] Which were allowed to them out of the several tribes, and where they dwelt, when it was not the turn of their course to officiate in the temple; now to these, as well as to those in Jerusalem, a portion was distributed for the support of them and their families: *the men that were expressed by name;* before mentioned, ver. 13. though some understand it of such as were nominated and appointed by them, and to act under them in the country: *to give portions to all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites;* as before declared.

Ver. 20. *And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah,* &c.] Settled the courses of the priests and Levites, and made a provision for them and their families: *and wrought* that which was *good and right and truth before the Lord his God;* or did that which was truly right and good, according to the law and will of God, in the sincerity and uprightness of his soul, and as in the presence of the omniscient God, he approving and accepting it for Christ's sake.

Ver. 21. *And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God,* &c.] In cleansing the temple, providing sacrifices, placing the priests and Levites in order, taking care of the maintenance of them, &c. *and in the law and in the commandments;* in the observation of all the laws, statutes, and judgments of God, moral, ceremonial, and judicial: *to seek his God;* and serve and worship him, and therein his honour and glory: *he did it with all his heart;* in the most cordial, sincere, and upright manner: *and prospered;* he succeeded in all he undertook, God being with him, and blessing him in his civil and religious concerns.

CHAP. XXXII.

THIS chapter relates Sennacherib's invasion of the land of Judah, the preparations Hezekiah made to resist him, and the encouragement he gave his people to trust in the Lord, ver. 1—8. the messages and letters Sennacherib sent to Hezekiah and his subjects, full of arrogance and blasphemy, to solicit them to deliver up Jerusalem to him, ver. 9—19. the destruction of his army by an angel, and the deliverance of the Jews at the prayers of Hezekiah and Isaiah, ver. 20—23. the sin Hezekiah fell into after this, and his recovery from a fit of illness; but, upon his humiliation for it, wrath was averted, ver. 24, 25, 26. and the chapter is concluded with an account of his honours, riches, and exploits, and of his death and burial, ver. 27—33.

Ver. 1. *After these things, and the establishment thereof,* &c.] What are recorded in the preceding chapters, when matters were well settled, especially with respect to religion and temple-service, and when Hezekiah was well established in the throne of his kingdom, had fought with and defeated the Philistines, and cast off the Assyrian yoke, and was in very prosperous circumstances; for it was in the fourteenth year of his reign that what follows was done: *Sennacherib king of Assyria came and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself;* or *to break them,* or into them; or through them [r], to break down the walls to take them, and join them to himself, as the Targum, and he did take them, see 2 Kings xviii. 13.

Ver. 2. *And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was*

[r] לבקעם ad perrumpendum eas, Montanus; diffindere illas, Piscator; abscindere, Schmidt.

come, &c.] Into the land of Judah, which he perceived and understood by reports brought to him: *and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem*; to besiege it and take it, if possible; this he saw was his design, by taking the fenced cities in his way, and coming forward with his forces.

Ver. 3. *He took counsel with his princes, and his mighty men*, &c.] With his nobles, and the officers of his army, what steps should be taken to resist, retard, and distress the enemy, and among the rest what follows was proposed: *to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city*; that so the Assyrian army would find it difficult to supply themselves with water, which was an article of great importance: *and they did help him*: to stop the fountains, not only with their advice how to do it, but with their men, their servants, who assisted those that Hezekiah employed in this work.

Ver. 4. *So there was gathered much people together*, &c.] At the instance of Hezekiah, his nobles and officers: *who stopped all the fountains*; perhaps by laying planks over them, and earth upon them, so that it could not be discerned there were any fountains there: *and the brook that ran through the midst of the land*; which, according to Kimchi, was Gihon, ver. 30. which was near Jerusalem; the stream of this very probably they turned into channels under ground, whereby it was brought into the city into reservoirs there provided, that that might have a supply during the siege, whilst the enemy was distressed for want of it: *saying, why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?* by which means they would be able to carry on the siege to a great length, when otherwise they would be obliged to raise it quickly: mention is made of kings of Assyria, though there was but one, with whom there might be petty kings, or tributary ones; and, besides, as he boasted, his princes were altogether kings, Isa. x. 8.

Ver. 5. *Also he strengthened himself*, &c.] In the Lord his God, and fortified his city, and put it in the best manner of defence he could: *and built up all the wall* that was *broken*; which was broken from the gate of Ephraim to the corner-gate by Joash king of Israel; and though it might have been repaired by Uzziah, it might again be broken down in the times of Ahaz, by Pekah, king of Israel, or some other enemy, see ch. xxv. 23. and xxvi. 9. and xxviii. 6, 7. *and raised it up to the towers*; from the corner-tower to the tower of the gate of Ephraim, which, as before observed, had been broken down: *and another wall without*; a second wall, either all around the city, or at such a part of it which was weakest; Josephus[a] says the city of Jerusalem had three walls about it: *and repaired Millo in the city of David*; a wall on the north side of the city: *and made darts and shields in abundance*: darts to cast from the walls of the city, to annoy the enemy with, and shields to defend them from those of the enemy.

Ver. 6. *And he set captains of war over the people*, &c.] To teach them the exercises of war, to lead them on against the enemy, to direct them where to stand, and what to do in defence of the city: *and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city*; the street which led to the gate, and was large and commodious to assemble the people in: *and spake comfortably to them*; to animate and encourage them to hold out the siege, and do all they could to repel the enemy; *saying*; as follows.

Ver. 7. *Be strong and courageous*, &c.] Be of good heart and spirit, and quit yourselves like men: *be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him*; which was very large; for no less than 185,000 were slain of them by an angel in one night, 2 Kings xix. 35. *for there be more with us than with him*; though not in number, yet in power and might; and if angels are meant, they are more in number; but it seems, by what follows, that Hezekiah had only the Lord his God in his thoughts and view.

Ver. 8. *With him is an arm of flesh*, &c.] Only weak, frail, mortal men, not at all to be feared; nothing in comparison of the Lord: *but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our battles*; who is the Lord God Almighty, who has the host of heaven at his command, and with whom all the inhabitants of the earth are as nothing; the Targum is, "the Word of "the Lord our God is for us to help us, and fight our "battles:" *and the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah*; not upon his bare words, but on what was contained in them, on the strength and power of the Lord God he assured them was on their side; they believed what he said to be true, and trusted in the Lord that he would save them.

Ver. 9. *After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem*, &c.] Who are mentioned by name, 2 Kings xviii. 17. this was after Hezekiah had given him a large quantity of silver and gold to depart, and he did depart from him, 2 Kings xviii. 14, 15, 16. *but he* himself laid siege *against Lachish, and all his power with him*; one of the cities of Judah, see Isa. xxxvi. 2. from hence he dispatched them *unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that* were *at Jerusalem*; who had retired thither for safety, upon the invasion of their country by the king of Assyria.

Ver. 10. *Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, whereon do ye trust*, &c.] On what power in heaven or on earth? *that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem?* hold out against the siege of it, and don't deliver it up.

Ver. 11. *Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine, and by thirst*, &c.] Suggesting that would be their case if they did not surrender: *saying, the Lord our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria?* see the note on Isa. xxxvi. 15.

Ver. 12. *Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places*, &c.] For the sense of this and the three following verses, see the notes on Isa. xxxvi. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Ver. 16. *And his servants spake yet* more *against the Lord God, and against his servant Hezekiah*.] Than what is here recorded, as may be read in 2 Kings xviii. and xix. Isa. xxxvi.

[a] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 3.

Ver. 17. *He wrote also letters to rail on the Lord God of Israel*, &c.] See 2 Kings xix. 9—14. Isa. xxxvii. 9—14.

Ver. 18. *Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that* were *on the wall*, &c.] The messengers of Sennacherib, particularly Rabshakeh the chief speaker; though they were desired to speak in the Syrian language, Isa. xxxvi. 11, 13. but this they did *to affright them, and to trouble them, that they might take the city*; to throw them into terror and confusion, that they might prevail upon them to deliver up the city to them.

Ver. 19. *And they spake against the God of Jerusalem*, &c.] The only living and true God, whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem professed to be their God, and who was worshipped by them in the temple there: *as against the gods of the people of the earth*, which were *the work of the hands of man*; they made no difference between the one and the other, but spoke as freely and as contemptibly of the one as of the other, see Isa. xxxvi. 19, 20. and xxxvii. 10—13.

Ver. 20. *And for this* cause *Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.*] To God in heaven; of the prayer of Hezekiah on this account, see Isa. xxxvii. 15—20. and the notes there; and though we read not of the prayer of Isaiah, no doubt he made one, as Hezekiah desired, and since he received a message from the Lord, which he sent to Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 4, 21.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord sent an angel*, &c.] The Targum is, "the Word of the Lord sent Gabriel;" Josephus * takes this angel, or messenger sent of God, to be the pestilence; and others suppose it to be a hot pestilential wind, common in the eastern countries, called *Samiel*, or the poison-wind, by which multitudes are sometimes destroyed at once; of which Thevenot and other travellers make mention, see the note on Job xxvii. 21. and on Psal. xci. 6. but be it as it may, it was sent of God, was under his direction, and by his power and providence did the execution according to his prediction: *which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria*; the generals and officers of his army, with the common soldiers, to the number of 185,000, Isa. xxxvii. 36. among these, no doubt, were the three generals sent with railing letters to Hezekiah, particularly Rabshakeh, see the note on Isa. xxxvii. 36. *so he returned with shame of face to his own land*; Assyria, particularly to Nineveh, the metropolis of it, Isa. xxxvii. 37. *and when he was come into the house of his god*; the temple of his idol, whose name was Nisroch: *they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword*; his sons Adramelech and Sharezer, Isa. xxxvii. 38.

Ver. 22. *Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria*, &c.] As most clearly appeared; for no stroke was struck but by him: *and from the hand of all* other; the Arabic version adds, "who were "round about them;" who by this defeat were deterred from attacking them: *and guided them on every side*: and guarded them all around, as a shepherd leads his flock, where they may be secure from all dangers.

Ver. 23. *And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem*, &c.] Even out of neighbouring nations, things which they devoted to the service of God in the temple, being convinced that this wonderful deliverance was wrought by the Lord God of Israel, and by him only: *and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah*; being desirous of living in friendship with him, who appeared to be the favourite of the God of heaven: *so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth*: from the time of the destruction of the Assyrian army in such a wonderful manner, he was highly esteemed, and his name and fame spread abroad among all the neighbouring nations round about him.

Ver. 24. *In those days Hezekiah was sick*, &c.] Of which sickness, and of his prayer, and of the sign given him, see Isa. xxxviii. and the notes there.

Ver. 25. *But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit* done *unto him*, &c.] Both in the deliverance of him and his people from the king of Assyria, and the recovery of him from his sickness: *for his heart was lifted up*; with pride, because of the wonderful defeat of the Assyrian army in his favour, the miracle wrought at his recovery from illness, the riches and honour conferred upon him, the presents brought him from his neighbours, and especially the embassy of the king of Babylon to him: *therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem*: who, in imitation of him, fell into the same sin of pride, with many others; and therefore both he and they were threatened with some tokens of the divine displeasure.

Ver. 26. *Notwithstanding, Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart*, both *he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem*, &c.] In what manner is not said; perhaps by putting on sackcloth, and by fasting and prayer, and making confession of sin, and declaring repentance for it: *so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah*; but in the days of his son's sons, Isa. xxxix. 7, 8.

Ver. 27. *And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches*, &c.] Increased by the spoil of the Assyrian camp, and the presents sent him after that by neighbouring nations, ver. 21, 23. *and honour*; both from his subjects, and the nations around him: *and he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels*; which were houses both for rich and curious things, and for armour, he shewed to the ambassadors of Babylon, Isa. xxxix. 2. see the note there.

Ver. 28. *Storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil*, &c.] The produce of his fields, vineyards, and oliveyards, such as David had, with persons over them, see 1 Chron. xxvii. 25—28. *and stalls for all manner of beasts*; as oxen, horses, camels, and asses, see ch. ix. 25. *and cotes for flocks*; folds for sheep.

* Antiqu. l. 10. c. 1. sect. 5.

Ver. 29. *Moreover, he provided him cities,* &c.] Where he had the above storehouses and stalls, and convenient dwellings for those that looked after them, and were over his cattle, small and great, as follows; the Vulgate Latin version reads six cities in some copies[b]: *and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance;* in which the riches of men, and even of kings, lay in those times: *for God had given him substance very much;* for all was owing to his disposing providence, let it come which way it might.

Ver. 30. *This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper water-course of Gihon,* &c.] Which Procopius Gazæus says was the same with Siloam, and which it seems had two streams, and this was the upper one; Mr. Maundrell says[c], the pool of Gihon "lies about two "furlongs without Beth-lehem-gate westward; it is a "stately pool, 106 paces long, and 67 broad, and lined "with wall and plaster, and was, when we were there, "well stored with water:" *and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David;* through canals under the plain of the city of David; as the Targum, by a subterraneous passage; and Siloam, as Dr. Lightfoot[d] observes from Josephus, was behind the west wall, not far from the corner that pointed toward the south-west: *and Hezekiah prospered in all his works;* natural, civil, and religious, see ch. xxxi. 21.

Ver. 31. *Howbeit, in* the business of *the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was* done *in the land,* &c.] Not to see the two tables of stone which were in the ark, with the other two that were broken because of the sin of the calf, as the Targum; nor to ask about the destruction of the Assyrian army, and the manner of it, as Grotius; but to be informed of the miracle of the sun's going back ten degrees, when Hezekiah was recovered from his sickness; the Chaldeans being a people much given to astrology, and curious in their observations of that kind: *God left him to try him;* by shewing him all his treasures: *that he might know all* that was *in his heart;* not that God might know, who knows all things, unless spoken of him after the manner of men; but rather that Hezekiah might know the pride lurking in his heart, and other sins which escaped his notice, Jer. xvii. 9. or that it might be known by others; that the children of men might know it, as Kimchi; and take warning by it, and observe the frailty and infirmity of the best of men.

Ver. 32. *Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness,* &c.] His acts of piety and liberality: *behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz;* in the prophecy of Isaiah, ch. xxxvi. 37, 38, 39. whose book is called the Vision of Isaiah, ch. i. 1. and *in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel;* in 2 Kings xviii. xix. xx.

Ver. 33. *And Hezekiah slept with his fathers,* &c.] Died, as they did: *and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David;* in the more honourable and principal of them; there are still to be seen, on the north of Jerusalem, some grottos, called the sepulchres of the kings, though it is certain none of the kings of Israel or Judah were buried there; unless it may be thought, as Mr. Maundrell[e] conjectures, that Hezekiah was here interred, and that these are the sepulchres of the sons of David here mentioned; however, he observes, whoever was buried here, this is certain, that the place itself discovers so great an expense both of labour and treasure, that we may well suppose it to be the work of kings: *and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death;* by attending his funeral in great numbers, by burning spices for him, and by mourning for him many days: *and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead;* of whom a further account is given in the next chapter.

CHAP. XXXIII.

THIS chapter gives an account of the reign of Manasseh, of his idolatries and impieties, ver. 1—10. of his captivity, humiliation, repentance, and reformation, ver. 11—17. of his last end, death, and burial, ver. 18, 19, 20. and of the wicked reign of Amon his son, and of his death by his servants, ver. 21—25.

Ver. 1. *Manasseh was twelve years old,* &c.] From hence to the end of ver. 9 the same things are recorded, almost word for word, as in 2 Kings xxi. 1—9. see the notes there.

Ver. 10. *And the Lord spake to Manasseh, and to his people,* &c.] By his servants the prophets, see 2 Kings xxi. 10—15. where what was said to them is recorded: *but they would not hearken;* to what was said, to reproofs, admonitions, and exhortations to repent and reform.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria,* &c.] Who was Esarhaddon, the son and successor of Sennacherib; this, according to the Jewish chronology[f], was in the twenty-second year of Manasseh's reign: *which took Manasseh among the thorns;* in a thicket of briers and thorns, where, upon his defeat, he had hid himself; a fit emblem of the afflictions and troubles his sins brought him into: *and bound him with fetters;* hands and feet; with chains of brass, as the Targum, such as Zedekiah was bound with, 2 Kings xxv. 7. not chains of gold, with which Mark Antony bound a king of Armenia, for the sake of honour[g]: *and carried him to Babylon;* for now the king of Assyria was become master of that city, and added it to his monarchy, and made it the seat of his residence; at least some-

[b] So the Edition of Sixtus V. Lovain, and MSS. in James's Contrariety of the Popish Bibles, p. 295.
[c] Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 168.
[d] Chorograph. in John, c. 5. sect. 2.
[e] Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 76.
[f] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 24. p. 67.
[g] Vell. Patercul. Hist. Roman. l. 2.

times that and sometimes Nineveh, Merodach-baladan being dead, or conquered; though, according to Suidas[h], it was he that took Manasseh; and by an Arabic writer[i], he is said to be carried to Nineveh.

Ver. 12. *And when he was in affliction,* &c.] In prison; however, in fetters; according to the Targum, the Chaldeans made an instrument of brass with holes in it, and put him in it, and fire about it, something like the brasen bull of Perillus; and the above Arabian writer[k] calls it a tower of brass: *he besought the Lord his God;* by prayer and supplication: *and humbled himself greatly before the Lord God of his fathers;* confessing his sins, expressing great sorrow and repentance for them.

Ver. 13. *And prayed unto him,* &c.] To have mercy on him, and forgive him his sins: *and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication;* and granted his request, shewed favour to him, and forgave him his sins: *and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom;* so wrought upon the heart of the king of Assyria, as to give him his liberty, and restore him to his dominions; it is very probable his captivity was not long; for, being soon brought by his affliction to a sense and confession of his sins, by the overruling providence of God, he was quickly released: *then Manasseh knew that the Lord he* was *God;* and not the idols he had served; that he was a holy God, and hated sin, and a just God in afflicting him for it, and gracious and merciful in forgiving his sins, and bringing him out of his troubles.

Ver. 14. *Now after this he built a wall without the city of David,* &c.] Which perhaps had been broken down by the Assyrian army, when it came and took him; Vitringa[l] thinks this is the wall of the pool of Siloah, Neh. iii. 15. which seems to be the first and oldest wall, as Josephus[m]; for that turning to the north bent towards the pool of Siloam; an Arabic writer[n] calls it the southern wall: *on the west side of Gihon;* on the west side of the city, towards Gihon; for that was to the west of it, ch. xxxii. 10. *in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish-gate;* through which the fish were brought from Joppa, and where, according to the Targum, they were sold: *and compassed about Ophel;* the eastern part of Mount Zion; some say it was the holy of holies, ch. xxvii. 3. *and raised it up a very great height;* built the wall very high there: *and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah;* this he did to put his kingdom in a posture of defence, should it be attacked by the Assyrian army again.

Ver. 15. *And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord,* &c.] Which he had set there, ver. 7. *and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem;* see ver. 4, 5. *and cast them out of the city;* perhaps into the brook Kidron; all this he did to shew the sincerity of his repentance for his idolatry, and his abhorrence of it.

Ver. 16. *And he repaired the altar of the Lord,* &c.] Which was fallen to ruin, being neglected and disused in his times of idolatry: or, according to the Keri, or marginal reading, and so the Targum, *he built it;* which perhaps he had before pulled down and destroyed: *and sacrificed thereon peace-offerings and thank-offerings;* to the Lord, for bringing him out of captivity, and restoring him to his kingdom; and especially for converting him from his idolatries, giving him repentance for them, and forgiveness of sins: *and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel;* and him only; another instance of the truth of his repentance, in endeavouring to reform those whom he had misled, and restore the true worship of God among them, and bring them back to that.

Ver. 17. *Nevertheless, the people did sacrifice still in the high places,* &c.] Not in those that were built for idols, at least did not sacrifice to them; for it follows: yet *unto the Lord their God only;* the Targum is, "to "the name of the Word of the Lord their God."

Ver. 18. *Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh,* &c.] Good and bad, what were done by him both before and after his conversion: *and his prayer unto his God;* which it seems was taken and recorded, but now lost; for as for that which is among the apocryphal writings, there is no reason to believe it to be his, though it is thought to be so by many[o]: *and the words of the seers;* or the prophets, as the Targum; and the prophets in his days, according to the Jewish chronology[p], were Joel, Nahum, and Habakkuk: *that spake to him in the name of the Lord God of Israel;* words of admonition and reproof before his humiliation, and words of comfort, advice, and instruction, after it; the Targum is, "that spake to him in the name of the Word of the "Lord God of Israel:" *behold, they* are written *in the book of the kings of Israel;* not in the canonical book so called, where none of the above things, namely, his prayer, and the speeches of the prophets, are to be found, at least not all; but in the annals of the kings of Israel, now lost.

Ver. 19. *His prayer also,* &c.] Was not only recorded in the above annals, but in the writings of another person after mentioned: *and* how God *was entreated of him;* heard his prayer, and shewed him favour both in a temporal and spiritual way; for though the Jews would not allow that he was saved, or had a part in the world to come, eternal life[q], yet there appears no just reason why it should be so thought: *and all his sin, and his trespass;* his impieties, idolatries, and murders: *and the places wherein he built high places;* see ver. 3. *and set up groves;* statues in groves: *and graven images, before he was humbled;* see ver. 7, 22. *behold, they* are *written among the sayings of the seers;* or of Hosai, the name of a prophet who wrote the history of his own times; so the Targum and Vulgate Latin version; and, according to the Jewish chronology[r], there was a prophet of this name in the times of Amon the son of Manasseh.

Ver. 20. *So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house,* &c.] That is, in the garden of his house, 2 Kings xxi. 18. see the note

[h] In voce Μανασσης.
[i] Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. Dyn. 3. p. 67. So Suidas, ib.
[k] Abulph. & Suidas, ib.
[l] Comment. in Jesaiam, c. 22. 9.
[m] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 2.
[n] Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. Dyn. 3. p. 67.
[o] Vid. Fabritii Bibliothec. Græc. l. 3. c. 31. p. 728, 739.
[p] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 20.
[q] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. sect. 2.
[r] Seder Olam Zuta, p. 105. Ed. Meyer.

there; to which may be added, that the Jews[s] in after-times buried in a garden; though it was the custom of the ancients, both Greeks[t] and Romans[u], to bury the dead in their own houses; hence sprung the worship of the Lares and Penates, the household gods: from hence to the end of the chapter is the same with 2 Kings xxi. 18—26. see the notes there.

CHAP. XXXIV.

THIS chapter begins with the good reign of Josiah, the reformation he made in the land, purging it from idolatry, ver. 1—7. relates the orders he gave to repair the house of the Lord, which was accordingly done, ver. 8—13. when the book of the law was found and brought to him, which greatly affected him, ver. 12—19. upon which he deputed some persons to inquire of the Lord, who did of Huldah the prophetess, to whom she gave an answer, which they returned to the king, ver. 20—28. and the chapter is concluded with an account of reading the book in the ears of all the people, and of the king, and then making a covenant with the Lord to serve him, ver. 27—33.

Ver. 1, 2. *Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, &c.*] Of these two verses, see the notes on 2 Kings xxii. 1, 2.

Ver. 3. *For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, &c.*] Being in the 16th year of his age; though Kimchi thinks it was the very year he began to reign, which was the eighth of his age; and Jarchi observes, it may be interpreted, *though he was young, he began to seek after the God of David his father;* to pray unto him, to seek after the knowledge of him, and the true manner of worshipping him, what were his will, commands, and ordinances; the Targum is, "to seek "instruction or doctrine of the Lord God of David his "father," to be taught his ways, such as David his great ancestor walked in, and whom he chose to follow: *and in the 12th year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images;* which were made in the times of Manasseh; and though removed by him when humbled, were restored in the reign of Amon. Now Josiah purged the land from these, by putting them down, and destroying them; and this he did when he was 20 years of age, having now more authority, being out of his minority, and from under guardians, and one year before Jeremiah began to prophesy, Jer. 1, 2.

Ver. 4. *And they broke down the altars of Baalim in his presence, &c.*] He not only ordered them to be broke down, but he went in person, and saw it done; these were the altars Manasseh had reared up to the idols; and though upon his humiliation he cast them out, they were rebuilt by Amon his son, see ch. xxxiii. 3, 15, 22. *and the images that were above them he cut down;* sun-images, as the word signifies; these Chamanim might be representatives of Cham or Ham, the son of Noah, the same with Jupiter Ammon; and there was another Heathen deity, Amanus, Strabo[w] speaks of, supposed to be the sun, see the note on Lev. xxvi. 30. these, as Jarchi says, were in the form of the sun, and were set above the altars, over-against the sun, to whom worship was paid; though some think this respects not place, but time, and that these were images in times past; in the preceding age, as the Tigurine version: *and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces;* ordered them to be broken; the groves were statues, or images in groves, and thereby distinguished from those made of wood, and were carved, and from those that were of molten metal, and were placed elsewhere: *and made dust* of them, *and strewed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them,* see 2 Kings xxiii. 6.

Ver. 5. *And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, &c.*] On which they sacrificed, in detestation of their idolatry, and to deter from it; and this he did according to the prophecy of him, above 350 years before: *and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem;* from idolatry, and all the monuments of it.

Ver. 6. And so did he *in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, &c.*] Which though they belonged to the 10 tribes, yet these being carried captive by the king of Assyria, they that were left became subject to the kings of Judah, see the note on 2 Kings xxiii. 19. *with their mattocks round about;* or hammers or mauls, as Kimchi, or pick-axes, such sort of instruments as were used in demolishing altars and images: the Targum is, "in the house of their "desolation;" and so other versions, *in their desolate places*[x], which were become such, the inhabitants being carried captive, and few left behind.

Ver. 7. *And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, &c.*]. The statues or images in them: *and had beaten the graven images into powder;* and strewed it on the graves of the idolaters: *and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel;* the sun-images, as in ver. 4. *he returned to Jerusalem;* this tour of his throughout the whole land, and the things done by him, which are represented as done before the repairs of the temple were made, and the book of the law found and read, and the covenant he and his people made with the Lord, are spoken of in 2 Kings xxiii. 1—20. as if done after.

Ver. 8. *Now in the 18th year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the house, &c.*] The temple; this was in the 26th year of his age, six years this work had been doing before it was finished: *he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah;* who only is mentioned in 2 Kings xxii. 3. two more are added here, as follow: *and*

[s] Cippi Heb. p. 43.
[t] Plato in Minoe.
[u] Servius in Virgil. Æneid. 5. praeterea si nova, & in l. 6. sedibus hanc refer, &c.
[w] Geograph l. 11. p. 35?.
[x] בחרבתיהם in desolatis locis suis, *vel* eorum, Montanus, Tigurine version, Rambachius.

Maaseiah the governor of the city: the city of Jerusalem, a deputy-governor under the king, a sort of mayor or provost: *and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder*: who was over the book of memorials, as the Targum; the word may be rendered *the remembrancer*; and, according to Jarchi, as every king of Judah had a scribe to write down the memorable things that happened in his reign, good or bad, so the scribe had one by him, to put him in mind of every transaction, from whom he wrote it down: *to repair the house of the Lord his God*: that is, to give orders for the doing of it, to prepare for it, provide workmen, and appoint overseers of them: it had not been repaired since the times of Joash, which, according to the Jewish chronology [y], was a space of 218 years.

Ver. 9. *And when they came to Hilkiah the high-priest*, &c.] To whom they were sent to advise with about the repair of the temple: *they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God*; that is, the high-priest, and the Levites the door-keepers, gave it to the king's ministers; which money was either brought to the temple voluntarily, as the free-gifts of the people, for the repairs; or rather what was collected by the Levites, sent throughout the land for that purpose, or it may be both: *which the Levites that kept the doors*; of the temple; and received the money as the people brought it: and also *had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah, and Benjamin*; they went throughout all the land of Israel and Judah, and collected money for the above purpose: *and they returned to Jerusalem*; with it, which the high-priest took the sum of, see 2 Kings xxii. 4. of whom the king's ministers now received it.

Ver. 10. *And they put it*, &c.] The king's ministers did: *in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the Lord*; whose business it was to inspect the temple, and see what repairs were necessary, and to overlook the workmen in making those repairs; the names of these overseers are in ver. 12. *and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the Lord, to repair and mend the house*; that is, the overseers gave the money they received to the labourers, as the hire of their labour, and the reward of their work, and to buy materials with, as follows.

Ver. 11. *Even to the artificers and builders gave they it*, &c.] To the masons and carpenters: *to buy hewn stone*; to put in the room of that which was decayed or fallen down: *and timber for couplings*; of boards, beams, and rafters: *and to floor the houses*; the chambers, the apartments in the temple, which belonged to the priests and Levites: *which the kings of Judah had destroyed*; the idolatrous ones, who had let them go to decay and ruin, taking no care of them.

Ver. 12. *And the men did that work faithfully*, &c.] The labouring men, as also their inspectors, see 2 Kings xxii. 7. *and the overseers of them were Jahath and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari*; the third son of Levi: *and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites*; who had their name from Kohath, the second son of Levi: *to set it forward*; to urge and animate the men to their work, to keep them constant to it, and see that they did it well: *and other of the Levites, all that could skill of instruments of music*; these, when they were not employed in singing in the temple, attended this service, to look after the workmen at the repairs of it; and perhaps they might play, as some think, on their instruments of music, whilst the men were at work, that they might go on in it the more pleasantly and cheerfully.

Ver. 13. *Also* they were *over the bearers of burdens*, &c.] Who carried the timber and stones to the workmen, to look after them, that they were not dilatory, and that the workmen might not stand still for want of materials being brought to them to work with: *and were overseers over all that wrought in any manner of service*; whether in the way of masonry, or in that of carpenters, or of such that served them, or in whatsoever way: *and of the Levites* there were *scribes, and officers, and porters*; some to take the account of the money carried in and paid, who were the *scribes*, according to Jarchi; and others who looked after the men, and kept them to work, who were the *officers*; and others that let them in and out, called *porters*.

Ver. 14. *And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the Lord*, &c.] The Levites, who brought it out of the country into the temple, and from thence brought it to the high-priest, who delivering it to the king's ministers, and they to the overseers, the repairs were begun: and then *Hilkiah the high-priest found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses*, see the note on 2 Kings xxii. 8. From hence, to the end of ver. 28, is the same as 2 Kings xxii. 8—20. see the notes there.

Ver. 29. *Then the king sent and gathered*, &c.] From hence, to the end of ver. 32, the same account is given of the reading of the law to the people, and of the covenant the king and they made to serve the Lord, as in 2 Kings xxiii. 1, 2, 3.

Ver. 33. *And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that* pertained *to the children of Israel*, &c.] All their idols, as related in 2 Kings xxiii. 4, *&c. and made all that were present in Israel to serve*, even *to serve the Lord their God*; by his edicts, and by his example: *and all his days they departed not from following the Lord God of their fathers*; not publicly and universally; otherwise there were great declensions and corruptions among them, as the prophecies of Jeremiah and Zephaniah shew.

C H A P. XXXV.

IN this chapter we have an account of the keeping of the passover and its preparation, for which the priests and Levites were ordered to prepare, and to which Josiah, and his princes, gave liberally, and such an one

[y] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 24.

was kept as had not been for ages past, ver. 1—19. and of Josiah's rash engagement in battle with the king of Egypt, in which he was slain, ver. 20—23. and of the great lamentations that were made for him, ver. 24—27.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, Josiah kept a passover unto the Lord in Jerusalem*, &c.] Where only it was to be kept: *and they killed the passover on the 14th day of the first month*; the month Nisan, as the Targum, which was the exact time of killing the passover-lamb, according to the law of Moses, Exod. xii. 6. in the Vulgate Latin version of 1 Esdras i. 1. it is called the 14th moon of the first month; a phrase often used in ecclesiastical writers, when speaking of the time of the passover; and so we now call one of the days of the week *dies lunæ*, Monday.

Ver. 2. *And he set the priests in their charges*, &c.] In their offices and in their proper places, to execute them: *and encouraged them to the service of the house of the Lord*; to attend it with cheerfulness and constancy, and do it according to the will of God, promising his favour and protection.

Ver. 3. *And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel*, &c.] Whose business it was to go through the several tribes, and instruct them in the knowledge of God, his word and worship, statutes and ordinances. In an ancient MS. mentioned by Junius, it is read, *who prepared for all Israel the holy things*, &c. *which were holy unto the Lord*; who were consecrated to the name of the Lord, as the Targum, dedicated to his worship and service; or it may signify the holy things they taught or prepared: *these put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build*; which some think was removed from thence by Amon, and an idol put in its room, which is the greater trespass he is said to be guilty of, ch. xxxiii. 23. others, that it was privately removed by the high-priest in idolatrous times, and laid up in some secret place for the preservation of it; but rather the truth is that it had been removed by the order of Josiah, for the sake of the repairs of the most holy place; and this being done, he orders it to be replaced; and though the Levites might not go into the holy of holies, yet they could carry it to the entrance of the holy place, and the priests from thence to the door of the most holy place, where the high-priest could receive it, and fix it in its proper place: *it shall not be a burden upon* your *shoulders*; it was not now to be carried from place to place, having a fixed abode in the most holy place, and therefore they were at leisure to attend other service: *serve now the Lord your God, and his people Israel*; by singing the praises of God, and slaying the passover-lambs for the people.

Ver. 4. *And prepare* yourselves, &c.] To do their work in this service of the sanctuary, the passover; that they be ready to do it, and diligent in it, and perform it according to the law of God: *by the houses of your fathers, after your courses*; such of them whose turn in course it was to officiate: *according to the writing of David king of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon his son*; who had given in writing directions in what manner their courses should be observed, see 1 Chron. xxiii. xxiv.

Ver. 5. *And stand in the holy place*, &c.] The court of the priests, where their ministrations were: *according to the divisions of the families of your brethren the people*; of the other tribes, who were according to their families to provide a lamb for the passover: *and after the division of the families of the Levites*; who were obliged to observe the same ordinance in their respective families, and for whom, as well as for the other families of Israel, they were to slay the lamb.

Ver. 6. *So kill the passover*, &c.] In the manner, time, and place, and for the persons it should be killed: *and sanctify yourselves*; by washing themselves and garments, that they might be fit for this service: *and prepare your brethren*; prepare a lamb for your brethren, or instruct them how to perform their office that needed instruction: *that they may do according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses*; celebrate the ordinance of the passover in all its rites, according to the law of Moses, at least in every rite in which they were more peculiarly concerned.

Ver. 7. *And Josiah gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover-offerings*, &c.] Which might be either lambs or kids of the goats, Exod. xii. 5. *for all that were present, to the number of 30,000*; that is, 30,000 lambs or kids, which would serve 30,000 families: *and 3,000 bullocks*; these were for the *chagigah* or feast, kept on the day following the passover: *these were of the king's substance*; taken out of his flocks and herds, or bought with his money, and liberally given to the people, to such poor families as could not afford well to be at the expense of such a festival.

Ver. 8. *And his princes gave willingly to the people, to the priests and the Levites*, &c.] Besides, to some other families, they gave also to poor priests and Levites, which the king's bounty did not extend to; and these princes were not secular, but ecclesiastical princes, as follows: *Hilkiah, and Zechariah, and Jehiel, rulers of the house*; of the temple; Hilkiah was high-priest, and the other two were chief priests, the one of the line of Eleazar, and the other of the line of Ithamar: these *gave unto the priests for the passover-lambs* 2,600 small cattle; which were lambs, or kids, or both: *and 300 oxen*; for peace-offerings on the seven days of unleavened bread, to feast upon.

Ver. 9. *Cononiah also, and Shemaiah and Nathaneel his brethren*, &c.] See ch. xxxi. 12. *and Hashabiah, and Jehiel, and Jozabad, chief of the Levites*; men of considerable substance, and in good posts and offices: *gave unto the Levites*; their poor brethren of that order: *for passover-offerings* 5,000 small cattle; lambs, or kids, or both: *and 300 oxen*; for the feast that followed the passover.

Ver. 10. *So the service was prepared*, &c.] Every thing was got ready both for the passover and the feast of unleavened bread, for all sorts of people, rich and poor: *and the priests stood in their place*; in their court near the altar, to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifices about it, as in the following verse: *and the Levites in their courses*; whose turn it was to officiate: *according to the king's commandment*, ver. 4.

Ver. 11. *And they killed the passover*, &c.] The lambs for the passover, which was done by the Levites: *and the priests sprinkled* the blood *from their hands*; which they received from the Levites, see ch. xxx. 16.

and the Levites flayed them; the passover-lambs, took off their skins.

Ver. 12. *And they removed the burnt-offerings*, &c.] Either such of the lambs and kids as were designed for burnt-offerings for the people; these they separated from those that were for the passover: or they removed from them what was to be burnt, the fat of the inwards, of the kidneys, and the caul on the liver: *that they might give;* the rest for the passover: *according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the Lord;* according to the number of them: *as it is written in the book of Moses;* see Lev. iii. 3, 4, 5. *and so* did they *with the oxen:* such of them as were appointed for burnt-offerings were set apart by themselves, and such as were for peace-offerings; what of them were to be burnt, as those before mentioned, were taken from them.

Ver. 13. *And they roasted the passover with fire, according to the ordinance*, &c.] Of the Lord by Moses, Exod. xii. 8. *but the* other *holy* offerings: which were the peace-offerings: *sod they in pots, and in cauldrons, and pans;* which was forbid to be done with the passover-lamb, but might with the other sacrifices, which were to be eaten, Exod. xii. 9. *and divided* them *speedily among all the people:* the parts which belonged to the offerer, who was the king; but he gave his part to the people, and therefore the Levites delivered them to them as soon as they could.

Ver. 14. *And afterwards they made ready for themselves, and for the priests*, &c.] The passover-lambs, and such parts of the peace-offerings that belonged to them: *because the priests the sons of Aaron* were busied *in offering burnt-offerings;* such as are before said to be removed or separated for that purpose: *and the fat:* of the peace-offerings that was to be burnt: and this employed them *until night;* so that they could not prepare the passover for themselves: *and therefore the Levites prepared*, not only *for themselves*, but *and* also *for the priests the sons of Aaron;* who were otherwise engaged in the service of the day.

Ver. 15. *And the singers the sons of Asaph* were *in their place*, &c.] In the court of the priests, singing and playing on their instruments whilst the sacrifices were offering: *according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer;* the same with Ethan; and every one were seers, as Jarchi interprets it, that is, the three last: *and the porters* waited *at every gate;* such of the Levites as were in that post and office: *they might not depart from their service;* to let people in and out, that came for their passover-lamb, and share in their other offerings: *for their brethren the Levites prepared for them;* because they were not at leisure to prepare for themselves.

Ver. 16. *So all the service of the Lord was prepared the same day*, &c.] With every sacrifice, and for all sorts of persons: *to keep the passover, and to offer burnt-offerings upon the altar of the Lord;* which were required to be done on that day: *according to the commandment of King Josiah;* which was, that every thing be provided, prepared, and done, as the law required.

Ver. 17. *And the children of Israel that were present kept the passover at that time*, &c.] In its proper time, on the 14th day of Nisan: *and the feast of unleavened bread seven days;* the seven days following the passover, as the Lord by Moses appointed.

Ver. 18. *And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel*, &c.] So exactly according to the law, so universally by Israel and Judah, and with such liberality shewn by the king, and the chief of the priests and Levites; of this, and the following verse, see the notes on 2 Kings xxiii. 22, 23.

Ver. 20. *After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple*, &c.] Purified it, and cleansed it from the filth in it, and from all idolatry, and had repaired it, and put the service of it in good order, and on a good footing, after which great prosperity in church and state might have been expected: *Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates;* now called Querquisia, supposed by some to be the same with the Cadytis of Herodotus, which that historian calls a great city of Syria, whither he says Necho went after the battle with the Syrians [x]; of which see the note on Isa. x. 9. and of this king of Egypt, see the note on 2 Kings xxiii. 29. and Jer. xlvi. 2. *and Josiah went out against him;* or to meet him, and stop him from going through his land, which lay between Egypt and Syria; Egypt being on the south of Israel, and Euphrates on the north of it, as Jarchi observes.

Ver. 21. *But he sent ambassadors to him*, &c.] That is, Necho sent to Josiah: *saying, what have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah?* signifying he had no quarrel with him, he did not come to fight with him, and he had no business to intermeddle between him and another prince: *I come not against thee this day;* in an hostile manner: *but against the house wherewith I have war;* the king of Assyria: *for God commanded me to make haste;* and oppose his enemy; according to the Targum, it was his idol; and which is the sense of other Jewish writers [y]; but the true God might have appeared to him in a dream, or sent a prophet to him; or at least he might pretend this, that it might have the greater effect on Josiah; and indeed it seems to be real from the following verse: *forbear thee from* meddling *with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not;* he concluded God was with him, and would succeed him, because he had put him upon this enterprise, and hastened him to it; therefore Josiah, in opposing him, might expect to be resisted by him, and fall.

Ver. 22. *Nevertheless, Josiah would not turn his face from him*, &c.] Or withdraw his forces, and go back: *but disguised himself, that he might fight with him;* without being personally known, and aimed at, see 1 Kings xxii. 30. *and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God;* not believing that what he said came from the Lord, though it might; and his infirmity was, that he did not inquire of the Lord about it: *and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo;* which was in the tribe of Manasseh, thought to be the Magdolum of Herodotus, where he says Necho fought the battle [z]; see the note on 2 Kings xxiii. 29.

[x] Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 159. & Gale in not. in ib.
[y] T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 22. 2.
[z] Gale in Herodot. ut supra.

Ver. 23. *And the archers shot at King Josiah,* &c.] For, though disguised, he appeared to be a general officer, and indeed chief commander, and therefore aimed at him, and pressed him hard: *and the king said to his servants, have me away, for I am wounded;* as Ahab said, when in the like case, 1 Kings xxii. 34.

Ver. 24. *And his servants therefore took him out of that chariot,* &c.] Dead, and had him to Jerusalem, and buried him; see the note on 2 Kings xxiii. 30. *and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah;* he having been so good a king, so tender of them, and such an happy instrument in restoring the true religion, and the service of God; this was the sense of the generality of them, who were sincere in their mourning; but it is not improbable that those who were inclined to idolatry were secretly glad, though they dissembled mourning with the rest.

Ver. 25. *And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah,* &c.] Composed a lamentation for him, which is now lost; for what is said in Lam. ch. iv. 20. respects Zedekiah, and not Josiah: *and all the singing men, and all the singing women, spake of Josiah in their lamentations unto this day;* who were made use of on mournful occasions, as the *preficæ* among the Romans, see Jer. ix. 17. these in their mournful ditties used to make mention of his name, and the disaster that befell him: *and made them an ordinance in Israel;* an annual constitution, as the Targum calls it, appointing a solemn mourning for him once a year, which Jarchi says was on the 9th of Ab or July: *and, behold, they are written in the lamentations;* not of Jeremiah; though the Targum is, "lo, they are written in the book "which Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah, "concerning the lamentations," but respect a collection of lamentations on various subjects then in being, but since lost.

Ver. 26, 27. *Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his goodness,* &c.] His piety towards God, and liberality to the people; of these two verses, see the note on 2 Kings xxiii. 28.

C H A P. XXXVI.

THIS chapter records the reigns of the four kings of Judah, and the captivity of the Jews, the short reign of Jehoahaz, deposed by the king of Egypt, and his brother Eliakim or Jehoiakim set up in his room, ver. 1—4. the reign of Jehoiakim, who was bound and carried away by Nebuchadnezzar, ver. 5—8. the reign of Jehoiachin his son, who also in a short time was taken and carried to Babylon by the same king, ver. 9, 10. the reign of Zedekiah, who also rebelled against the king of Babylon, and he and his people were taken and carried captive by him for his sins, which are here mentioned, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, and where the Jews continued until the reign of the kingdom of Persia, ver. 11—21. and the chapter is concluded with the proclamation of Cyrus king of Persia, and with which also the next book begins, ver. 22, 23.

Ver. 1. *Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah,* &c.] Of whose reign, and of the three following, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah, and the account of them, from hence to the end of ver. 13. what needs explanation or reconciliation, see the notes on 2 Kings xxiii. 31—37. and xxiv. 5, 6, 8, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, the chief of the priests, and of the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the Heathens,* &c.] The priests, and even the chief of them, who should have instructed the people in the duties of religion, and retained them in the pure worship of God, these were the ringleaders of idolatry, who led the people to commit all the idolatries of the Heathens round about them; and of the people, all ranks and degrees of them were corrupted with them; this was their case in several of the preceding reigns, and now a little before the destruction of them: *and polluted the house of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem;* the temple dedicated to his worship there; this they defiled, by setting up idols in it.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers,* &c.] The prophets of the Lord, to admonish them of their idolatries, and to reprove them for them, to warn them of the wrath of God that would come upon them on that account, unless they repented and reformed; these were at the beginning of their apostacy, and were successively continued unto this time, as Ahijah, Elijah, and others, in the first times of it; Amos, Isaiah, and others, in the middle of it; and Jeremiah, Zephaniah, and Ezekiel, towards the close of it: *rising up betimes, and sending;* which is either to be understood of the Lord, and as expressive of his care and diligence, like the master of a family, solicitous for the good of it; or of the messengers, the prophets, who made haste to go or send their prophecies and instructions to reclaim the people; the phrase is often to be met with in the prophecy of Jeremiah, see ch. xi. 7. and the note there: *because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place;* being unwilling they should come to ruin, and perish, and their city and temple be destroyed where they dwelt.

Ver. 16. *But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words,* &c.] Which was the treatment Jeremiah and Ezekiel frequently met with: *and misused his prophets;* imprisoned them, as Micaiah and Jeremiah were: *until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people;* which burned like fire in his breast, and broke out to the consumption of them: *till* there was *no remedy;* or healing of them; there was no reclaiming or recovering of them, no bringing them to repentance, and no pardon for them.

Ver. 17. *Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees,* &c.] Nebuchadnezzar; and though it was the rebellion of Zedekiah which was the cause and occasion of his coming against them, yet it was the Lord that moved him to it, and gave him success: *who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of the sanctuary;* in the temple, where they took sanctuary, imagining that sacred place would protect them from the rage of the enemy, but it did not: *and had no*

compassion on young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; spared none on account of age or sex, but put them all to the sword, or carried them captive: *he gave them into his hand;* that is, the Lord delivered them into the hand of the king of Babylon, for their sins.

Ver. 18. *And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small,* &c.] All that were left; for some had been carried away in both the reigns preceding: *and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his princes;* which became the spoil and booty of the soldiers: *all these he brought to Babylon;* the vessels were laid up there, and restored when Cyrus took it; but the treasures were no doubt in part taken for his own use, and the rest divided in the army.

Ver. 19. *And they burnt the house of the Lord,* &c.] The temple; of which, and what follows in this verse, see the notes on Jer. lii. 13, 14.

Ver. 20. *And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away captive,* &c.] The king of Babylon, or his general by his orders, excepting some poor persons left to till the land, see Jer. lii. 15, 16. *where they were servants to him and his sons;* his son Evil-merodach, and his grandson Belshazzar, see Jer. xxvii. 7. and the note there: *until the reign of the kingdom of Persia;* until that monarchy began, as it did upon the taking of Babylon by Cyrus king of Persia. This is the first place we meet with this name of Persia in Scripture. The Arabic writers differ about the origin of it; some derive it from Pars the son of Arsham (Arphaxad), the son of Shem; others from Pars the son of Amur, the son of Japhet; and others say Pars was the son of Elam, the son of Shem, the son of Noah[a]; but Bochart[b], seems to be rightest in the derivation of the word, who observes, from Xenophon[c], horses were very rare in this country; and very few could ride them before the times of Cyrus, who taught his foot-soldiers to ride horses; and hence it became common, so that none of the best men of the land cared to be seen on foot; yea, he made a law, that it should be reckoned infamous if any of those he had taught the art of riding were seen to go on foot, though ever so little a way; from this sudden change made in his time the people were called Persians, and the country Persia; in the Arabic language, *pharas* signifying a horse, and *pharis* a horseman; and the same writer observes, that hence it is that no mention is made of this country, in the name of Persia, by Isaiah and Jeremiah; but by Ezekiel and Daniel, who were cotemporary with Cyrus; and in this book and the following historical ones, which were wrote after the Babylonish captivity, as their history shews; and that this book was, is clear from the preceding clause, as well as from the three last verses.

Ver. 21. *To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah,* &c.] That is, the Jews were so long servants in Babylon, as in the preceding verse, to accomplish Jeremiah's prophecy of it, ch. xxv. 12. and xxvii. 7. and xxix. 10. *until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths;* the sabbatical years, or seventh-year sabbaths, which, according to the law of the land, was to rest from being tilled, Lev. xxv. 4. which law had been neglected by the Jews, and now, whether they would or no, the land should have rest for want of persons to till it: for *as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years;* as threatened in Lev. xxvi. 34, 35. on which text Jarchi observes, that at the destruction of the first temple the law concerning the sabbath, or rest of the land, had been neglected 430 years, in which space were 69 sabbatical years; and, according to Maimonides[d], it was at the end of a sabbatic year that the city and temple were destroyed, and so just 70 years had been neglected, and the land was tilled in them as in other years, and now it had rest that exact number of years; but of this we cannot be certain, though it is probable.

Ver. 22, 23. *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia,* &c.] These two verses are the same with which the next book, the book of Ezra, begins, where they will be explained; and these two books, the one ending and the other beginning with the same words, is a strong presumption, that one and the same person, Ezra, is the writer of them both; or rather, as a learned[e] writer conjectures, these two verses are added by some transcriber, who, having finished the book of Chronicles at ver. 21, went on with the book of Ezra, without any stop; but, perceiving his mistake, broke off abruptly; for so it is plain these verses conclude; however, this shews, as the same writer observes, that the book of Ezra followed that of the Chronicles, in the Hebrew copies, though it now does not.

[a] Hyde, Hist. Relig. Vet. Pers. c. 35. p. 418, 419.
[b] Phaleg. l. 4. c. 10. col. 224.
[c] Cyropædia, l. 1. c. 11. & l. 4. c. 17, 18.
[d] Hilchot Shemitah Veyobel, c. 10. sect. 3.
[e] Dr. Kennicott's Dissert. 1. p. 492, &c.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

E Z R A.

THIS book, in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, is called the *First* Book of Ezra, Nehemiah being reckoned the *second*; but with the Jews both were accounted but one book[a]; in the Syriac version, it is called the Writing or Book of Ezra the Prophet; and this title is given him, both by Jews[b] and Christians[c]; in the Arabic version, it is called the First Book of Ezra the Priest, skilful in the Law; and that he was a priest is clear, since he was the son of Seraiah the high-priest, who was slain by Nebuchadnezzar, and the younger brother of Josedeck, who succeeded his father as high-priest, and uncle to Joshua that succeeded him; and he was also a ready scribe in the law of Moses, see ch. vii. 1, 6, 10, 11, 12. That Ezra was the writer of this book is believed by the Jews[d], and by the generality of Christians; only Huetius[e] thinks that the six first chapters were written by another hand, but his reasons are not satisfactory; and it has been universally received as canonical by all; it agrees with the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah, and serves to illustrate them; it is of use for the continuation of the sacred history, to point at the fulfilment of prophecies concerning the return of the Jews from captivity, and the rebuilding of the temple; and to give us an account of the state of the church in those times, the troubles and difficulties it met with, and what care was taken to keep the tribes and families distinct, that it might be known from whom the Messiah sprung; this book contains an history of 70 years, according to the calculation of Bishop Usher[f], from A. M. 3468, to A. M. 3538.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter informs us of the proclamation of Cyrus king of Persia, for the Jews to return to their own country, and rebuild their temple, ver. 1—4. and that, upon it, the chief of them rose up for that purpose, whose hands were strengthened and supplied by those about them, ver. 5, 6. and particularly by Cyrus, who gave orders that the vessels belonging to the temple should be delivered to them, ver. 7—11.

Ver. 1. *Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia*, &c.] Not in the first of his reign over Persia, for he had been many years king over that, and now had all the kingdoms of the earth given him, ver. 2. but over Babylon, and the dominions belonging to it, which commenced with Darius upon the taking of Babylon; he reigned in all 30 years, as Cicero[g] from a Persian writer relates; or 29, according to Herodotus[h]; but in what year this was is not certain; Africanus[i], has proved, from various historians, that it was the first year of the 55th Olympiad, perhaps about the 20th of Cyrus's Persian government[k]; see the note on Dan. x. 1. *that the word of the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremiah, might be fulfilled*; which foretold that the Jews should return from their captivity at the end of 70 years, which fell on the first of Cyrus, reckoning from the 4th of Jehoiakim, and the first of Nebuchadnezzar, see Jer. xxv. 1, 11, 12. and xxix. 10. *the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia*; who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and even of the kings of the earth, and can turn them as he pleases; he wrought upon him, put it into his heart, enlightened his mind, shewed him what was right, and his duty to do, and pressed him to the performance of it; so that he could not be easy until he had done it, and he was made thoroughly willing, and even eager to do it: *that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and* put it *also in writing*; gave it in writing to his heralds to read and proclaim throughout all his dominions: *saying*; as follows.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia*, &c.] Of whom, and this edict of his, Isaiah prophesied 200 years before he was born, Isa. xliv. 28. *the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth*; many he had conquered before he took Babylon, and then the whole Babylonian monarchy fell into his hands. Herodotus[l] says, he ruled over all Asia; Xenophon[m] reckons up many nations that were under his government, Medes and Hyrcanians, Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygians, Carians, Phœnicians, Babylonians, Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, Sacæ or Scythians, Paphlagonians, Megadinians, and many other nations, the Greeks inhabiting Asia, and the Cyprians, and Egyptians; and elsewhere he says[n], the borders of his kingdom were, to the east the Red sea, to the north the Euxine Pontus, to the west

[a] Origen apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 25. Hieron. Opera, tom. 3. Epist. ad Paulin. fol. 6. B, & ad Domnion. & Rogat. fol. 7. G.
[b] Seder Olam Zuta, p. 105.
[c] Lactant. Institut. l. 4. c. 11.
[d] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 1.
[e] Demonstr. Evangel. prop. 4. p. 208, 209.
[f] Annal. Vet. Test. p. 146, 192.
[g] De Divinatione, l. 1.
[h] Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 214.
[i] Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 10. c. 10. p. 488.
[k] Nic. Abrami Pharus, p. 202.
[l] Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 130. So Sallust, Bell. Catalin. p. 2.
[m] Cyropædia, l. 1. in principio.
[n] L. 8. c. 42.

Cyprus and Egypt, and to the south Ethiopia. And the possession of these kingdoms Cyrus ascribes, not to his own martial courage and skill, but to the providence and disposal of the God of heaven, which he seems to have had some notion of: *and he hath charged me to build an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah*; in the prophecy of Isaiah, which, according to Josephus[x], he had seen and read, and believed it to be a charge upon him, and a command unto him to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem; however, to give leave for the rebuilding of it, and to encourage to it, and assist in it; an Arabic writer says[y], that Cyrus married a sister of Zerubbabel, and that it was at her request that the Jews had leave to return; which is merely fabulous.

Ver. 3. *Who is there among you of all his people?* &c.] The people of God, the Israelites, as well of the 10 tribes, as of the two of Judah and Benjamin; for this edict was published throughout all his dominions, where were the one as well as the other: *his God be with him*; to incline his heart to go, to protect him in his journey, and succeed and prosper him in what he goes about: *and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, he is the God*; the one only living and true God: *which is in Jerusalem*: who has been in former times, and is to be worshipped there; though Aben Ezra says, this is to be connected with *the house of the Lord*: as if the sense was, to build the house, that was in Jerusalem, or to be built there; and so our version connects them, putting those words into a parenthesis, *he is God*; but this is contrary to the accents.

Ver. 4. *And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth*, &c.] Is left behind, and can't go up through poverty, not having a sufficiency to bear his charges in his journey to Jerusalem: *let the men of his place keep him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts*, with money to bear the expenses of his journey, with goods to furnish his house, or trade with, when he came to Judea, and with cattle to carry him, and his goods, and to till the ground with, when he came thither; and the men exhorted to this are either the Gentiles that dwelt in the cities where these poor Jews were, or the richer Jews, who chose as yet not to go up until they saw how things would succeed; and are therefore called upon to assist their brethren who had a will, but not ability: *besides the will-offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem*; which they freely gave, and sent by them for the rebuilding of the temple.

Ver. 5. *Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin*, &c.] Princes of these tribes, and heads of families in them, and of some other tribes too, though chiefly of these, as appears from 1 Chron. ix. 3. *and the priests and the Levites*; whose presence was necessary both to direct in the building of the temple, and to animate to it, and to set the vessels in their proper places; and particularly to assist in the setting up of the altar, and to offer sacrifices on it, which was the first thing done when come to Jerusalem, ch. iii. 2, 3, *with all them whose spirit God raised to go up, to build the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem*; God, who *works* in men *both to will and to do*, wrought powerfully by his spirit on their hearts, inclined their minds, and made them willing to go up, and set about this work; and such a divine, powerful, and efficacious operation upon them, was necessary to engage them in it, since the embarrassments, difficulties, discouragements, and objections, were many: some of them were well settled, and had contracted a pleasing acquaintance with many of their neighbours, and indeed to most of them it was their native place; and as for Judea and Jerusalem, they knew nothing of but what their fathers had told them; the way to it unknown, long, and dangerous, at least fatiguing and troublesome to their wives and children; and Judea and Jerusalem desolate and in ruins, and in the hands of enemies, from whom they had reason to expect trouble.

Ver. 6. *And all they that were about them*, &c.] Their neighbours, the Chaldeans: *strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things*; which they either did of themselves at their own motion, or by the direction and example of Cyrus, ver. 4. and perhaps many of them to ingratiate themselves into the favour of their new monarch: *besides all that was willingly offered*; by the rich Jews, who thought fit, at least for the present, to remain in Babylon.

Ver. 7. *And Cyrus brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord*, &c.] Or ordered them to be brought forth: *which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem*; out of the temple there, when he took it and burnt it: *and had put them in the house of his gods*; in the temple of Belus at Babylon, see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7. Dan. i. 2. and v. 2, 3. by which means they were providentially preserved.

Ver. 8. *Even these did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer*, &c.] Or Mithridates, a name common with the Persians, from their god Mithras, the sun they worshipped: *and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar prince of Judah*; delivered them by tale to him; who, according to the Jewish rabbins, as Jarchi says, was Daniel, who was so called, because he stood in six tribulations; but it does not appear that Daniel went up to Jerusalem with the captivity, as this man did, but remained at Babylon; rather, with Aben Ezra, it is best by him to understand Zerubbabel, who did go up, and was the prince of Judah; and Cyrus, in his letter[z] to the governors of Syria, expressly says, that he delivered the vessels to Zerubbabel, the prince of the Jews. He had two names, Sheshbazzar, which signifies he rejoiced in tribulation, and Zerubbabel, which signifies either the seed of Babylon, being born there, or dispersed, or a stranger there, as others.

Ver. 9. *And this is the number of them*, &c.] Of the vessels delivered, as follows: 30 *chargers of gold*, 1,000 *chargers of silver*; these, according to Ben Melech, were vessels in which water was put to wash hands in; but rather they were, as Aben Ezra observes from the Jerusalem Talmud[a], vessels in which they gathered the blood of lambs and bullocks slain

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[x] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 1. sect. 1, 2.
[y] Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. Dyn. 5. p. 52.

[z] Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 11. c. 1. sect. 3.
[a] T. Hieros. Yoma, fol. 41. 1.

for sacrifices: 29 *knives*; which, because the handles of them were of gold or silver, were valuable, and might be very large knives, and what the priests used in slaying and cutting up the sacrifices.

Ver. 10. *Thirty basins of gold*, &c.] Cups or dishes with covers, as the word seems to signify; but, according to Jarchi and Aben Ezra, they were vessels in which the blood of sacrifices was received, and out of which it was sprinkled on the altar: *silver basins of a second sort* 410; perhaps lesser than the other, however not so valuable, being of silver; in the apocryphal Ezra, ch. ii. 13. the number is 2,410; and in the letter of Cyrus, before referred to, it is 2,400: *and other vessels* 1,000; which are not particularly mentioned; Junius and Tremellius render the words, *other vessels by thousands*, there being near 3,000 that are not described.

Ver. 11. *All the vessels of gold, and of silver, were* 5,400, &c.] Those that are mentioned make no more than 2,499, which Aben Ezra thinks were the larger vessels; but this general sum takes in great and small, as in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18. in the letter of Cyrus, before mentioned, these vessels are more particularly described, and their several numbers given, which together amount to the exact number in the text, 5,400; the apochryphal Ezra makes them 5,469: *all these did Sheshbazzar bring up with* them of *the captivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem*: of whom there is a large and particular account in the following chapter.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter contains a list of those that went up from Babylon to Jerusalem, of their leaders, their chief men, princes and priests, ver. 1, 2. of the people, described by their families, towns, and cities, and number of persons, ver. 3—35. of the priests, Levites, and Nethinim, ver. 36—58. and of those that could not make out their genealogy, people and priests, ver. 59—63. and then the sum-total of the whole congregation is given, ver. 64. besides men and maid-servants, singing men and women, and cattle of divers sorts, ver. 65—67. and the chapter is closed with an account of the free-will offerings of the principal men towards the building of the temple, and of the settlement of the people in their respective cities, ver. 68, 69, 70.

Ver. 1. *Now these* are *the children of the province*, &c.] Either of the province of Babylon, as Aben Ezra, where they were either born, or had dwelt for many years; or else rather, according to Jarchi, of the province of Judea, as it is called, ch. v. 8. once a flourishing kingdom, but reduced to a province of the Babylonian monarchy, now in the hands of the Medes and Persians, of which province they and their fathers originally were: *that went out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon*: who either in person, or in their parents, were carried captive by him, and who were the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; and they are only mentioned, because they were the principal that returned, though there were some of the other tribes that also came up with them: *and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city*; that he dwelt in before, or was now assigned to him by lot, see Neh. xi. 1, &c.

Ver. 2. *Which came with Zerubbabel*, &c.] The head of them, the prince of Judah; and the chief that came with him are the 10 following; Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah; the first of these, Jeshua, was Joshua the high-priest, the son of Josedeck, Hagg. i. 1. Dr. Lightfoot[s] thinks that Nehemiah is the same, whose name the following book bears; and that Mordecai is he who was uncle to Esther, so Aben Ezra; but, if so, they must both return again; for that Nehemiah came to Jerusalem in the 20th year of Artaxerxes, Neh. i. 1. and that Mordecai brought up his niece in the city of Shushan, in the times of Ahasuerus, is certain; and this, with respect to both, is denied by others[t], who take them to be different men of the same name; and the same writer is of opinion that Seraiah, and who is called Azariah, Neh. vii. 7. is the same with Ezra, who therefore must and did return, since he went up to Jerusalem in the 7th year of Artaxerxes, ch. vii. 1, 7, 8. as for the others, we know nothing more of them than their names: *the number of the men of the people of Israel*; either of the principal of them before named, or of the common people, which next follows.

Ver. 3. *The children of Parosh*, 2,172.] From hence, to the end of ver. 35, a list is given of the captives that returned, described by the families they were of, their ancestors from whence they sprung, or the towns and cities to which they originally belonged, and by their numbers; otherwise nothing more of them is known.

Ver. 36. *The priests*, &c.] An account of them is given in this and the three following verses, and only four families are mentioned, those of Jedaiah, Immer, Pashur, and Harim, and the number of them amounted to 4,289; these, according to the Jews, were heads of four courses, which were all that returned from Babylon[u].

Ver. 40. *The Levites*, &c.] Singers and porters, who are reckoned in this, and the two following verses, whose numbers were no more than 341; whereas, in the times of David, they were 38,000, 1 Chron. xxiii. 3.

Ver. 43. *The Nethinims*, &c.] Supposed by Aben Ezra and Jarchi to be the Gibeonites, who were *given* by Joshua, as the word Nethinim signifies, to the congregation, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water; but rather were those that were given by David

[s] Works, vol. 1. p. 137. So Broughton, Works, p. 258.
[t] Vid. Raineld. de Libr. Apocryph. Prælect. 111, 117, 148.

[u] T. Hieros. Taanioth, fol. 68. 1.

to assist the Levites; of these is an account from hence to the end of ver. 58, together with those who descended from Solomon's servants, who seem to be the remains of the Canaanites in the land, whom Solomon made bond-servants of, 1 Kings ix. 20, 21. 2 Chron. ii. 17. who, and their posterity, became proselytes; or those sprung from men that were domestic servants of Solomon's, and valued themselves on that account; the number of the Nethinim and these together were three hundred ninety and two.

Ver. 59. *And these were they that went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsa,* &c.] Places in the land of Babylon, see Isa. xxxvii. 12. Ezek. iii. 15. *Cherub, Addan,* and *Immer; but they could not shew their father's house, and their seed, whether they were of Israel;* these were such that professed the Jewish religion, and went for Jews in Babylon, but could not trace their pedigree, and tell what family they were of, who their ancestors, and where they had lived in Judea; they had lost their genealogical tables, if they ever had any, and could not make it out, whether their parents were Israelites or proselyted Gentiles; or they were such who had been exposed, and taken out of the streets, and their parents unknown.

Ver. 60. *The children of Delaiah, Tobiah,* and *Nekoda,* 652.] These, though their immediate parents were known, yet by their being mentioned here, it seems as if they could not carry their genealogy further, and make it clearly appear what was the house of their fathers, or what their family.

Ver. 61. *And of the children of the priests,* &c.] Who could not make out their pedigree, for those that could are mentioned before: *the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai;* how the latter came by this name follows: *which took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name;* this man married a woman that descended from the famous Barzillai the Gileadite, in the times of David; and the priesthood being in disuse, and mean and despicable, in Babylon, he chose to take the name of his wife's family, and pass for a descendant from that, and perhaps destroyed, or at least neglected, to take care of the genealogy of his own family.

Ver. 62. *These sought their register* among *those that were reckoned by genealogy,* &c.] To find their names written and registered there; for the Jews kept public registers of their priests, their descent, marriages, and offspring, that it might be known who were fit, and who not, to officiate as such: *but they were not found;* their names were not there, nor any account taken of them: *therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood;* were not suffered to attend at the altar, and offer sacrifice, and enjoy the privileges belonging to that office.

Ver. 63. *And the Tirshatha said unto them,* &c.] By whom Jarchi understands Nehemiah, and observes, that their rabbins say he was so called, because the wise men allowed him to drink the wine of the Gentiles, he being cup-bearer to the king; but Aben Ezra, with greater probability, takes it to be a name of honour and grandeur in the Chaldee language, as a prince or governor; and no doubt Zerubbabel is meant, the prince of the Jews, the same with Sheshbazzar, ch. i. 8. according to Gussetius[w], this office was the same with that of the king's commissary in a province, delegated to carry his orders, make them known, and see them put in execution; and that this name Tirshatha is the same with Tithraustes in Ælian[x]; but that seems to be not the title of an office, but the personal name of a man that was a chiliarch: *that they should not eat of the most holy things;* as of the shew-bread, and those parts of the sin-offerings, and of the peace-offerings and meat-offerings, which belonged to the priests, which the governor forbid these to eat of, who were rejected from the priesthood: *till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim;* as yet there was not any priest that had them; they were not to be found at the return from Babylon; the governor might hope they would be found, and a priest appear clothed with them, when it might be inquired of the Lord by them, whether such priests, before described, might eat of the holy things or no; but since the Jews[y] acknowledge that these were one of the five things wanting in the second temple; it is all one, as the Talmudists[z] express it, as if it had been said, until the dead rise, or the Messiah comes; and who is come, the true High-priest, and with whom are the true Urim and Thummim, lights and perfections to the highest degree, being full of grace and truth; of the Urim and Thummim, see the note on Exod. xxviii. 30.

Ver. 64. *The whole congregation together* was 42,360.] But the sums before given make no more, with Zerubbabel, and the 10 principal men, than 29,829, so that there are more than 12,000 wanting; wherefore, in answer to the question, where are the 12,000? the Jews say in their chronology[a], these are they of the other tribes, who set up the altar on its bases, and gave money to the masons, &c. ch. iii. 1, 3, 7. this was a much larger number than were carried captive; see 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 15. Jer. lii. 28, 29, 30. but not to be compared with the number that came out of Egypt, Exod. xii. 37. An Arabic writer[b] makes them 50,000, but wrongly.

Ver. 65. *Besides their servants and their maids, of whom* there were 7,337, &c.] This shews that the greater part of those that returned were of the poorer sort, since there were so few servants that belonged unto them; these came not into the above account: *and* there were *among them* 200 *singing men and singing women;* among the servants, who were kept by persons of figure for their pleasure and recreation, see Eccl. ii. 8. for that these were such as were employed in sacred service is not so clear, especially the latter, though some conclude it from 1 Chron. xxv. 5, 6. but rather they were such as were employed at marriages, festivals, and funerals; though Jarchi thinks they were employed by the returning captives, to make them cheerful as they travelled along, see Isa. lv. 12.

[w] Ebr. Comment. p. 809.
[x] Var. Hist. l. 1. c. 21. Vid. Corn. Nep. Vit. Conon. l. 9. c. 3.
[y] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 21. 2.
[z] T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 48. 2. & Gloss. in Kiddushin, fol. 60. 2.
[a] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 29. p. 86.
[b] Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. Dyn. 5. p. 82.

Ver. 66, 67. *Their horses were* 736, *their mules* 245, *their camels* 435, *their asses* 6,720.] So that the far greatest part of them must walk on foot, since these can be thought to be little more than sufficient to carry their goods or baggage; some copies of the Vulgate Latin read 636 horses [j].

Ver. 68. *And some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the house of the Lord that is at Jerusalem,* &c.] That is, when they came to the place where it formerly stood, and where were still the ruins of it: *offered freely for the house of God, to set it up in its place;* to rebuild it upon the spot where it formerly stood; this they did besides the free-will offerings they brought with them from Babylon.

Ver. 69. *They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work* 61,000 *drachms of gold,* &c.] These *darcemons* or *darics* were a Persian coin; one of which, according to Brerewood [k], was of the value of fifteen shillings of our money, and so this quantity of them amounted to 45,750 pounds; but according to Bishop Cumberland [l] they were of the value of twenty shillings and four-pence of our money, and so came to upwards of 61,000 pounds; these every one, according to his ability, put into the common stock or treasury for the work of building the temple; the Vulgate Latin [m] reads 40,000: *and* 5,000 *pound of silver;* and an Hebrew *mina*, or pound, being of our money seven pounds, ten shillings, according to Brerewood [n], amounted to 31,250 pounds: but others [o], reckoning a drachm of gold at 10 shillings, and a mina or pound of silver at 9 pounds, make the whole to amount only to 75,500 pounds of our money: *and* 100 *priests' garments;* which, as they were laid up among treasures, so were necessary for the service of the temple.

Ver. 70. *So the priests and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singers, and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities,* &c.] Which were assigned to them out of the several tribes, and in which they or their forefathers had dwelt before the captivity: *and all Israel in their cities;* as those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, so of the other ten, as many as returned and joined those who were left in the land.

CHAP. III.

THIS chapter relates how that the people of Israel returned from captivity, gathered to Jerusalem, and set up the altar, where sacrifices were offered, ver. 1, 2, 3. and kept the feast of tabernacles, and offered the sacrifices of that, besides the daily sacrifice, and of other festivals; and contributed to the workmen that prepared for the building of the temple, ver. 4—7. and began it by laying the foundation of it; which to some was matter of joy, to others of grief, on different accounts, ver. 8—13.

Ver. 1. *And when the seventh month was come,* &c.] The month Tisri, which answers to part of September and October; or when it *was approaching* [p], for before it was actually come some following things were done, the people met, and an altar was built; for on the first day of it sacrifices were offered, ver. 6. *and the children of Israel were in the cities;* their respective cities, settling their domestic affairs: *the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem;* the thing was universal, and done with as much dispatch as if only one man was concerned; and it seems to denote as if they were under a divine impulse, and came together without any consultation, or knowledge of each other's designs, and without summons.

Ver. 2. *Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak,* &c.] Who was the high-priest, and the proper person to give the lead in the following work: *and his brethren the priests;* the common priests, very fit to join him, and assist him in it: *and Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel;* the prince and governor of Judah, whose presence was necessary to give countenance to the work, and animate to it: *and his brethren;* the princes and heads of the people, particularly those mentioned ch. ii. 2. *and builded the altar of the God of Israel;* the altar of burnt-offering, gave orders for the building of it, and directions about it: *to offer burnt-offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God;* or prophet of God, as the Syriac version; see Lev. i. 1—17.

Ver. 3. *And they set the altar upon his bases,* &c.] Which might remain of the old altar; or the meaning is, that it was fixed and settled on the same spot where it stood before: *for fear was upon them, because of the people of those countries;* and therefore they hastened to erect an altar, and offer sacrifices to the Lord, in hope that he would appear for them, and help them against their enemies; or rather, as some render the words [q], *though fear was upon them,* &c. yet they were not deterred from the work, worship, and service of God: *and they offered burnt-offerings unto the Lord, even burnt-offerings, morning and evening;* the daily sacrifice, as directed to Exod. xxix. 38, 39.

Ver. 4. *They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written,* &c.] According to the rules prescribed for the observation of it in Lev. xxiii. 34—42. this began on the 15th day of the seventh month: *and offered the daily burnt-offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required:* for on all the eight days of the feast there was a certain number of sacrifices fixed for every day; and exactly according to the law concerning them did they offer them at this time; see Numb. xxix. 12—38.

Ver. 5. *And afterwards* offered *the continual burnt-offering,* &c.] Not after the feast of tabernacles, as if they then began to offer the daily sacrifice; for that they did as soon as the altar was set up, and on the first day of the month, ver. 3, 6. rather the sense is, that

[j] Ed. of Sixtus V. and the Lovain in James's Contrariety of Popish Bibles, p. 295.
[k] De Pret. & Ponder. Vet. Num. ch. iii. v.
[l] Scripture Weights & Measures, ch. 4. p. 115.
[m] Sixtus V. Lovain & MSS. in James ut supra.
[n] Ut supra, c. iv. v.
[o] Universal History, vol. 10. p. 183. marg.
[p] ויגע cum appropinquaret, Piscator.
[q] כי quamvis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Patrick.

after the daily burnt-offering of the morning, they offered the other sacrifices peculiar to the several days of the feast of tabernacles; they never neglected that, yea, always began with it; all the rest were after it, and so on other festivals: *both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated:* to the service of the Lord, and the honour of his name, as every first day of the month, and every other appointed festival, they offered the sacrifices appropriate to each; but not to the neglect of that sacrifice, and always after it: *and of every one that willingly offered a free-will offering unto the Lord;* these they were careful also to offer in their proper time.

Ver. 6. *From the first of the seventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto the Lord,* &c.] And which day was not only a new moon, but a grand festival, the feast of blowing of trumpets, Lev. xxiii. 24, 25. and no doubt but they observed the 10th day of this month, with all the rites of it, which was the day of atonement, Lev. xxiii. 27—32. *but the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid:* they began first with sacrifices, that having thereby given thanks to God for their return to their own land, and for all the benefits they enjoyed, and made atonement for their sins in a typical way, they might be the more prepared and fit for the work of building the temple; or, *though the foundation* of it was not laid [z], yet they offered the above sacrifices.

Ver. 7. *They gave money also to the masons, and to the carpenters,* &c.]. To buy stone and timber with for the building of the temple: *and meat and drink and oil unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre;* which were more agreeable to them than money, because there was not plenty of such things in their country, as in the land of Israel: *to bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa;* as they did at the first building of the temple by Solomon; they cut down cedars at Lebanon, which belonged to them, and sent them by sea to Joppa, the nearest sea-port to Jerusalem, about 40 miles from it: see 2 Chron. ii. 16. *according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia;* for Tyre and Zidon being under his dominion as well as Judea, he not only gave leave to the Jews to get cedar-wood from Lebanon, but gave orders to the Zidonians and Tyrians to furnish them with it, paying a valuable consideration for it; and so some [a] render the word, *according to the commandment of Cyrus.*

Ver. 8. *Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem,* &c.] The place where it formerly stood; the Jews seem to have set out from Babylon, in the spring of the preceding year, as it was now of this; which to Jerusalem was a journey of about four months, as Ezra performed it, ch. vii. 9. but might take up longer time for such a body of people to do it in, being larger than that with him; wherefore, after they had visited their respective cities, and settled their affairs there, they came to Jerusalem on the 7th month, or September, and kept the feast of tabernacles, and then they returned to their cities again, the winter season being an improper time to begin the building of the temple; having given money to workmen to purchase materials with, and no doubt left a sufficient number to clear away the rubbish, and get things ready by the returning spring to set about the work: *in the second month;* the month Ijar, as Jarchi observes, answering to part of April and May, having, as may be supposed, kept the passover the month before: *began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak;* the prince, and the high-priest: *and the remnant of their brethren, the priests and Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem;* whose names and numbers are given in the preceding chapter: *and appointed the Levites from 20 years old and upwards to set forward the work of the house of the Lord;* to put men to work upon it, and direct them what to do, and urge them to attend closely to it; ever since David's time the Levites were employed at 20 years of age, when before not till 30, or 25; see 1 Chron. xxiii. 24.

Ver. 9. *Then stood Jeshua,* with *his sons,* &c.] Not Jeshua the high-priest before mentioned, but Jeshua the Levite, ch. ii. 40. *and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, together;* the same with Hodaviah, ch. ii. 40. *to set forward the workmen in the house of God;* to give them orders to begin and lay the foundation, and hasten and animate them to it: *the sons of Henadad,* with *their sons and their brethren the Levites;* two of this man's sons are mentioned in Neh. iii. 18, 24. and x. 9.

Ver. 10. *And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord,* &c.] The masons, whose work it was, ver. 7. *they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets;* these were set in a proper place by the prince and the high-priest, in their priestly garments, with trumpets in their hands to blow with, as the foundation was laying: *and the Levites the sons of Asaph, with cymbals to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel;* these were instruments of brass, and made a tinkling sound, and were by the order of David; and the persons that made use of them; and the songs of praise they were played upon unto; all by his appointment, as well as harps and psalteries, which might now be used, though not expressed; see 1 Chron. xv. 16. and xxv. 1. So the Messenians, when the walls of their city were raised by Epaminondas, and their houses and temples erected, attended it with sacrifices and prayer, and with piping and singing [b].

Ver. 11. *And they sang together by course,* &c.] They sang by turns in responses, and answered one another, as the word signifies; when one company had performed their part, another took theirs: *in praising and giving thanks to the Lord;* for returning them to their own land, and giving them opportunity, ability, and will, to set about the rebuilding of the temple of the Lord, and restoring the pure worship of God; *because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel;* which words are often repeated in Psal. cxxxvi. and which might be the psalm the Levites now sung by responses: *and all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord;* to express their joy, in the best manner they could, on this solemn occasion: *because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid;* which gave them hope the temple in due time would

[z] Etsi, Michaelis.

[a] כרשיון juxta preceptum, Vatablus; juxta quod praeceperat, V. L. So Ben Melech.

[b] Pausan. Messenica, sive, l. 4. p. 368.

be rebuilt, and the service of it restored; see Job xxxviii. 6, 7.

Ver. 12. *But many of the priests and Levites, and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men*, &c.] Seventy or eighty years of age: *that had seen the first house*: the temple built by Solomon, as they very well might, since then it had been destroyed but 52 years; for the 70 years captivity are to be reckoned from the 4th of Jehoiakim, when it began, and which was 18 years before the destruction of the temple; the beginning of the next clause, *when in the foundation*, according to the Hebrew accents, is to be connected with this, *that had seen the first house*; not when first founded, for that was 500 years ago, but *in its foundation*; they saw it standing upon its foundation, in all its glory, and so the Septuagint version; and we may read on, when *this house was before their eyes, wept with a loud voice*; seeing what it was like to be by the foundation now laid, and was in their sight as nothing in comparison of the former; see Hagg. ii. 3. but Aben Ezra connects this clause as we do, *when the foundation of this house was laid*; not but that the dimensions of this house strictly taken were as large as the former: see ch. vi. 3, 4. but not the courts and appendages to it: besides, what might affect them, there was no likelihood of its being so richly decorated with gold and silver as the former temple, and many things would be wanting in it, as the Urim and Thummim, &c. *and many shouted aloud for joy*: of the younger sort, who had never seen the grandeur of the first temple, and were highly delighted with the beginning of this, and the hope of seeing it finished.

Ver. 13. *So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people*, &c.] That is, not clearly and distinctly, they were so mixed and confounded together, and made such a jarring and discord: *for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off*: the shouting being of young people, whose voice was strongest, and they the most numerous, the noise of shouting prevailed over the noise of weeping: and it was heard further, and at a distance appeared more distinctly to be the noise of shouting, that of weeping not reaching so far; though Jarchi is of opinion that the noise of weeping was heard further than the noise of shouting, which is not likely.

CHAP. IV.

THE contents of this chapter are the offer the Samaritans made to the Jews, to assist them in building the temple, which having refused, they gave them all the trouble they could, ver. 1—6. and a letter of theirs to Artaxerxes, king of Persia, full of accusations of them, ver. 7—16. and the answer of Artaxerxes to it, giving orders to command the Jews to cease building the temple, ver. 17—22. which orders were accordingly executed, and the work ceased till the 2d year of Darius, ver. 23, 24.

Ver. 1. *Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin*, &c.] The Samaritans, as appears from ver. 2, 10. *heard that the children of the captivity*: the Jews, who had been in captivity 70 years, and were just come out of it, and still were not quite free, but under the jurisdiction and control of the king of Persia: *builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel*; that they were going about it, and had laid the foundation of it, which might soon come to their ears, the distance not being very great. Josephus[c] says they heard the sound of the trumpets, and came to know the meaning of it.

Ver. 2. *Then they came to Zerubbabel, and the chief of the fathers*, &c.] These they addressed, as knowing that if they could not prevail with them, they could never succeed in their design; and these were no doubt the principal of the Samaritans that applied: *and said unto them, let us build with you*: that is, the temple, they proposed to join with them, and assist them in it; which proposal at first sight might seem very agreeable and welcome, and would have been so had they been sincere, but they were not; they hoped, by getting among them, to have sown discord among them, and disunited them; and so by these or other means to have retarded the building; or if it went forward, that they might have a claim to it as theirs, at least as to set up their own idols in a part of it; the reasons they gave follow: *for we seek your God as ye do*; which was false, for they did not worship him alone, but with idols, nor in the same manner as the Jews did: *and we do sacrifice unto him*; but even that could not recommend them to the Jews, since they ought not to sacrifice, even to the Lord himself, but at Jerusalem: there is a various reading here; the textual reading is, *we do not sacrifice*; that is, to idols; the marginal reading is, *we sacrifice to him*, which we follow; Aben Ezra takes in both, perhaps most rightly; *we do not sacrifice* to any other, *but to him*; which was also false: *since the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assur, who brought us up hither*; to Samaria, from Babylon, and other places; see 2 Kings xvii. 24.

Ver. 3. *But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers, said unto them*, &c.] The prince and high-priest, and chief of the people: *you have nothing to do with us to build an house to our God*; being neither of the same nation, nor of the same religion: *but we ourselves together will build to the Lord God of Israel*; we and we only, who are together as one man, united in one body of people, and in the same religious sentiments, being Israelites; we separately, without admitting strangers among us, will build a temple to the God of Israel: *as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us*; thereby letting them know that they acted by his authority, and the commission they had from him only concerned themselves, and not others.

Ver. 4. *Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in*

[c] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 4. sect. 3.

building.] By threatening them, or by dissuading the workmen from going on, by endeavouring to hinder their having materials from the Tyrians and Zidonians, or money out of the king's revenues to bear the expenses as ordered; see ch. vi. 4.

Ver. 5. *And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose*, &c.] Either to advise and persuade the king of Persia's officers in those parts not to supply them with money, or to influence the great men at his court to get the edict revoked: and this they did *all the days of Cyrus king of Persia*: who, though the hearty friend and patron of the Jews, yet being engaged in wars abroad with the Lydians and Scythians, and leaving his son as viceroy in his absence, who was no friend unto them, the work went on but slowly, attended with interruptions and discouragements: *even until the reign of Darius king of Persia*; who was Darius Hystaspis, between whom and Cyrus were Cambyses the son of Cyrus, and Smerdis the impostor, who pretended to be Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses; a space of about 15 years.

Ver. 6. *And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign*, &c.] According to Jarchi, this was Ahasuerus the husband of Esther; but, as most think [d], was Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus; so Josephus [e]; who was an enemy to the Egyptians; and, fearing the Jews might take part with them, was no friend to them: their enemies therefore took the advantage of the death of Cyrus, and the first opportunity after Cambyses reigned in his own right: *and wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem*: full of hatred and enmity, spite and malice, charging them as a turbulent, disobedient, and rebellious people.

Ver. 7. *And in the days of Artaxerxes*, &c.] The same with Ahasuerus, in the preceding verse; and who also is Cambyses, which is his name in Heathen authors, Artaxerxes being a common name to the kings of Persia; though some [f] think this was Smerdis, the magician and impostor, who was between Cambyses and Darius; but as he reigned but seven months, it is not very likely that he should be wrote unto, and an answer received from him; besides he sent to every nation he ruled over [g], and so to the Jews, and proclaimed to them freedom from tribute and the militia for three years, to ingratiate himself to them: *wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions*; or his company; for Jarchi thinks only one person is meant; that Mithredath Tabeel is the name of one of the adversaries of Judah; and that Bishlam is an appellative, and signifies that he wrote in peace, or in a way of salutation and greeting; but they seem to be the names of governors in the cities of Samaria under the king of Persia: these wrote to *Artaxerxes king of Persia*; instigated by the Samaritans: *and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue*; or Chaldee, of which Ezra gives a copy in the Chaldee language; the meaning either is, that it was written both in Syriac letters and in the Syriac language; for sometimes words are written in one language and in the character of another, as the Syriac is sometimes written in Hebrew characters, and the Hebrew in Roman; or else there was a postscript added to this letter, explaining some things in it, which also was written in the same language: some take [h] the word *nishtevan*, rendered *written*, to be the name of a province on the borders of the country beyond Euphrates, whose figure and characters were in high esteem, and fit to write in to kings; but the words and language were Syrian, and needed interpretation.

Ver. 8. *Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort.*] This means the same letter as before; which, according to Jarchi, was sent in the name of Mithredath Tabeel and his company, was endited by Rehum, master of words or sense, and written by Shimshai the scribe, whom he makes to be a son of Haman [i]; but it was written rather in all their names.

Ver. 9. *Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions*, &c.] Who all signed the letter; namely, the governors of the following nations; *the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites*, and *the Elamites*; which were colonies from several parts of Chaldea, Media, and Persia, and were settled in the several cities of Samaria, as several of their names plainly shew, as from Persia, Arech, Babylon, Shushan, and Elimais; some account for them all, but with uncertainty; according to R. Jose [k], these were the Samaritans who first were sent out of five nations, to whom the king of Assyria added four more, which together make the nine here mentioned, see 2 Kings xvii. 24.

Ver. 10. *And the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over*, &c.] The river Euphrates: *and set in the cities of Samaria*: placed there in the room of the Israelites carried captive; this Asnapper was, according to Jarchi and others [l], Sennacherib; but, with Grotius, Salmaneser; rather he was Esarhaddon, the son of the former, and grandson of the latter; so Dr. Prideaux [m]; though he might be only some commander of the Assyrian monarch, who carried them over by his orders: *and the rest that are on this side the river*; the river Euphrates: *and at such a time*; which may respect the date of the letter, which, no doubt, was expressed, though not here given; or this, as some think, was the same with our *&c.* something following, unto King Artaxerxes greeting, or something like that; though David de Pomis [n] takes it to be the general name of the people beyond the river.

Ver. 11. *This is the copy of the letter they sent unto*

[d] Spanhem. Introduct. Chron. ad Hist. Eccl. p. 54. & Universal History, Vol. 4. p. 203. Prideaux, p. 175.
[e] Ut supra, sect. 4, 6. Vid. R. David Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 8. 2. So Dr. Lightfoot, Works, vol. 1. p. 129.
[f] Prideaux's Connect. par. 1. p. 175. Authors of the Universal History, vol. 5. p. 199, 203. So Vitringa, Hypotypos. Hist. Sacr. p. 108.
[g] Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 67. Justin. l. 1. c. 9.

[h] Præfat. Arugas Habbosem apud Buxtorf. de liter. Heb. add.
[i] So Midrash Esther, fol. 85. 3.
[k] Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.
[l] Kimchi Sepher Shorash. fol. 166. 2. & Vajikra Rabba in ib. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1.
[m] Connexion, &c. vol. 1. p. 30.
[n] Tzemach David, fol. 63. 3.

him, even unto Artaxerxes the king, &c.] Which Ezra brought with him from Babylon, and is contained in the five following verses: *thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time;* this was the inscription of the letter, or the beginning of it.

Ver. 12. *Be it known unto the king, &c.*] The intent of this letter was, that it might be known to the king what follows: *that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem;* this they observe partly out of contempt of the Jews, having been lately captive in Babylon, and partly to insinuate what ingratitude they were guilty of; that having got their liberty, and come to Jerusalem, they made use of it to the king's detriment: *building the rebellious and the bad city;* as they suggest it had been to kings, even his predecessors, in former times, ver. 15. *and have set up the walls* thereof, *and joined the foundations;* which was a falsehood; for the most they had done was setting up the walls of their houses in Jerusalem, and laying the foundation of the temple; as for the walls of the city, they had not as yet done any thing unto them.

Ver. 13. *Be it known now unto the king, &c.*] And let it be seriously and thoroughly considered by him and his counsellors: *that if this city be builded, and its walls set up* again, then *will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom;* being able to defend themselves against the king's forces, sent to reduce them to their obedience; these three words take in all sorts of taxes and levies on persons, goods, and merchandise: *and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings;* not only his own, but his successors'; this they thought would be a very striking and powerful argument with him.

Ver. 14. *Now because we have maintenance from* the king's *palace, &c.*] Have posts under the king, to which salaries were annexed, by which they were supported, and which they had from the king's exchequer: or *salt* *, as in the original, some places of honour and trust formerly being paid in salt; hence, as Pliny [r] observes, such honours and rewards were called *salaries: and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour:* to see any thing done injurious to his crown and dignity, to his honour and revenues, when we are supported by him; this would be ungrateful as well as unjust: *therefore have we sent and certified the king;* of the truth of what is before related: and, for the further confirmation of it, refer him to the ancient records of the kingdom, as follows.

Ver. 15. *That search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers, &c.*] That is, his predecessors in the Babylonian monarchy; though, as the Medes and Persians were included in that, and joined the Babylonians in their wars with others, and particularly with the Jews, the records of the Medes and Persians might also be applied to: *so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city* is *a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time;* against the king of Babylon, particularly in the times of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah: *for which cause was this city destroyed;* as it was by Nebuchadnezzar; see 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 20. and xxv. 1, 9.

* מלח salem vel sale, Montanus, Tatablus, Michaelis.

Ver. 16. *We certify the king, that if this city be builded* again, *and the walls thereof set up, &c.*] As it formerly was, and now attempted, as they suggest: *by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river;* the river Euphrates; intimating that the Jews would not only shake off his yoke, and refuse to pay tribute themselves, but would seize on all his dominions on that side the river, and annex them to their own.

Ver. 17. Then *sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and* to *Shimshai the scribe, &c.*] This affair, upon examination, being found to be of importance, the king of Persia thought fit to send an answer to the above letter, which was doing them an honour, and gave them the power and authority they wished to have: *and to the rest of their companions that dwelt in Samaria;* in the kingdom, province, and cities of Samaria: *and unto the rest beyond the river;* the river Euphrates, the rest of the nations before mentioned, ver. 9, 10. *Peace, and at such a time;* that is, all health and prosperity, &c.

Ver. 18. *The letter which ye sent unto us, &c.*] The plural number is used, being now become courtly for kings thus to speak of themselves: *hath been plainly read before me;* by such that understood both the Syrian and Persian languages; the letter was written in the Syrian language, and the king being a Persian, it was necessary it should be interpreted and explained to him.

Ver. 19. *And I commanded, and search hath been made, &c.*] In the records of his predecessors, whether Chaldeans or Persians: *and it is found that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings, and* that *rebellion and sedition have been made therein:* and yet this could not be carried higher than to the times of Zedekiah and Jehoiakim, as before observed, which was not 100 years ago, unless the rebellion of Hezekiah against the king of Assyria could be thought to be in these records, 2 Kings xviii. 7. and yet from hence it is concluded as if in ages past they had been guilty of rebellion and sedition, and even always.

Ver. 20. *There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all* countries *beyond the river, &c.*] As David and Solomon; and the account of these they had in their records, see 2 Sam. viii. 1 Kings iv. 21, 24. *and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them;* as appears from the places referred to; and this served to strengthen the insinuation made to the king, that if these people were suffered to go on building, he would lose his tribute and taxes in those parts.

Ver. 21. *Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, &c.*] From building: *and that this city be not builded until* another *commandment shall be given from me;* he might suspect that this case, in all its circumstances, was not truly stated, and that hereafter he might see reason to recede from the present orders he gave; and the rather, as by searching, and perhaps on his own knowledge, must have observed, that his father Cyrus had shewn favour to the Jews, and had not only set them at liberty, but had encouraged them to rebuild their temple; which might be what they

[r] Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 7.

were about, and was the case, and nothing else, except their houses to dwell in.

Ver. 22. *Take heed now that ye fail not to do this, &c.*] To put his orders into execution, and at once, without any loss of time, oblige the Jews to desist from rebuilding the walls of their city, which he was told they were doing, though a great falsehood: *why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?* of him and his successors, to be deprived of their toll, tribute, and customs, and to have insurrections, mutinies, and rebellions, in the dominions belonging to them.

Ver. 23. *Now when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, &c.*] By him or them to whom it was particularly directed: *they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews*; not only in obedience to the king's command, but from an eagerness of spirit to put a stop to the proceedings of the Jews, to whom they had an aversion, instigated by the Samaritans: *and made them to cease by force and power*; from going on with the building of the temple, which they reckoned a part of the city, and within their commission; this they did by shewing the power and authority they had under the king's hand, and by the forces they brought with them to compel them to it, should they refuse to obey; or, however, they threatened them highly what they would do, if they did not desist.

Ver. 24. *Then ceased the work of the house of God, which is at Jerusalem, &c.*] How far they had proceeded is not said, whether any further than laying the foundation of it: though probably, by this time, it might be carried to some little height; however, upon this it was discontinued: *so it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia*: not Darius Nothus, as some think, for from the first of Cyrus to the sixth of his reign, when the temple was finished, was upwards of 100 years; yea, according to some, about 140; which would carry the age of Zerubbabel, who both laid the foundation of the temple, and finished it, and the age of those who saw the first temple, to a length that is not probable; but this was Darius Hystaspis, who succeeded Cambyses the son of Cyrus, there being only, between, the short usurpation of Smerdis for seven months.

CHAP. V.

THIS chapter relates, how that the people of the Jews were stirred up by the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah to set about the building of the temple again, notwithstanding the orders to the contrary from the deputy-governors of the king of Persia; nor could the present ones cause them to cease from it; though it must be owned they behaved towards them in a better manner than the former ones did, ver. 1—5. and who, upon the answers received from the Jews, wrote a letter to Darius, to know the truth of things; and in which they seem to state fairly the case of the Jews, as they had it from them, so far as they understood it, ver. 6—17.

Ver. 1. *Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, &c.*] The grandson of Iddo; for he was the son of Barachiah, Zech. i. 1. *prophesied unto the Jews that* were *in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel*; this they both did in the second year of Darius; the one began in the sixth month, and the other in the eighth month of the year, Hagg. i. 1. Zech. i. 1. *even unto them*; or *against them*, as De Dieu; reproving them for their sloth and neglect of building the temple, when they were careful enough to raise up goodly houses for themselves to dwell in; and for being intimidated by the command of the king of Persia, which only forbid the building of the city, that is, the walls of it, but not the temple any more than their own houses; and besides, there was now a new king, from whom they had not so much to fear.

Ver. 2. *Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, &c.*] Whose spirits were stirred up and quickened by the ministry of the prophets, the Lord accompanying it by his spirit, Hagg. i. 12. 14, *and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem*: to go on with the building of it; for they had laid the foundation before, and perhaps had carried it up to some little height, at least, before they ceased from it, ch. ii. 10. *and with them were the prophets of God helping them*; with words of counsel, comfort, and exhortation, directing and encouraging them, and promising them protection and success: these are the prophets before named.

Ver. 3. *At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, &c.*] These were new governors and officers under the king of Persia in those parts, the old ones, Rehum, Shimshai, &c. being either dead, or removed upon this new king coming to the throne: these came to the Jews, *and said thus unto them, who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall?* for it seems by this time they had raised up the walls of the temple from its foundation to some height; for of these it must be understood, see ver. 8, 9. for it can hardly be thought they were as yet enclosing it with a wall round about it; now they asked them by what authority they did this? who set them to work? and what were their names? for that this question was asked, though not here expressed, is clear from ver. 10. and to which an answer is given in the next verse.

Ver. 4. *Then said we unto them after this manner, &c.*] In answer to their questions; namely, Ezra and other Jews replied; for though Ezra is said after this to come from Babylon in the 7th year of Artaxerxes, he might go thither on some business, and then return again at that time; some indeed think these are the words of Tatnai and those with him; so Ben Melech, which seems to be favoured by ver. 10. and by reading the words with an interrogation, as we do; Aben Ezra says they are either the words of the builders, or of the scribes, the secretaries that came to question them; but they are the words of the former, as order requires, or otherwise no answer would be returned, at least as

expressed; and the next clause may be read without an interrogation, and the sense be, that they told them not only that they acted according to an edict of Cyrus king of Persia, for this was said, as appears from ver. 13. but they declared *what were the names of the men that did make this building:* or employed them in it, namely, Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the chief men of the Jews; they made no scruple of telling them who they were; neither ashamed of their masters nor of their work, nor afraid of any ill consequences following hereon.

Ver. 5. *But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews,* &c.] He in his providence looked favourably at them, smiled upon them, encouraged them in the work by his good spirit, and by the prophets, and gave them success, and protected and defended them, see 2 Chron. xvi. 9. Zech. iii. 9. and iv. 10. *that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius:* they were not intimidated by what the governor and those with him said to them, but went on in their work; nor did the governor attempt to interrupt them, they having referred him and their cause to Darius for the truth of what they had said, and for further information from him: *and then they returned answer by letter concerning this* matter; that is, Tatnai and those with him sent a letter to Darius about this affair, to which they had an answer, which are both related in this and the following chapters.

Ver. 6. *The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and his companions the Apharsachites, which* were *on this side the river,* &c.] Which is thought by some to be one of the nations mentioned, ch. iv. 9. the name being pretty near alike to two of them; but perhaps might be a distinct colony in those parts Tatnai was governor of: these *sent unto Darius the king;* and is as follows.

Ver. 7. *They sent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus,* &c.] Or this was the inscription of it: *unto Darius the king, all peace:* wishing him all kind of happiness and prosperity.

Ver. 8. *Be it known unto the king,* &c.] This seems to have been the usual form of beginning a letter to a king in those days, ch. iv. 12. *that we went into the province of Judea:* which from a kingdom was reduced to a province, and was become a part of the Babylonian, now Persian, monarchy, see ch. ii. 1. *to the house of the great God;* as the Jews called the Lord their God; and even the Heathens had a notion that there was one supreme God, though they worshipped inferior ones; and some had a notion that Jehovah the God of the Jews was he: *which is builded with great stones;* marble stones; as Jarchi [s], stones of rolling, as it may be rendered; which, according to Aben Ezra, were so large and heavy, that they could not be carried, but were obliged to roll them: *and timber is laid in the walls,* cedar-wood, as Aben Ezra interprets it, for beams, for flooring and raftering; or rather, is put upon the walls, for the lining and wainscoting of them, which was done with cedar-wood: *and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands;* and, unless timely prevented, will soon be finished.

Ver. 9. *Then asked we those elders,* &c.] The elders of the province of Judea; the chief men of it: *who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls?* see ver. 3.

Ver. 10. *We asked their names also,* &c.] The names of the elders, those that set men about this work: *to certify that we might write the names of the men that* were *the chief of them:* take the names of them in writing, that they might with certainty acquaint the king who they were, and that if it was necessary they might be called to an account for what they were doing.

Ver. 11. *And thus they returned us answer,* &c.] To the purpose and in the manner following: *saying, we are the servants of the God of heaven and earth;* signifying that they were doing his work, in obedience to his will, and to whom they were accountable: *and build the house that was builded these many years ago;* even 500 years ago, or thereabout; so that they were not erecting a building where there was none before, but were rebuilding what was in ruins: *which a great king of Israel builded and set up;* King Solomon, who was a great king for wisdom, honour, riches, peace, prosperity, and extent of his kingdom.

Ver. 12. *But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath,* &c.] By their idolatries; which accounts for it how it was that they who were the servants of the great God of heaven and earth, and this temple built for the honour of his name, were not preserved by him; but they were carried captive, and this house left desolate: it was for their sins for which he (God) *gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon;* see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19, 20.

Ver. 13. *But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon,* &c.] That is, the first year he was king of Babylon, having taken it, otherwise he was king of Persia many years before: the same *King Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God;* see ch. i. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 14, 15. *And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God,* &c.] Of which, and of what is said concerning them, and particularly of the delivery of them to Sheshbazzar, whom Cyrus made governor of Judah, and ordered him to carry them to Jerusalem, and build the temple there, and put them in it, see ch. i. 7—11.

Ver. 16. *Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem,* &c.] Which makes it clear, that by Sheshbazzar is meant Zerubbabel; for he it was that laid the foundation of the temple, or at least by whose order it was laid, see Zech. iv. 9. *and since that time even until now;* from the 1st of Cyrus to the 2d of Darius, a space of about 18 years, and just 70 from the destruction of the temple: *hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished;* the work going on slowly, not without interruption and intermission, through the enmity of the Samaritans unto them, who had made false representations of them; but these men, Tatnai and those with him, as the Jews gave them a very particular account of things, as above, so they fairly and fully related them in this their letter to the king.

[s] So David de Pomis, Tzemach David, fol. 14. 3.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure-house, which is there at Babylon*, &c.] Where were the archives of the kingdom, where the laws, decrees, edicts, and proclamations, and other things relating to the state, were laid up, that recourse might be had to them upon occasion: *whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem*: which the Jews affirmed was made by him, and upon which they proceeded: *and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter*; whether the Jews should be allowed to go on with the building of their temple, and finish it, or whether they should be restrained from it; signifying they were ready to do his will and pleasure either way, as he thought fit.

CHAP. VI.

DARIUS, on receiving the letter from his officers in Samaria, searched for the decree of Cyrus, and found it, and which he confirmed, ver. 1—7. and made a fresh decree, and ordered expenses to be given out of his tribute for the building of the temple, and for the sacrifices of it; and that whosoever altered it should be hanged on the timber of his own house, and imprecated a curse on those that should destroy the house of God, ver. 8—12. upon which the building went on, and was finished, ver. 13, 14, 15. and the temple was dedicated to God in a solemn manner, ver. 16, 17, 18. and the passover was kept by all the people, ver. 19—22.

Ver. 1. *Then Darius the king made a decree*, &c.] To make inquiry after the edict of Cyrus, to search the public records for it: *and search was made in the house of the rolls*: or *books*[r], in a public library or museum: *where the treasures were laid up in Babylon*: where things of worth and value were reposited; not only gold, silver, jewels, and precious stones, and things rare and curious, but all sorts of writings relating to the monarchy, and the dominions belonging to it; but it seems it could not be found here, and therefore the king ordered search to be made elsewhere.

Ver. 2. *And there was found at Achmetha*, &c.] Which Jarchi and Aben Ezra take to be the name of a vessel in which letters and writings were put for safety; but it was no doubt the name of a place; the Vulgate Latin version has it Ecbatana; and so Josephus[s]; which was the name of a city in Media, where the kings of that country had their residence in the summer-time[t]; for it has its name from heat[u]; the Persian kings dwelt at Shushan in the winter, and at Ecbatana in the summer[w]; hence they are compared by Ælian[x] to cranes, birds of passage, because of their going to and from the above places: *in the palace that is in the province of the Medes*, here was found *a roll*: which was the decree of Cyrus, which perhaps he took with him when he went thither: *and therein was a record thus written*: as follows.

Ver. 3. *In the first year of Cyrus the king*, the same *Cyrus the king made a decree* concerning *the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house be builded*, &c.] See ch. i. 1—4. Isa. xliv. 28. *the place where they offered sacrifices*: to God in times past, ever since it was built by Solomon: *and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid*: so as to bear and support the building erected on them, as the word signifies: *the height thereof 60 cubits*: which were 30 more than the height of Solomon's temple, 1 Kings vi. 2. though 60 less than the height of the porch, which was 120, 2 Chron. iii. 4. and which some take to be the height of the whole house; and hence it may be observed what Herod *said*[y], that the temple then in being wanted 60 cubits in height of that of Solomon's: *and the breadth thereof 60 cubits*, whereas the breadth of Solomon's temple was but 20, 1 Kings vi. 2. but since it cannot reasonably be thought that the breadth should be equal to the height, and so very disproportionate to Solomon's temple; many learned men understand this of the extension of it as to length, which exactly agrees with the length of the former temple, 1 Kings vi. 2.

Ver. 4. With *three rows of great stones*, &c.] Which Jarchi interprets of the walls of it, and these stones of marble; and so Ben Melech: *and a row of new timber*; of cedar-wood upon the rows of stone, see 1 Kings vi. 36. or for the lining and wainscoting the walls: *and let the expenses be given out of the king's house*: treasury, or exchequer; but it does not appear that this part of the decree was observed, at least hitherto; but the Jews built at their own expense, and perhaps did not exactly observe the directions given as to the dimensions of the house.

Ver. 5. *And also let the golden and silver vessels*, &c.] See ch. i. 7—11. and which confirms what the Jews said to Tatnai, ch. v. 14, 15.

Ver. 6. *Now* therefore *Tatnai, governor beyond the river*, &c.] The river Euphrates, that side of it towards the land of Israel; Josephus[z] calls this man master of the horse: *Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence*; keep at a distance from the Jews, and give them no disturbance, nor interrupt them in their work of building of the temple, but mind your own business and government.

Ver. 7. *Let the work of this house of God alone*, &c.] Suffer them to go on with it, and don't hinder them; it looks, by these expressions, as if he had some suspicion or hint given him that they were inclined to molest them, or that there were some that stirred them up to it, and were desirous of it: *let the governor of the Jews, and the elders of the Jews, build this house of God*

[r] בבית ספריא, ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις, Sept. in bibliotheca, V. L. in bibliotheca librorum, Tigurine version; in domo librorum, Pagninus, Montanus.

[s] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 4. sect. 6.

[t] Curtius, l. 5. c. 8. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 2. c. 6.

[u] Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 918.

[w] Athen. Deipnosophist. l. 12. c. 1.

[x] De Animal. l. 3. c. 13.

[y] Apud Joseph. Antiqu. l. 15. c. 11. sect. 7.

[z] Ibid. l. 11. c. 4. sect. 7.

in his place: where it formerly stood; that is, go on with the building of it.

Ver. 8. *Moreover, I make a decree, what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God,* &c.] This must be considered as an additional decree of Darius, which was peculiarly made by him, in which more was granted in favour of the Jews, and as an encouragement to them to go on with the building of the temple; though Josephus[a] says this is no other than a confirmation of the decree of Cyrus; for, according to him, all that is here granted to them, or threatened to others, from hence to the end of ver. 12, was contained in the decree: *that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river:* what was collected out of his dominions on that side the river Euphrates, towards the land of Israel: according to Herodotus[b], this Darius was the first of the kings of Persia that exacted tribute; under Cyrus and Cambyses only presents were brought; but he imposed a tribute, and was therefore called καπηλος, an huckster, as Cambyses had the name of lord, and Cyrus that of father: the same writer gives an account of the several nations he received it from, and the particular sums, which in all amounted to 14,560 Euboic talents of gold; among whom are mentioned all Phœnicia and Syria, called Palestine, the tribute of which parts is the tribute beyond the river he referred to: and this king was well disposed to the Jewish nation, temple, and worship, before he was king, if what Josephus[c] says is true, that, while a private man, he vowed to God that, if he should be king, he would send all the sacred vessels that were in Babylon to the temple at Jerusalem: and out of the above tribute it is ordered, that *forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered:* from going on with the building, for want of money to buy materials, and pay the workmen.

Ver. 9. *And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt-offerings of the God of heaven,* &c.] All which were used for burnt-offerings, see Lev. i. *wheat, salt, wine, and oil; wheat,* or fine flour, for the *minchah* or meat-offering; *salt,* for every offering; *wine,* for the drink-offerings; and *oil,* to be put upon the meat-offerings, see Lev. 2. *according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail;* for the daily sacrifice, and the meat and drink offerings which attended it, Exod. xxix. 38—41.

Ver. 10. *That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven,* &c.] Such as will be acceptable to him, Gen. viii. 21. *and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons:* prayer being wont to be made at the time of the morning and evening incense; and the Jews used to pray for other people besides themselves, and especially when desired, and particularly for kings and civil magistrates, to whom they were subject, see Jer. xxix. 7. 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. the sons of Darius Hystaspis, for whose life, as well as his own, he would have prayer made, were, according to Herodotus[d], three by his first wife, the daughter of Gobryas, before he began to reign, the eldest of which was Artobazanes; which sons must be here meant, since this was towards the beginning of his reign; he had afterwards four more by Atossa the daughter of Cyrus, the eldest of which was Xerxes, who succeeded him: many of the Heathens had an high opinion of the God of the Jews, and of their prayers to him for them; even the Emperor Julian[e] styles him the best of all the gods, and desired the Jews to pray to him for the welfare of his kingdom; nor need it seem strange that Darius should desire the same, since he was a devout prince; his father Hystaspes is supposed by some to be the same that was one of the most famous among the Persian Magi, or ministers in sacred things; and Darius himself had so great a veneration for the men of that sacred order, that he commanded that it should be put upon his sepulchral monument, that he was master of the Magi[f]; and by his familiarity with the priests of Egypt, and learning their divinity, had the honour, whilst alive, to have deity ascribed to him[g].

Ver. 11. *Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word,* &c.] Act contrary to this command, will not obey it, but as much as in him lies changes and revokes it: *let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon:* that is, let a beam be taken from it, and a gallows or gibbet made of it, and hang him on it: *and let his house be made a dunghill for this;* be pulled down, and never rebuilt more, see the note on Dan. iii. 2, 9.

Ver. 12. *And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there,* &c.] Whose name is not only called upon there, and that called by his name; but who grants his presence, and causes his Shechinah, or divine Majesty, to dwell there, as in Solomon's temple, which Darius had some knowledge of: *destroy all kings and people;* let them be who they will, high or low: *that shall put to their hand to alter* and *to destroy this house of God, which is at Jerusalem;* this he said to deter from hindering the building of it now, and from attempting to destroy it hereafter: *I Darius have made a decree, let it be done with speed;* be carried immediately into execution, especially with respect to the disbursement for the building of the temple, and for the sacrifices of it.

Ver. 13. *Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions,* &c.] Having received and read the above letter: *according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily;* acquainted the Jews with what the king had written; were so far from hindering the work going forward, that they encouraged it; and made disbursements to them out of the king's tribute, and furnished them with every thing necessary for sacrifice: and this they did immediately, without delay.

Ver. 14. *And the elders of the Jews builded,* &c.] Went on with the building of the temple: *and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo;* or grandson, as before; being animated and encouraged by them; and as they foretold and promised it would be, so it was; they had success in their work, the Lord overruling the

[a] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 4. sect. 6.
[b] Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 89—95.
[c] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 3. sect. 1.
[d] Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 2.

[e] Opera, par. 2. ep. 25. p. 152.
[f] Porphyr. de abstinentia, l. 4. c. 16.
[g] Diodor. Sic. l. 1. p. 85.

heart of Darius the king and his council in their favour: *and they builded and finished* it; that is, the temple: *according to the commandment of the God of Israel*; by the above prophets, who spoke to them, and prophesied in his name: *and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia*; the commandment of Cyrus is in ch. i. 1. that of Darius in this, ver. 8. but who Artaxerxes is, and his commandment, is not easy to say; he cannot be the Artaxerxes between Cyrus and Darius, but one that followed the latter; besides, he was a hinderer of the building, ch. iv. 21—24. some think this was Xerxes the son and successor of Darius, and who might be partner with his father in the empire at this time, and so is joined with him in this commandment; which is more probable than that he should be his grandson Artaxerxes Longimanus, in whose reign the temple, it is supposed, was beautified and ornamented, though the exterior building of it was before finished; and so he is spoken of by anticipation; and still more plausible than that he should be, with others, Artaxerxes Mnemon, the son of Darius Nothus; but, after all, I am most inclined to think, with Aben Ezra, that he is Darius himself; and the words to be read, Darius, that is, Artaxerxes, king of Persia; Artaxerxes being, as he observes, a common name of the kings of Persia, as Pharaoh was of the kings of Egypt; though this is by some rejected [h]; and who goes by this name in the continuance of this history, in whose seventh year, the year after this, Ezra went up to Jerusalem, and, in the 20th of his reign, Nehemiah, ch. vii. 1—7. Neh. ii. 1. and I find Dr. Lightfoot [i] was of the same mind; and, according to Diodorus Siculus [k], the kings of Persia were called by the name of Artaxerxes after Mnemon; and so they might before; Cambyses is so called in ch. iv. 7. Herodotus [l] says the name signifies a *mighty warrior*.

Ver. 15. *And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar*, &c.] The 12th month of the year with the Jews, and answers to part of our February and part of March: *which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king*; four years after the decree came forth.

Ver. 16. *And the children of Israel*, &c.] Those of the ten tribes that remained after the body of the people were carried captive, or came with the Jews at their return: *the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity*; those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin: *kept the dedication of this house of God with joy*; they set it apart for sacred use and service, with feasting and other expressions of joy and gladness, as follows.

Ver. 17. *And offered, at the dedication of this house of God*, 100 *bullocks*, 200 *rams*, 400 *lambs*, &c.] Hecatombs of various sorts, which were always reckoned grand sacrifices, even among Heathens, of which Homer sometimes speaks; some of these were for burnt-offerings, and others peace-offerings, by way of thankfulness to God for the finishing of the temple; part of which belonging to the offerers, they feasted upon it with great gladness of heart: *and for a sin-offering for all Israel*, 12 *he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel*; for though the ten tribes were carried captive by Salmaneser, yet, as before observed, there were some of them that remained in the land, and others that went and returned with the two tribes; and therefore a sin-offering was made for them all, for the typical expiation of guilt contracted since they had been in an Heathen land, and temple-service had ceased.

Ver. 18. *And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God which is at Jerusalem*, &c.] All in their proper classes and courses, to do the work of the temple at Jerusalem in their turns: *as it is written in the book of Moses*; see Numb. iii. 6. and viii. 11, 14, 15. from hence it is plain the Pentateuch was not written by Ezra, as suspected by Spinosa [m], but by Moses; see the argument of the book of Genesis.

Ver. 19. *And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the* 14*th* day *of the first month*.] The month Nisan or Abib, which was the month following that in which the temple was finished, ver. 15. this passover was kept at the exact time the law commanded, Exod. xii. 2, 6.

Ver. 20. *For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them* were *pure*, &c.] They were all to a man pure, and all purified as one man; all were of one mind to purify themselves, and took care to do it, and did it with as much dispatch as if only one man was purified; so that they were more generally prepared for service now than in the times of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxix. 34. and xxx. 3. *and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves*; which seems to have been done by the Levites, for themselves and for the priests, and for all the people, who were not so pure as the priests and Levites; or otherwise they might have killed it themselves, Exod. xii. 6. as Bochart [n] thinks.

Ver. 21. *And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity*, &c.] The tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with some of the ten tribes mixed with them: *and all such as had separated themselves unto them, from the filthiness of the Heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat*: such of the Gentiles in the dominions of Babylon, and came with the Jews from thence, who were enlightened into the knowledge and worship of the true God, and not only renounced their idolatry, here called filthiness, but were circumcised, and embraced the religion of the Jews, and so were proselytes of righteousness, as they call them; or otherwise they would not have been allowed to eat of the passover, as they did, Exod. xii. 48.

Ver. 22. *And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy*, &c.] Which immediately followed upon the passover, Exod. xii. 18, 19. *for the Lord had made them joyful*; the building of the temple being finished, and the service of it restored to its origi-

[h] Vid. Rainold de Lib. Apocryph. prælect. 31. p. 271.
[i] Works, vol. 1. p. 139.
[k] Bibliothec. l. 15. p. 400.
[l] Erato, sive, l. 6. c. 98.
[m] Tract. Theolog. Polit. c. 8. p. 163.
[n] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 50. col. 576.

nal purity: *and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel;* by giving them leave to go on in building the temple, and by encouraging and assisting them in it till they had finished it; this was Darius Artaxerxes, who, though called king of Persia, was also king of Assyria, being possessed of the Assyrian monarchy, as his predecessors were upon the taking of Babylon, and the same is therefore called also the king of Babylon, Neh. xiii. 6. God, the God of Israel, who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and so the hearts of kings, and can turn them at his pleasure, inclined his heart to do them good, which was matter of joy unto them, see ch. vii. 27.

CHAP. VII.

In this chapter we have the lineage and character of Ezra described, ver. 1—6. his expedition to Jerusalem, and of many others with him, ver. 7—10. a copy of the commission King Artaxerxes gave him to execute, ver. 11—26. and his thankfulness, ver. 27, 28.

Ver. 1. *Now after these things,* &c.] The finishing of the temple, and the dedication of it, and keeping the passover: *in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia;* in the 7th year of his reign, ver. 7, 8. who is the same with Darius in the preceding chapter; so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; see the note on ch. vi. 14. *Ezra the son of Seraiah;* the high-priest slain by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. lii. 24, 27. this Ezra was a younger son of his, brother to Josedech, and uncle to Joshua, who were high-priests in succession; his pedigree is carried in the ascending line up to Aaron, in this and the four following verses; only six generations, for brevity-sake, are omitted, between Azariah and Meraioth, which may be supplied from 1 Chron. vi. 7—10. see the notes there.

Ver. 6. *This Ezra went up from Babylon,* &c.] A second time; for that he went up with Zerubbabel is clear from Neh. xii. 1. and is plainly intimated, ch. v. 4. *and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given;* the meaning is, not that he had a quick hand in writing out copies of it, but was well-versed in the knowledge of it; had studied it thoroughly, well-instructed in it, and was abundantly qualified to teach it others; he was an eminent doctor of the law; so scribes, in the New Testament, who are the same with the lawyers, were such as were teachers of the law; the word here used in the Arabic language signifies to be expert, as Jarchi * learned from one of their doctors: *and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him;* either upon Ezra, giving him favour with the king, and so success and prosperity; or it may denote the divine influence of the God of Ezra upon the heart of the king, moving him to grant what he asked of him, even every thing he desired: he seems to have been sent upon an embassy to the king from the chief men at Jerusalem; perhaps the governors of Syria had not so fully made the disbursements the king in his decree had required them to make, since the following commission chiefly respects such things; and he was sent on that errand to acquaint the king with it, as well as to persuade those that remained to return, and to obtain leave for it.

Ver. 7. *And there went up some of the children of Israel,* &c.] Perhaps some of the ten tribes, as well as others of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; who, notwithstanding the edict of Cyrus, chose to remain in Babylon, and in the countries of it, until they saw how things would go in Judea; and hearing that the temple was finished, and that those that had returned had built them houses in their several cities, and prospered, thought fit to return also: *and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem;* to take their places, and execute their offices in the temple now built; for of the Levites especially, some of which were singers, and others porters, and of the Nethinim, there were but few that went up with Zerubbabel: now this journey of theirs was taken *in the 7th year of Artaxerxes the king;* that is, of Darius Artaxerxes, and this was the year after the temple was finished: though it is thought by many learned men, and not without some shew of reason, that Artaxerxes Longimanus is meant.

Ver. 8. *And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month,* &c.] With the above company; this was the month Abib, answering to part of July and part of August: *which was in the seventh year of the king;* as in the preceding verse.

Ver. 9. *For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon,* &c.] The month Nisan, answering to part of March and part of April; this was New-year's day: *and on the first day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem;* the 1st of the month Ab, as in the preceding verse; so that he was just four months on his journey: *according to the good hand of his God upon him;* his power and providence, which gave him and his company health and strength, supplied them with every thing necessary, directed, protected, and defended them, and brought them in safety to their journey's end.

Ver. 10. *For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord,* &c.] To attain to the knowledge of it, that he might be master of it, and expert in it, and know what was not to be done, and what to be done; he had set his heart upon this, bent his studies this way, and taken a great deal of pains in searching into it, in reading of it, and meditating on it; *and to do it:* he was not only concerned to get the theory of it, but to put it in practice, to exercise himself in it, that it might be habitual to him; *and* the rather, as his view and intentions were not merely for the sake of himself, but *to teach in Israel statutes and*

* Comment. in Psal. xlv. 1. [Arabic] acutus ingenio & solers fuit, Golius, col. 2272. in re exercitatus fuit & excultus, Castel. col. 2008. Ethiop. docuit, erudivit, ib. col. 2007.

judgments: and therefore it was not only necessary that he should have a large and competent knowledge of the laws, moral, ceremonial, and civil, but that he should act according to them himself, that so by his example, as well as by his instructions, he might teach the people.

Ver. 11. *Now this is the copy of the letter that the King Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest,* &c.] This title relating to his office is justly given him, since he was the son of an high-priest, and lineally descended from Aaron, as the above account of his pedigree shews: *the scribe,* even *a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord, and of his statutes to Israel:* the doubling of the word *scribe* shews that he was very wise and learned in the law, in the commandments and statutes of it the Lord gave to Israel; not only in the language of it in which it was written, but in the matter and substance of it, in the things contained in it; for *dibre* signifies *things* as well as words.

Ver. 12. *Artaxerxes, king of kings,* &c.] Having several kings and kingdoms subject and tributary to him; for this was not merely a proud haughty title which the eastern kings [p] assumed, particularly the Persians; for after Cyrus they were so in fact, who took this title also, and had it put on his sepulchral monument, "Here I lie, Cyrus, king of kings [q];" this title was given to Grecian kings, particularly Agamemnon is called king of kings [r], he being general at the siege of Troy, under whom the rest of the kings fought; if this was Darius Hystaspis, of him Cyrus dreamt that he had wings on his shoulders, with one he covered Asia, and with the other Europe [s]: *unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven;* of which titles see in the preceding verse: *perfect* peace, *and at such a time:* the word *perfect* belongs to Ezra's title as a scribe, signifying that he was a most learned and complete scribe or teacher of the law of God; *peace* is not in the text, and the phrase *at such a time* respects the date of the letter, though not expressed, or is only an *et cætera*, see the note on ch. iv. 10.

Ver. 13. *I make a decree,* &c.] Which, according to the laws of the Medes and Persians, when signed, might not be changed, Dan. vi. 8. *that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm;* who remained there, and took not the benefit of the edict of Cyrus, which gave them leave to go; but neglecting the oppo tunity, it seems as if they could not now go out of the realm without a fresh grant, which is hereby given: *which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee;* this decree did not oblige them to go whether they would or no; for they might, notwithstanding this, continue if they pleased; it only gave them leave to make use of the present opportunity of going along with Ezra, if they chose it.

Ver. 14. *Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors,* &c.] Such a number the kings of Persia used to have from the times of Darius Hystaspis, who was chosen out of seven nobles to be king, and ever after the Persian kings had seven counsellors privileged, as those nobles were, Esther i. 14. and Ezra had the honour to be sent with a commission from this king and his seven counsellors, *to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem:* the inhabitants thereof, whether they had knowledge of and behaved *according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand;* a copy of which he had with him, and was very expert in and conversant with, and could readily and at once pass judgment whether they acted according to it or not.

Ver. 15. *And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem.*] In the temple built there; for the service of which, either for purchasing and procuring vessels that were wanting in it, or for sacrifices to be offered in it, the king and his nobles had made a voluntary contribution, and intrusted and sent Ezra with it.

Ver. 16. *And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon,* &c.] Not that he might take it wherever he found it, whether the owners of it were willing he should have it or not; but whatever was freely offered by them, as Jarchi, that he was allowed to take, whatever he could get in that way: *with the free-will offering of the people;* of the people of the Jews, who thought fit to continue in the province: *and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which is in Jerusalem;* those free-will offerings, whether of the natives of Babylon, or of any of the Jewish nation, for the service of the temple at Jerusalem, he had leave and a commission to carry with him.

Ver. 17. *That thou mayest buy speedily with this money,* &c.] Thus freely contributed by one and another: *bullocks, rams, lambs;* which were for burnt-offerings: *with their meat-offerings, and their drink-offerings;* which always went along with the burnt-offerings, according to the law of Moses; and which the king seemed to have a right knowledge of, being, no doubt, instructed by Ezra, or some other Jew in his court: *and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which is in Jerusalem;* the altar of burnt-offering in the temple there.

Ver. 18. *And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren,* &c.] The priests, that he should think fit to take in to his assistance in this work: *to do with the rest of the silver and gold;* which should be left after the sacrifices were offered up: *that do after the will of your God;* as they should be directed by him, or was prescribed by him in the law.

Ver. 19. *The vessels also that were given thee for the service of the house of thy God,* &c.] These were vessels of silver, basins of gold, and vessels of fine copper; not what formerly belonged to the temple, they were delivered by Cyrus to Sheshbazzar; but what the present king and his counsellors freely offered at this time, see ch. viii. 25, 26. those *deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem;* perfect and complete, the full number of them, as the word signifies [t]; meaning not to be delivered before him, or in his presence,

[p] See the Universal History, vol. 5. p. 16, 127. & vol. 11. p. 7, 8. margin, & p. 66.

[q] Strabo. Geograph. l. 15. p. 500.

[r] Vell. Patercul. Hist. Roman. l. 1. in initio.

[s] Herodot. Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 209.

[t] השלם integra & pleno numero redde, Michaelis.

as a witness thereof, but that they should be dedicated and devoted to his service, who was worshipped in the temple at Jerusalem, and by the inhabitants of it; he seems as if he thought him a topical deity, the God of that particular place, which was the notion of the Heathens, see 1 Kings xx. 23. though he also speaks of him as the God of heaven.

Ver. 20. *And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow,* &c.] For the beautifying and ornamenting the temple, ver. 27. *bestow it out of the King's treasure-house;* where the money collected by tribute, tax, and custom, was deposited; his exchequer, as it may be called, see ch. vi. 8.

Ver. 21. *And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which* are *beyond the river,* &c.] The receivers of his tribute, tax, and custom, beyond the river Euphrates, on that side towards the land of Israel: *that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven;* see ver. 12. *shall require of you, it be done speedily:* which seems at first a grant at large for whatsoever he should want or demand, but is limited and restrained by what follows.

Ver. 22. *Unto 100 talents of silver,* &c.] Which amounted to 35,300 pounds sterling; these, according to Jarchi, were to buy the offerings or sacrifices with: *and 100 measures of wheat;* or *cors,* the same measure with the homer, each of which held 10 ephahs, or 75 wine-gallons, 5 pints, and upwards; these, according to the same writer, were for meat-offerings, made of fine flour, or rather bread-offerings, as they may be called: *and to 100 baths of wine;* which was the same measure in liquids as the ephah in things dry, a tenth part of the cor or homer, and held seven wine-gallons, five pints, and upwards[u]; these were for the drink-offerings: *and to 100 baths of oil;* the same measure as before; these were to mix in the meat-offerings: *and salt without prescribing* how much; because it was used in all offerings, and was cheap, and therefore no measure is fixed, but as much as was wanting was to be given, see Lev. ii. 1—13.

Ver. 23. *Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven,* &c.] In the law given by Moses to the people of Israel: *let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven;* for the service of it, particularly sacrifices: *for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?* through the neglect of the service of God in the temple, and by reason of the default of the king's treasurers.

Ver. 24. *Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God,* &c.] The king had a right and perfect knowledge of the distinct offices and services of those persons, see ver. 7. *it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them;* that they might be the less encumbered with the affairs of life, and be more at leisure to attend divine service, and do it the more readily and freely: it was usual with the Heathens to except ecclesiastics from taxes, tributes, and imposts; so the priests in Egypt[w], and the Druids here in Britain[x].

Ver. 25. *And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand,* &c.] Which he had a large share of from the Lord, and could readily make use of to good purpose; and this may be meant of the law of God made with the highest wisdom, and to know and observe which is an instance of wisdom in men, Deut. iv. 6. *set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that* are *beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God;* such as God, in his great wisdom, directed to in his wise law to be appointed over the people, to judge righteous judgment; to inform them in all matters of controversy that might arise among them, and decide them according to it, and lead them into a greater and better knowledge of it, Deut. xvi. 18. and xvii. 9. Jarchi takes the word for *set* to be a comparative, and the sense to be, that the wisdom of Ezra was greater than the judges that judged the people, than them that knew the law: *and teach ye them that know* them *not;* such people that were ignorant thereof; though the above writer interprets this of ignorant judges, "the judge that knows not to "judge, make him know judgment to do it."

Ver. 26. *And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king,* &c.] Either the judge who delays judgment, or does not execute it according to the law of God, and of the king; or the people, that don't obey the law of God in matters of religion, and the law of the king in civil things, Judea being now a province of the Persian empire; though some think the law of the king only refers to this law or decree of the king, which gave the Jews power to execute their own laws: *let judgment be executed speedily upon him;* immediately, without delay, according to the nature of his crime: *whether* it be *unto death;* if guilty of a capital crime, deserving death, let him be put to death: *or to banishment;* from his native country to a foreign distant land; or *to rooting out*[y], as the word signifies; an utter extirpation of him and his family, a destroying him root and branch; or, as Jarchi expresses it, a rooting him out of the world, his seed and family: *or to confiscation of goods;* to payment of mulcts and fines: *or to imprisonment;* for such a term of time; all according to the breach of what law he may be guilty of; thus far the king's decree.

Ver. 27. *Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers,* &c.] This is Ezra's thanksgiving to God for the above decree: *which hath put* such a thing *as this in the king's heart;* which he rightly took to be of God, who wrought in him to will and to do: *to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem;* to provide for the ornamenting of it, for vessels in it, as well as for sacrifices; for as for the building of it, that was finished.

Ver. 28. *And hath extended mercy unto me, before the king and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes,* &c.] Before Artaxerxes, his seven counsellors, ver. 14. and the nobles of his realm, in being appointed by them to carry their free-will offerings to Jerusalem, and the king's commands to his treasurers, with leave to take as many of the Jews with him as were willing to go: *and I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me;* animated

[u] See Cumberland's Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 4. p. 137.
[w] Diodor. Sicul. l. 1. p. 66.
[x] Cæsar. Comment. de Bello Gall. l. 6. c. 13.

[y] לשרשי ad eradicationem ejus, Pagninus, Montanus; ad eradicationem, Tigurine version, Vatablus, De Dieu, Michaelis.

to undertake this work, and execute this commission, being under the influence of divine favour and protection: *and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me*; he went about in the several parts where Israelites dwelt, and persuaded some of the principal men among them to go along with him to Jerusalem, shewing them the king's decree, which gave them leave; and their names and numbers are described in the next chapter.

CHAP. VIII.

IN this chapter we are told who and how many went up with Ezra to Jerusalem, ver. 1—14. the gathering of them together at a river, from whence he sent to Babylon for Levites to come to him, who did, ver. 15—20. the proclaiming a fast for a safe and prosperous journey, ver. 21, 22, 23. the delivery of the vessels and money given him into the hands of priests, to take the care and charge thereof, ver. 24—30. their safe arrival at Jerusalem, where they deposited the gifts in the temple, offered sacrifices to God, and delivered the king's commissions to his lieutenants and governors, ver. 31—36.

Ver. 1. *These are now the chief of their fathers, and this is the genealogy of them*, &c.] Which follows from hence to the end of ver. 14. *that went up with me from Babylon*; with Ezra the priest and scribe, the writer of this book: *in the reign of Artaxerxes the king*; that is, Darius Hystaspis, in the 7th year of his reign, see ch. vii. 1, 7. though many think Artaxerxes Longimanus is meant.

Ver. 2. *Of the sons of Phinehas; Gershom: of the sons of Ithamar; Daniel*, &c.] Not Daniel the prophet, he was of the blood-royal, and of the tribe of Judah; this was a priest, a descendant of Ithamar, as Gershom was of Eleazar in the line of Phinehas: *of the sons of David; Hattush*; perhaps the same with him in 1 Chron. iii. 22. who was a descendant of David the king; these three men seem to have come alone without any of their families, at least they are not mentioned, nor their numbers given, as the rest that follow be.

Ver. 3. *Of the sons of Shechaniah, of the sons of Pharosh*, &c.] Who is so described, to distinguish him from another Shechaniah, ver. 5. *Zechariah: and with him were reckoned by genealogy, of the males* 150; males only were reckoned, not women and children; though that there were such that went up is clear from ver. 21. from hence to the end of ver. 14 an account is given of the number of the males that went up with Ezra, who were chiefly, if not altogether, sons of those that went up with Zerubbabel; such of them as were left there behind, and now returned, at least a great number of them, see ch. ii. it is particularly remarked of the sons of Adonikam, ver. 13. that they were the last of them; not that they were the last that came in to go with Ezra, or were backward and dilatory, but the last with respect to the first of his sons that were gone before, and seem with them to be the whole of his family; the number of all that went up under their respective heads amounts to 1,496.

Ver. 15. *And I gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava*, &c.] From whence also the river bore the same name; or that from the river, see ver. 21. and may be the same with Adiabene, a country in Assyria, which had its name from the river Adiava: *and there abode we in tents three days*; or pitched their camp; this was the place of their rendezvous: *and I viewed the people and the priests*; mustered them, took the number of them, and what tribe and families they were of: *and found there none of the sons of Levi*; excepting the priests.

Ver. 16. *Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam, chief men; also for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, men of understanding.*] These were all in the camp, in some part of it, to whom Ezra sent messengers to come unto him; three of them are of the same name; the first nine were men of chief note, rank, and dignity in their family, and the other two were noted for men of good sense, and that could speak to a case well, and so fit to be sent on such an affair as they were.

Ver. 17. *And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief, at the place Casiphia*, &c.] Not a place by the Caspian sea, and near the Caspian mountains, as Munster, which was too far off to go and return in the time they must, see ch. vii. 9. and viii. 15, 31. but, as Jarchi, a place in Babylon so called, a village near it, or a parish or street in it, where Ezra knew lived many of the Levites and Nethinim, and where Iddo was the chief of the Levites, and over them both: *and I told them what they should say unto Iddo*, and *to his brethren the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia*; but Iddo was not one of the Nethinim; for he was chief of the Levites, and by his authority many of them were sent as well as of the Nethinim; but none of the latter were over the Levites, for they were servants to them, ver. 20. but, according to Jarchi, the Nethinim are not at all intended in this clause, who reads the words, *to Iddo and Achio*, (the name of a man with him; perhaps it may be better rendered, *to Iddo and his brother*,) *who were appointed*, or *settled, in the place Casiphia*; and with him De Dieu agrees, and so the Syriac version, *who dwelt in Casiphia*: *that they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God*; both Levites to be singers and porters there, and the Nethinim to wait on them.

Ver. 18. *And by the good hand of our God upon us*, &c.] Favouring their designs and orders, protecting those that were sent, and inclining those they were sent to to use their interest and authority with those that were under them, and making them willing also to agree to what was proposed to them: *they brought us a man of understanding of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel*; an Israelite, of the tribe of Levi, in the line of Mahli a son of Merari, the third son of

Levi: *and Sherebiah;* or rather *even Sherebiah;* so Aben Ezra; for he is the understanding man that is meant, and described by his pedigree: *with his sons and his brethren,* 18; all together made this number.

Ver. 19. *And Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah of the sons of Merari,* &c.] These were of the same division of Levites as Sherebiah: *his brethren and their sons,* 20; these 38, with those they came with, were all Levites; the Nethinim follow.

Ver. 20. *Also of the Nethinims, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites,* &c.] To wait upon them, and minister to them, as they did to the priests; some think those were the same with the Gibeonites, whom Je[...]hua gave to the service of the sanctuary, and Dav[...] [...]firmed; but others are of opinion these were d[...] [...] from them, and an addition to them: 220 *Neth*[...] [...]*l of them were expressed by name;* in the hist[...] [...]o sent of them to Ezra; and so the names [...] though not here expressed, only the n[...] [...] they came with.

Ver. 21. *Then I proclaimed a f*[...] [...]*he river Ahava,* &c.] After the messengers to Iddo were returned with those they brought with them: *that we might afflict ourselves before our God;* humble themselves before him for their sins, confess them, and declare their repentance of them, and ask forgiveness for them: *to seek of him a right way for us;* to take from thence towards Jerusalem, to be directed by him in it: either by a prophet, or by a vision in a dream, as Eben Ezra; or rather by the guidance of his providence; this they sought in prayer by the riverside, where it had been usual with them, and since has been, to perform religious exercises, see Ezek. i. 1. and iii. 15. Acts xvi. 13. hence Tertullian[a] calls the prayers of the Jews *orationes littorales;* they sought not so much which was the shortest and easiest way for them to travel in, as which was the safest: *and for our little ones and for all our substance;* for the safe conveyance of them; this shews, that though males only are numbered, as before, yet they had their wives and children with them; for little ones cannot be supposed without women to take care of them.

Ver. 22. *For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen,* &c.] Which he might have had, only asking for them; so great was the interest he had in the king's favour: *to help us against the enemy in the way;* the Arabs, Samaritans, and others, that might lie in wait for them, to rob them of their substance: *because we had spoken unto the king;* of the special favour of God to them, his singular providence in the protection of them: *saying, the hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him;* that pray unto him, serve and worship him; his hand is open to them to bestow all needful good upon them, temporal and spiritual, and his power and providence are over them, to protect and defend them from all evil: *but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him;* his word, his ways and worship; his powerful wrath, or the strength and force of it, is exerted against them, and they are sure to feel the weight and dreadful effects of it: and now all this being said to the king, after this, to desire a guard to protect them, it would look as if they had not that favour in the sight of God, and did not believe what they had said, but distrusted his power and providence towards them; therefore, rather than reflect any dishonour on God, they chose to expose themselves to danger, seeking his face and favour, and relying on his goodness and power.

Ver. 23. *So we fasted, and besought our God for this,* &c.] Sought the Lord by fasting and prayer for a good journey, and preservation in it: *and he was entreated of us;* accepted their prayer, as Jarchi, so that they came safe to Jerusalem.

Ver. 24. *Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests,* &c.] That were in company with him; so that it seems there were more than the two mentioned, ver. 2. very probably their families, or some of their brethren, were with them: *Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their brethren with them;* these men named were Levites, and not priests, ver. 18, 19. and therefore the copulative *and* must be supplied: *and Sherebiah,* &c. or with the 12 priests, Sherebiah, &c. and 10 Levites more with them; so that the number of priests and Levites were equal, and in all 24.

Ver. 25. *And I weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels,* &c.] When he delivered them to them; this he did as a proof of his own integrity and faithfulness, and as a security against any charge or accusation of embezzling any part of them, and to set them an example, and also that they might be under no temptation of acting such a part, and might be vindicated should they be charged with it: even *the offering of the house of our God;* what was freely offered for the service of it: *which the king and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel there present, had offered;* as free-will offerings, see ch. vii. 15, 16.

Ver. 26. *I even weighed unto their hand 650 talents of silver,* &c.] Which, according to Scheuchzer[b], amount to 975,000 imperials, and, of our money, 2,229,450 pounds sterling: *and silver vessels 100 talents;* which came to 35,300 pounds, or 50,000 imperials; according to Jarchi, there were 100 vessels, and every vessel weighed a talent, and so Aben Ezra, which, with Brerewood[c], was 375 pounds: and *of gold 100 talents;* which, according to Scheuchzer[d], were equal to 1,222,000 ducats of gold; the value of gold now is above 14 and a 3d to the value of silver, by which may be judged the difference between one hundred talents of gold and one hundred talents of silver; according to David de Pomis[e], there were two sorts of talents; common talents, which weighed 60 pounds, and the talent of the sanctuary, which weighed double to that.

Ver. 27. *Also 20 basins of gold, of 1,000 drachms,* &c.] Which were upwards of 1,000 pounds of our money; for Bishop Cumberland says[f], the Persian *daric, drachma,* or *drachm,* weighed twenty shillings and four-pence; and, according to Dr. Bernard, it ex-

[a] Ad nationes, l. 1. c. 13. Vid. lib. de jejuniis, c. 16.
[b] Physica Sacra, vol. 4. p. 631.
[c] De Pond. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 4.
[d] Ut supra.
[e] Tzemach David, fol. 57. 2.
[f] Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 4. p. 115.

ceeded one of our guineas by two grains, see the note on 1 Chron. xxix. 7. *and two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold:* which perhaps is the same with the Indian or Persian brass Aristotle[f] speaks of, which is so bright and pure, and free from rust, that it cannot be known by its colour from gold, and that there are among the cups of Darius such as cannot be discerned whether they are brass or gold but by the smell: the Syriac version interprets it by Corinthian brass, which was a mixture of gold, silver, and copper, made when Corinth was burnt, and which is exceeding valuable; of which Pliny[g] makes three sorts, very precious, and of which he says, it is in value next to, and even before silver, and almost before gold; but this sort of brass was not as yet in being: Kimchi[h] interprets the word here of its colour, being next to the colour of gold.

Ver. 28. *And I said unto them, ye are holy unto the Lord, the vessels* are *holy also,* &c.] As they were dedicated and set apart to holy service, so the vessels were sacred to holy uses, and therefore not to be converted to any other: *and the silver and the gold* are *a free-will offering unto the Lord God of your fathers:* and therefore not to be made use of but in his service.

Ver. 29. *Watch ye, and keep* them, *&c.*] The vessels, the gold, and the silver, that they be not hurt and diminished: *until ye weigh* them *before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord:* that is, until they had delivered them in full weight, as they had received them, in the presence of those persons as witnesses, and into their hands, in order to be laid up in the chambers and treasuries of the temple.

Ver. 30. *So took the priests and the Levites,* &c.] The 12 priests and 12 Levites, mentioned in ver. 24. *the weight of the silver and the gold, and the vessels, to bring* them *to Jerusalem unto the house of our God:* this they undertook to do, and did.

Ver. 31. *Then we departed from the river of Ahava, on the* 12*th* day *of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem,* &c.] The month Nisan, answering to part of March and part of April; this was two days before the passover began: *and the hand of our God was upon us:* guiding, directing, and protecting them by his providence: *and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way:* either by intimidating them, that they dared not attack them, or by directing them to take a different road, whereby they escaped them, see ver. 22.

Ver. 32. *And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days.*] Before they went about any business, delivered what was committed to them for the use of the temple, and the commissions to the king's officers; as it was but proper they should have some rest after such a fatiguing journey.

Ver. 33. *Now on the 4th day,* &c.] After their arrival at Jerusalem: *was the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, weighed in the house of our God;* the temple, that it might be seen and known that the exact weight which had been deposited with them was now faithfully delivered: this was done *by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest, and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas:* these were priests: *and with them was Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binnui, Levites;* two priests and two Levites; for since there were of both that were charged with the above things, it was proper there should be some of both, when [illegible]hed, that they might be witnesses of their fide[illegible]

Ver. 34. *By* [illegible]nd *by weight of every one,* &c.] They we[illegible]ed in by tale and weight, which exact[illegible] the number and weight in which the[illegible]n: *and all the weight was written at* [illegible]ccount was taken in writing, and laid [illegible]might not only be known hereafter what [illegible] offerings had been made in Babylon, but that it might be a voucher for the fidelity and integrity of those that brought them, should it ever be called in question.

Ver. 35. Also *the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity,* &c.] Namely, those that now came along with Ezra: *offered burnt-offerings unto the God of Israel;* by way of thankfulness for their deliverance from captivity, and for their safe journey: *twelve bullocks for all Israel;* according to the number of the tribes; and there might be some of every tribe that now came up: 96 *rams,* 77 *lambs;* these and the bullocks were burnt-offerings: *twelve he-goats* for *a sin-offering;* according to the number of the twelve tribes, also to make atonement for sins they had been guilty of: *all* this was *a burnt-offering unto the Lord;* excepting the twelve he-goats, which were a sin-offering.

Ver. 36. *And they delivered the king's commissions unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river,* &c.] The governors of the provinces of Syria, Palestine, and Judea, which were on that side of Euphrates the land of Israel was: *and they furthered the people, and the house of God:* or *lifted* them *up*[i], eased them of all burdens, and freed them from all impediments, and assisted them and furnished them with every thing, as the decree of Artaxerxes enjoined them; and provided every thing as they required for ornamenting the temple, and for the sacrifices of it; all which is to be understood of the king's lieutenants and governors, who obeyed his commands.

CHAP. IX.

EZRA being informed, by some of the princes who complained unto him, of the marriages of many of the Israelites with the people of the land, the Canaanites and others, was greatly grieved and distressed, ver. 1—5. upon which he made a confession of their sins to God, with great shame, sorrow, and contrition,

[f] De Mirabilibus, p. 704, vol. 1.
[g] Nat. Hist. l. 34. c. 1, 2.
[h] Sepher Shorash. rad. צהב.
[i] וינשאו elevaverunt, V. L. Piscator; exaltaverunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; sublevarunt, Junius & Tremellius.

and deprecated the evils which they deserved, ver. 6—15.

Ver. 1. *Now when these things were done*, &c.] When the captives with Ezra had refreshed themselves, and weighed the money and vessels they brought, and put them into the hands of proper persons, and offered sacrifices, and delivered the king's commissions to his lieutenants and governors, and shewn his own: *the princes came to me*: some of the nobles of Israel, the most religious of them, who were concerned at the corruptions that were among them, though not a sufficient number to reform them: *saying the people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the land*: but joined with them, though not in idolatrous practices, yet by marrying with them, which might lead them into them: doing *according to their abominations*: not serving idols as they did, but imitating them in their marriages: even *of the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites*; affinity with many of these was forbidden by an express law, Deut. vii. 1, 3. all but the Moabites, Ammonites, and Egyptians, and from these for the same reason they were to abstain; namely, lest they should be drawn into idolatry; that the priests and Levites should do this, who ought to have known the law, and instructed the people better, was very sad and shocking.

Ver. 2. *For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons*, &c.] Some that were widowers not only took wives to themselves of the above nations, either when they were of Babylon, where many of these nations also were, or rather since their return; but they took for their sons also; yea, some that had wives took Heathenish ones to them, see Mal. ii. 13, 14, 15. *so that the holy seed*; such as the Lord had separated from other nations, chosen them to be an holy people above all others, and devoted them to his service and worship: *have mingled themselves with the people of* those *lands*; before mentioned, by marrying with them: *yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass*; they were the first that went into it, were ringleaders of it, who should by their authority and example have restrained others; or they were *in this first trespass* [l]; which was the first gross and capital one the people fell into after their return from the captivity.

Ver. 3. *And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle*, &c.] Both inward and outward garments, that which was close to his body, and that which was thrown loose over it; and this he did in token of sorrow and mourning, as if something very dreadful and distressing, see Job i. 20. *and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard*; did not shave them, and so transgressed not the law in Lev. xix. 27. but plucked off the hair of them, to shew his extreme sorrow for what was told him: which has frequently been done by mourners on sorrowful occasions in various nations, see Isa. xv. 2. So in the *addition* to Esther, ch. xiv. 2. she is said to fill every place of joy with the tearings of her hair; and Lavinia in Virgil [k]; several passages from Homer [l], and other writers, both Greek and Latin, are mentioned by Bochart [m] as instances of it: *and sat down astonished*; quite amazed at the ingratitude of the people, that after such favours shewn them, in returning them from captivity unto their own land, and settling them there, they should give into practices so contrary to the will of God.

Ver. 4. *There were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel*, &c.] That had a reverence for the word of God, and the things contained in it; feared to break the laws of God, and trembled at his judgments, which they might apprehend would come upon transgressors, see Isa. lxvi. 2. *because of the transgression of those that had been carried away*; into Babylon, and were now returned, and which was an aggravation of their transgression: *and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice*; or until the ninth hour, as the Syriac version, which was about our three o'clock in the afternoon, at which time the evening sacrifice was offered; perhaps it was in the morning when Ezra first received his information from the princes.

Ver. 5. *And at the evening sacrifice I rose up from my heaviness*, &c.] The signs and tokens of it, particularly sitting on the ground; or *from my fasting* [n], having eaten nothing that day, it being early in the morning when he was told the above case: *and having rent my garment and my mantle*; which he had done before, and still kept them on him in the same case: *fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God*; in the posture and with the gesture of an humble supplicant.

Ver. 6. *And said, O my God*, &c.] Here begins the prayer of Ezra, and that with faith in God as his covenant-God, even when he was about to make confession of sin, and repentance for it; that prayer is right which is put up in faith, and that repentance genuine which is accompanied with faith, and flows from it: *I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God*; a true sight and sense of sin causes shame and blushing, and never more than when a man is sensible of his covenant-interest in God, and of his grace and favour to him, particularly in the forgiveness of his sin, see Ezek. xvi. 61, 63. *for our iniquities are increased over our head*; arisen and swelled like mighty waters, which seemed to threaten an overwhelming of them: *and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens*; being done in an open, public, and insolent manner, and in such numbers, that they were, as it were, piled up in heaps, reaching to heaven, and calling down vengeance from thence. Ezra includes himself as being one of the same nation; and these sins being so common were become national ones, which involved all the individuals, and exposed them to the divine resentment.

Ver. 7. *Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day*, &c.] The sins they were guilty of had been long continued in, which was

[i] במעל הזה הראשונה in prævaricatione ista prima, Pagninus, Montanus.

[k] Æneid. 12. prope finem. Vid. Ciceron, Tusc. Quæst. l. 3.

[l] Vid. Iliad. 10. ver. 15. & Iliad. 22. ver. 77, 78, 406. & Iliad. 24. ver. 711.

[m] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 2. c. 45. col. 481.

[n] מתעניתי jejunio meo, Michaelis; so Jarchi.

an aggravation of them: *and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands*; the ten tribes and their king into the hand of the king of Assyria, the kings of Judah, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, into the hands of the king of Babylon, with the priests and people: *to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil*; some were slain with the sword, others carried captive, and the houses of them all plundered and spoiled: *and to confusion of face, as it is this day*: being filled with shame when they reflected on their sins, the cause of those evils; and besides, the captivity of the ten tribes continued, and of many others, which exposed them to shame among their neighbours.

Ver. 8. *And now, for a little space, grace hath been shewed from the Lord our God*, &c.] It was but a small time since the Lord first began to shew favour to them, so that they soon after began to revolt from him; which argued the strange propensity of their minds to that which is evil, and from which they could not be restrained by the recent goodness of God unto them: *to leave us a remnant to escape*; out of captivity, from whence a small number were graciously and safely returned to their own land: *and to give us a nail in his holy place*; a fixed settlement in the land of Judea, the holy land the Lord had chosen, and in the temple, the holy place sacred to his worship; or a prince of their own, Zerubbabel, to be the governor of them, under whom they might enjoy settled happiness and prosperity, see Isa. xxii. 23. Zech. x. 4. *that our God may lighten our eyes*; refresh our spirits, cheer our souls, and give us light and gladness, see 1 Sam. xiv. 27. *and give us a little reviving in our bondage*; for they were still in some degree of bondage, being in subjection, and tributaries to the kings of Persia; but yet being returned to their own land, it was as life from the dead unto them, at least it was giving them a little life, liberty, and joy.

Ver. 9. *For we were bondmen*, &c.] To the Chaldeans when in Babylon, which was more than the Jews in the times of Christ would own, John viii. 33. *yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage*; had not left them to continue in it always: *but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia*; moved them to have pity and compassion on them, and release them: *to give us a reviving*; whilst in captivity, they were as in their graves, and like the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, but revived upon the proclamation of Cyrus, and the encouragement he gave them to return to their own land: *to set up the house of our God, and repair the desolations thereof*; both to rebuild the temple, and to restore the worship of it: *and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem*; not to set up the walls of Jerusalem, and of other cities, which as yet was not done; but rather the walls of their houses, which they had rebuilt; they had walled houses given them in Judah and Jerusalem; though the word signifies an hedge or fence, such as is about gardens and vineyards, and may denote the protection of the kings of Persia, which was a fence to them against the Samaritans and others; and especially the hedge of divine Providence about them, which guarded and defended them, see Job i. 10.

Ver. 10. *And now, O our God, what shall we say after this?* &c.] What apology or excuse can be made for such ingratitude? what can be said in favour of such a people? what kindness can be expected to be shewn to a people who had behaved in so base a manner? *for we have forsaken thy commandments*; particularly those which related to marriages with people of other nations.

Ver. 11. *Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets*, &c.] Moses, and Joshua, and others, see Deut. vii. 3. Josh. xxiii. 12. Judg. ii. 2. *saying, the land, unto which ye go to possess it*; meaning the land of Canaan: *is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness*; which is to be understood not of their idolatries only, but of their incestuous marriages, and impure copulations, on which account the Lord spewed out the old inhabitants of it; for which reason the Jews ought to have been careful not to have defiled it again by similar practices; see Lev. xviii.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons*, &c.] That is, in marriage, see Deut. vii. 3. where the prohibition is expressed in the same language: *nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever*; that is, as long as they continue in their idolatries and impurities, see Deut. xxiii. 6. *that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever*; that they might be strengthened and established in the land into which they were brought, and enjoy all the good things it produced, and leave their children in the possession of it, to hold at least until the Messiah came, see Isa. i. 19.

Ver. 13. *And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass*, &c.] As famine, sword, pestilence, and captivity, for their idolatries and other heinous sins: *seeing that our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve*; for they deserved eternal punishment, whereas it was temporal punishment that was inflicted, and this moderate, and now stopped; the sense is, according to Aben Ezra, "thou hast refrained from writing some of our sins in "the book of remembrance, and thou hast let them "down below in the earth, according to the sense of "*thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea*;" but Jarchi better, "thou hast refrained thyself from "exacting of us all our sins, and hast exacted of us "beneath our sins (or less than they deserve), and hast "not taken vengeance on us according to all our sins:" *and hast given us such deliverance as this*; from captivity, which they now enjoyed.

Ver. 14. *Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations?* &c.] That are guilty of abominable idolatries, and of all uncleanness: *wouldest thou not be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us*; it might be justly expected: *so that* there should be *no remnant nor escaping?* any left or suffered to escape the wrath of but all consumed by it.

Ver. 15. *O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous*, &c.] And would appear to be so, should Israel be entirely cut off, and utterly consumed for their iniquities: *for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day*: that they remained yet escaped out of captivity, and escaped the wrath and vengeance of God, was not ow-

ing to any deserts of theirs, but to the grace and mercy of God, who had not stirred up all his wrath, as their sins deserved: *behold, we are before thee in our trespasses;* to do with us as seems good in thy sight; we have nothing to plead on our behalf, but cast ourselves at thy feet, if so be unmerited favour may be shewn us: *for we cannot stand before thee because of this;* this evil of contracting affinity with the nations; we can't defend ourselves; we can't plead ignorance of the divine commands; we have nothing to say for ourselves why judgment should not be passed upon us; we leave ourselves in thine hands, and at thy mercy.

CHAP. X.

UPON Ezra's prayer and confession, it was proposed by Shechaniah, that those who had married strange wives should put them away with their children, which they swore to do, ver. 1—5. and proclamation was made throughout the land for all to meet at Jerusalem in three days' time, and accordingly they did, ver. 6—9. when, at the exhortation of Ezra, all agreed to it, and persons were appointed to see it done, and the work was finished in the space of three months, ver. 10—17. and a list of the names of those is given who had married such wives, and now put them away; of the priests, ver. 18—22. of the Levites, ver. 23, 24. of the other Israelites, ver. 24—44.

Ver. 1. *Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping,* &c.] Had confessed the sins of the people in prayer and supplication, with many tears: *and casting himself down before the house of God;* in the outward court before the temple, his face turned towards it, where he lay prostrate: *there assembled to him out of Israel a very great congregation of men, and women, and children;* it was quickly spread abroad, both in Jerusalem and places adjacent, that such a great man, a commissioner from the king of Persia, and a priest of the Jews, was in the utmost distress, rending his garments, and plucking off his hair, and was crying and praying in a vehement manner; which brought a great concourse of people, who concluded some great sins were committed, and sore judgments were coming upon them: *for the people wept very sore;* being affected with his confessions, cries, and tears, and fearing wrath would come upon them for their sins.

Ver. 2. *And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra,* &c.] This man seems to be one of those that now came with Ezra from Babylon, see ch. viii. 3, 5. *we have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land;* not that he had taken any himself, being but just come into the land, nor is his name in the list of those that had; but inasmuch as many of the nation, of which he was a part, and his own father, and several of his uncles had, ver. 26. he expresses himself in this manner: *yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing;* of a reformation of this evil, and of pardon for it.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God,* &c.] Renew our covenant with him, and lay ourselves under fresh obligation by promise and oath, and unanimously agree *to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them;* he means all the strange wives, such marriages being unlawful; and such wives might the more easily be put away, since bills of divorce were in frequent use with the Jews, and the children of such also being illegitimate; and the rather they were to be put away, lest they should corrupt other children, or get into the affections of their fathers, which might lead on to receive their mothers again, and especially this was to be done as a punishment of their sin: though no doubt but a provision was to be made, and was made, for the maintenance both of wives and children: *according to the counsel of my Lord;* either of Ezra, whom he honours with this title, being a ruler under the king of Persia; or of the Lord God, according to his will declared in his words, which is his counsel: *and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God;* feared to break it, and dreaded the effect of such a breach; and who no doubt would follow the counsel of the Lord, and join in their advice to act according to the proposal made: *and let it be done according to the law;* as that directs in such cases.

Ver. 4. *Arise,* &c.] From the ground, where he lay prostrate: *for this matter* belongeth *unto thee;* as a priest and scribe of the law, well versed in it, and therefore could direct what was to be done according to it; and as a ruler under the king of Persia, and a commissioner of his, to inquire whether the law of God was observed by the Jews, ch. vii. 14. and so had authority to put the law in execution: *we also* will be *with thee;* to help and assist in the reformation of this evil: *be of good courage, and do it;* don't despair of going through it, though there may be some opposition to it; begin, and doubt not of succeeding.

Ver. 5. *Then arose Ezra,* &c.] From the ground where he lay: *and made the chief priests, and the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to this word;* he took an oath of all that were present to do what was proposed, namely, to put away strange wives and their children: *and they sware;* by means of which they were kept to their word of promise, an oath being a solemn, sacred, thing.

Ver. 6. *Then Ezra rose up from before the house of God,* &c.] Departed from thence: *and went into the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib;* who was of the family of the high-priest. Eliashib was grandson of Joshua the high-priest, and succeeded his father Joiakim as such; but though Johanan was never high-priest, being a younger son, however he was a person of note, and had a chamber in the temple, whither Ezra went, either to advise with the princes and elders in it, ver. 8. or to refresh himself with food: *and when he came thither, he did eat no bread, nor drink water;* or rather *not yet had he ate bread* *, as some render it;

* לא אכל nondum comederat, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

that is, not till he came thither, from the time he first heard of the evil the people had committed; which very probably was early in the morning, and it was now evening: *for he mourned for the transgression of them that had been carried away*; into captivity, but were now returned from it, and it grieved him the more, that, after such kindness shewn them, they should be guilty of such an evil.

Ver. 7. *And they made proclamation*, &c.] By the voice of an herald: *throughout Judah and Jerusalem, unto all the children of the captivity*; who were returned from it: *that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem*: within a time after mentioned.

Ver. 8. *And that whosoever would not come within three days*, &c.] Or at the end of three days, as Jarchi, this was the space of time allowed, and which was pitched upon for the quick dispatch of this affair, to prevent any schemes that might be formed to obstruct it, and lest those who had agreed to it, and promised to assist in it, should repent and go from their word: *according to the counsel of the princes, and of the elders*; for though Ezra had a commission at large from the king of Persia, to inquire into and reform all abuses, he chose not to act of himself, but to have the opinion and consent of the senate of the nation; this he prudently did to avoid their envy, and that he might have less opposition, and better success: *his substance should be forfeited*; or *devoted* [p] to sacred uses, to be put into the treasury of the temple, and used in the service of it, and therefore never to be returned: *and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away*; into captivity, but now returned from it; that is, should be excommunicated from them as a church, and be no more reckoned of the body politic, or a freeman of Israel, and so deprived of all privileges both in church and state.

Ver. 9. *Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin*, &c.] And such of the 10 tribes that returned and dwelt among them: *gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days*; the time fixed: which they were the more careful to observe, since it was enjoined by the authority of princes and elders, and the punishment in case of disobedience very severe: *it was the ninth month, on the 20th day of the month*; the month Cisleu, which answers to part of November and part of December, so that the 20th day must be in the beginning of December; this was almost five months after Ezra came to Jerusalem: *and all the people sat in the street of the house of God*; the street which led to the temple, the east street, 2 Chron. xxix. 4. though some think this was the court of the people, called a street, because it lay open, not yet walled in; and, according to Josephus [q], it was in an upper room of the temple in which Ezra was, perhaps the same with the chamber of Johanan, ver. 6. *trembling because of this matter*; they were met about; some that were guilty, not knowing what punishment would be inflicted on them, and others that were not, yet dreaded the wrath of God, lest that should break out upon the whole congregation for it: *and for the great rain*: which now fell, and which they interpreted as a token of the divine displeasure: for though it was in winter-time, yet not with them a time of rain, for the former rain had fallen a month before: so that this being unusual and unexpected, they understood it as betokening evil to them.

Ver. 10. *And Ezra the priest stood up*, &c.] In the midst of the assembly to make his speech, acquainting them with the reason of their meeting together: *and said unto them, ye have transgressed*; the law of God in the following instance: *and have taken strange wives*; of the people of the land and others, idolatrous persons: *to increase the trespass of Israel*; to add to former iniquities, which had been the cause of the captivity.

Ver. 11. *Now therefore make confession to the Lord God of your fathers*, &c.] Of their sin, and express their detestation of it, and repentance for it: *and do his pleasure*; obey his will, and particularly in this case: *and separate yourselves from the people of the land*; the Canaanites, &c. have no fellowship with them, make no covenants, contracts, and alliances with them for the future; *and from the strange wives*; they had taken; put them away.

Ver. 12. *Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice*, &c.] That they might be heard, and to shew that they were willing and ready to comply with what was proposed: *as thou hast said, so must we do*; being convinced of their sin, they saw it was a duty incumbent on them to put away their strange wives, and that there was a necessity of it, to avert the wrath of God from them.

Ver. 13. *But the people are many*, &c.] Who have been guilty of this evil: *and it is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without*; in the street, because of the rain: *neither is this a work of one day or two*; to inquire into this affair, who they are that have taken strange wives, and to persuade or oblige them to put them away: *for we are many that have transgressed in this thing*; in marrying strange wives.

Ver. 14. *Let now our rulers of all the congregations stand*, &c.] Let the great sanhedrim, or court of judicature at Jerusalem, be fixed and continued, and others: *and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times*; to the court at Jerusalem, at certain and fixed known times of their sittings there for this purpose: *and with the elders of every city, and the judges thereof*; the principal magistrates of it, who were to testify that upon search and inquiry those were the men, and all the men in their city, that had taken strange wives, and that they had put them away according to the order of the princes and elders; and this they proposed to be done in every city, and the account to be brought to the sanhedrim at Jerusalem, who were to sit at certain times till this affair was finished: *until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us*; which it seems had broke out in some instances, and they feared would do yet more, unless this step was taken, whereby they hoped it would be averted.

Ver. 15. *Only Jonathan the son of Asahel, and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah, were employed about the matter*, &c.] To see that this affair was conducted in the

[p] יחרם anathema erit *vel* fore, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; deveveretur, Michaelis.

[q] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 5. sect. 4.

manner proposed; that the magistrates of every city brought the persons that had been delinquents, in their turns, of which they gave them notice, and took the account of them as they came: *and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them*: assisted them in this work; the other two perhaps were priests, and both these Levites; and these four were the only persons appointed over this matter, as the phrase in the preceding clause may signify; though Jarchi interprets it to a quite contrary sense, that they were the only persons that opposed and objected to it; and so Dr. Lightfoot [r] understands it, and renders it, *stood against this matter*: in which they were seconded by the two Levites, and the sense is very probable.

Ver. 16. *And the children of the captivity did so*, &c.] Put away their strange wives: *and Ezra the priest*, with *certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by* their *names, were separated*: from all their other business, and gave themselves up to attend to this wholly: *and sat down in the first day of the 10th month*: the month Tebeth, which answers to part of December and January; this was 10 days after the assembly of all the people met and broke up: these took their places in the great court, and there sat *to examine the matter*: the accounts brought in from the several cities by the magistrates thereof, and recorded them.

Ver. 17. *And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives*, &c.] Finished their inquiry and examination of them: *by the first day of the first month*: the month Nisan, answering to part of March and April; so that they were three months about this work.

Ver. 18. *And among the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives*, &c.] So that it need not be wondered at that this evil should spread among the people, when those who understood the law, and should have instructed the people in it, set such an example: namely, *of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak*: who was the high-priest; and perhaps for this fault of his, in not restraining his sons from such unlawful marriages, is he represented in filthy garments, Zech. iii. 3. *and his brethren, Maasiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah*: these were the brethren of Jeshua.

Ver. 19. *And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives*, &c.] They proposed to do it, and actually did it: *and* being *guilty*: of which they were fully convinced: they offered *a ram of the flock for their trespass*: to make atonement for it, and thereby set an example to others to do the like. Aben Ezra observes, that we don't find that the trespass-offering was a mulct to such who married strange wives, and conjectures, that it was the advice of the chief men to do it. From hence, to the end of ver. 43, is a list of the men that had married strange wives, and put them away; those in ver. 20, 21, 22, were priests; in ver. 23, 24, Levites, and those of them who were singers or porters; the rest were Israelites; and it is a very common distinction, in rabbinical writers, to distinguish the Jews into priests, Levites, and Israelites; of these we know no more than their names; some of the heads of the families may be observed in ch. 2.

Ver. 44. *All these had taken strange wives*, &c.] In all about 113: *and some of them* had *wives by whom they had children*: and yet they put them away, which made it the more difficult for them to do; and those that had none, it is thought to be a mark of God's displeasure at such marriages. No mention being made of the children being put away, as Shechaniah proposed, ver. 3, it may be concluded they were not, but were taken care of, to be educated in the true religion, and entered proselytes at a proper time; and the rather, as Ezra gave no orders about their putting away, ver. 11.

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

THIS book is, by the authors of the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, called the *Second* Book of Ezra, it being a continuation of the same history, and was by the Jews reckoned as one book with Ezra; Kimchi on Isa. ix. 7, calls it Ezra, so the Talmud [s]; and it has been quoted by Christian writers under his name; see the argument of the book of Ezra; but not as if it was wrote by him; for it is a clear case it was wrote by Nehemiah, whose name it bears, as appears from ver. 1. and throughout Nehemiah speaks of himself under the first person; and the style also is very different from that of Ezra, being plainer and easier than his. It has always had a place in the canon of Scriptures, both with Jews and Christians; and is of use to shew the fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah, and especially of Daniel concerning the building of the wall of Jerusalem in troublesome times; to carry on the history of the Jews, and describe the state of the church in those times, what opposition was made to it, and what enemies it had, and what must be expected when any work of God is set about; it is the last of the historical books that was written, as is thought, and contains an history of the space of about twelve years, from the twentieth of Artaxerxes to the thirty-second of his reign, see ch. i. 1. and ii. 1. and xiii. 6.

[r] Works, vol. 1. p. 144.

[s] T. Bab. Succah, fol. 27. 1. & Gloss. in ib. fol. 19. 1.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter relates how that Nehemiah, being at Shushan in Persia, and meeting with some Jews, inquired of the state of Jerusalem, of which having a melancholy account, he betook to mourning, fasting, and prayer, ver. 1—4. and his prayer is recorded, ver. 5—11.

Ver. 1. *The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah,* &c.] Or his transactions and deeds; for *dibre* signifies things done, as well as words spoken: who Hachaliah his father was is not known; the Arabic version adds, the high-priest, without any foundation; though some have thought that Nehemiah was a priest, from a passage in 2 Maccab. i. 18, *&c.* and from signing and sealing the covenant at the head of the priests, ch. x. 1. but he rather seems to be of the tribe of Judah, see ch. ii. 3, 5. and Nehemiah may be the same that went up with Zerubbabel, and returned again, and then became the king's cupbearer;—though some are of another opinion, see the note on Ezra ii. 2. *and it came to pass in the month Chisleu;* the 9th month, as the Arabic version; of which see Ezra x. 9. *in the 20th year;* not of Nehemiah's age, for, if he went up with Zerubbabel, he must be many years older; but in the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes, ch. ii. 1. *as I was in Shushan the palace;* a city in Persia, the royal seat of the kings of it; as Ecbatana was in the summer-time, this in the spring, as Cyrus made it, according to Xenophon[b]; but others say[c] it was their seat in winter, and this was the season now when Nehemiah was with the king there; for Chisleu was a winter-month, answering to part of November and of December; of Shushan, see the note on Dan. viii. 2. to which may be added what a traveller of the last century says[d] of it, "we rested at Valdac, once the great city Susa, but now very ruinous; "it was first built by Tythonus, and his son Memnon, "but enlarged by Darius the son of Hystaspes; in the "building whereof Memnon was so exceeding prodi- "gal, that, as Cassiodorus writeth, he joined the stones "together with gold—such was the beauty and de- "lectableness of it for situation, that they called it "*Susa*, which in the Persian tongue signified a *lily*, "but now it is called Valdac, because of the poverty of "the place;" and it is generally supposed to have its name from the abundance of lilies about it; but Dr. Hyde[e] gives another signification of its name, he says the Persians called it سوس, *Sus*, which signifies *liquorice*, but for what reasons he says not. There is a city now called Shustera, and is thought by some travellers to be built at least very near where Shushan formerly stood[f].

Ver. 2. *That Hanani, one of my brethren,* &c.] Either in natural relation, ch. vii. 2. or being a Jew of the same nation and religion; so Jarchi interprets it, one of my companions or acquaintance: *he and certain men of Judah;* who came from thence to Shushan on some account or another: *and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity;* who were returned from it to their own land; he inquired of their health and prosperity, in what circumstances they were, whether prosperous or adverse, whether they flourished, or were in distress: *and concerning Jerusalem;* whether it was rebuilt, the houses and walls of it, and in what condition it was.

Ver. 3. *And they said unto me, the remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province,* &c.] In Judea, now reduced to a province of the Persian empire: are *in great affliction and reproach;* harassed and distressed, calumniated and vilified, by their enemies the Samaritans: *the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire;* that is, its wall and gates were in the same condition in which Nebuchadnezzar had left them, for since his times as yet they had never been set up; for this is not to be understood of what was lately done by their adversaries, which is not at all probable.

Ver. 4. *And it came to pass, when I heard these words,* &c.] This sad and melancholy account of things: *that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days;* sat down upon the ground in dust and ashes, after the manner of mourners, and wept bitterly, and mourned in a most sorrowful manner, see Job ii. 8, 12, 13. *and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven;* that made it, and dwells in it.

Ver. 5. *And said, I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven,* &c.] He prayed not to the host of heaven, the sun in it, as the Persians, but to the God of it, in an humble supplicant manner: *the great and terrible God;* who is to be feared, and had in reverence of all his creatures, because of his greatness and glory, being God over all, blessed for ever, and his name holy and reverend: *that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him, and observe his commandments;* who keep them from a principle of love to him; to those he has made gracious promises in his covenant, which he truly and faithfully performs; and the consideration of these perfections in God animates and encourages good men in prayer to him.

Ver. 6. *Let thine ear be now attentive,* &c.] To his prayer, as in ver. 11. *and thine eyes open;* to behold with pity and compassion the distressed case of Jerusalem, and the Jews in it: *I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants;* this he had continued to do ever since he heard of their trouble and calamity: *and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned;* he considered sin as the cause of all this evil that had befallen his people, and confesses it with sorrow and humiliation,

[b] Cyropædia, l. 8. c. 44.
[c] Athenæus, l. 12. c. 1.
[d] Cartwright's Preacher's Travels, p. 87, 88.
[e] Hist. Relig. Vet. Pers. c. 35. p. 414.
[f] Tavernier, tom. 1. l. 4. c. 1.

and not their sins only, but his own personal and family sins.

Ver. 7. *We have dealt very corruptly against thee,* &c.] Corrupted his covenant, laws, and precepts, as well as themselves, ways, and works; all which were against the Lord, contrary to his nature, mind, and will: *and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses;* the laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial.

Ver. 8. *Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses,* &c.] To publish and declare to the children of Israel, Deut. xxviii. 64. and xxx. 3, 4, 5. *saying, if ye transgress;* the law of God: *I will scatter you abroad among the nations;* as now they had been among the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Medes, and Persians.

Ver. 9. *But if ye return unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them,* &c.] Return by repentance, and, as a proof of the genuineness of it, yield obedience to the commands of God, and continue therein: *though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven;* that is, the uttermost parts of the earth, the most distant regions; so called, because at the extreme parts of the horizon, according to our apprehension, the heavens and earth touch each other; so that what is the uttermost part of the one is supposed to be of the other: yet *will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there;* that is, to Jerusalem, where the temple was built, and his name was called upon.

Ver. 10. *Now these are thy servants, and thy people,* &c.] Meaning those that were in Jerusalem and Judah, gathered out of several countries, and returned to Jerusalem: *whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand;* touching and moving the heart of Cyrus to proclaim liberty to them.

Ver. 11. *O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant,* &c.] To the prayer of Nehemiah, put up at this time: *and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name;* the prayer of the Jews in Judea, whose desire was to worship the Lord in his temple, according to his will: *and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day;* meaning himself, who was to wait on the king of Persia that day, and, if he had opportunity, intended to lay the case of the Jews before him, and therefore entreats he might meet with success: *and grant him mercy in the sight of this man;* King Artaxerxes, who was but a man, and whose heart was in the hands of God, and he could easily move him to pity and compassion towards his poor people the Jews: *for I was the king's cupbearer;* in the execution of which office he was often in the king's presence, and hoped to have an opportunity of speaking to him in the behalf of the Jews; this with the Persians was reckoned a very honourable office[g]. A son of Prexaspes, a very honourable man, was made cupbearer to Cambyses; and so it was with the Greeks and Romans[h]; and the poets not only make Ganymedes to be Jupiter's cupbearer[i], but even Vulcan himself is put into this office[k].

CHAP. II.

NEHEMIAH being sorrowful in the king's presence, the reason of it was asked by the king, which he declared, and then took the opportunity to request of the king that he might be sent to Jerusalem to rebuild it, which was granted him, ver. 1—8. upon which he set out, and came to Jerusalem, to the great grief of the enemies of Israel, ver. 9—11. and after he had been three days in Jerusalem, he privately took a survey of it, to see what condition it was in, unknown to the rulers there, ver. 12—16. whom he afterwards exhorted to rise up and build the wall of the city, which they immediately set about, ver. 17, 18. not regarding the scoffs and taunts of their enemies, ver. 19, 20.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes,* &c.] It was still but in the 20th year of his reign; for though Nisan or March was the first month of the year with the Jews, and from whence the reigns of their kings were dated[l]; yet, with other nations, Tisri or September was the beginning of the reigns of their kings[m]; so that Chisleu or November being since, see ch. i. it was no more in Nisan or March than the 20th of the said king's reign, and was three or four months after Nehemiah had first heard of the distress of his people; which time he either purposely spent in fasting and prayer on that account, or until now his turn did not come about to exercise his office, in waiting upon the king as his cupbearer: but now it was *that wine was before him;* the king; it was brought and set in a proper place, from whence it might be taken for his use: *and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king;* according to Xenophon[n], the cupbearer with the Persians and Medes used to take the wine out of the vessels into the cup, and pour some of it into their left hand, and sup it up, that, if there was any poison in it, the king might not be hurt, and then he delivered it to him upon three fingers[o]: *now I had not been before time sad in his presence;* but always pleasant and cheerful, so that the sadness of his countenance was the more taken notice of.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore the king said unto me, why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?* &c.] He had no disorder upon him to change his countenance, and make him sorrowful, and therefore asks what should be the reason of it: *this is nothing* else *but sor-*

[g] Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 34. Xenophon. Cyropædia, l. 5. c. 56.
[h] Vid. Athenæi Deipnosophist. l. 10.
[i] Homer. Iliad. 21. ver. 234.
[k] Homer. Iliad. 1. prope finem.

[l] Misn. Roshhashanah, c. 1. sect. 1.
[m] T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 2. 1.
[n] Cyropædia, l. 1. c. 11.
[o] Vid. Heliodor. Ethiopic. l. 7. c. 47.

row of heart; this is not owing to any bodily disease or pain, but some inward trouble of mind; or *wickedness of heart*[r], some ill design in his mind, which being conscious of, and thoughtful about, was discovered in his countenance; he suspected, as Jarchi intimates, a design to kill him, by putting poison into his cup: *then I was very sore afraid:* lest the king should have suspicion of an ill design on him; or lest, since he must be obliged to give the true reason, he should not succeed in his request, it being so large, and perhaps many about the king were no friends to the Jews.

Ver. 3. *And I said unto the king, let the king live for ever,* &c.] Which some think he said to take off the king's suspicion of his having a design upon his life, though it seems to be a common salutation of the kings in those times, see Dan. vi. 6, 21. *why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres,* lieth *waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?* a man's native place, and where his ancestors lie interred, being always reckoned near and dear, the king and his nobles could not object to his being concerned for the desolations thereof.

Ver. 4. *Then the king said unto me, for what dost thou make request?* &c.] The king supposed that there was a meaning in those looks and words of his, that he had a favour to ask of him, and therefore encourages him to it; or the king of himself moved this, as being desirous of doing any thing for him he would propose, to make him easy: *so I prayed to the God of heaven;* secretly, in an ejaculatory way, giving him thanks for thus disposing the king's heart towards him, and entreating he might be directed what to ask, and in a proper manner, and that he might succeed.

Ver. 5. *And I said unto the king, if it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight,* &c.] He submits what he had to say wholly to the pleasure of the king, and puts it upon his unmerited favour, and not on any desert of his own: *that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it:* the wall of it, and the houses in it; the favour was, that he might have leave to go thither, and set about such a work, for which he was so much concerned.

Ver. 6. *And the king said unto me, the queen also sitting by him,* &c.] Which it seems was not very common for the queens of Persia to dine with the kings their husbands; though this may be observed, not so much for the singularity of it, as for the providence of God in it, that so it should be, she having a good respect for Nehemiah, and the Jewish nation, and forwarded the king in his grant to him: if this king was Darius Hystaspis, this his queen was Atossa, daughter of Cyrus[s], who might be the more friendly to the Jews, on account of her father's great regard unto them: *for how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return?* what time would he ask to do this business in? this shews the king had a great respect for him, and was loth to part with him, at least for any great length of time: *so it pleased the king to send me;* when he promised to return unto him, not in 12 years, which was the time of his government in Judea, but in a lesser space, perhaps a year at most, since in less than two months the wall of Jerusalem was finished; and it may be that he then returned to the king of Persia, who sent him again under the character of a governor, finding it was for his interest to have such a man in those parts.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, I said unto the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river,* &c.] The river of Euphrates, on that side of it towards the land of Judea: *that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;* furnish him with provisions, and a guard to protect him.

Ver. 8. *And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest,* &c.] The forest or mountain of Lebanon, which, because of its odoriferous and fruit-bearing trees, was more like an orchard or paradise, as this word signifies, and so it is translated in Eccl. ii. 5. Cant. iv. 13. and at the extreme part of it, it seems, there was a city called Paradisus[t]; such an officer as here was among the Romans, called Saltuarius[u], and is now among us: *that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which* appertaineth *to the house;* not the king's palace near the temple, for that might have occasioned suspicion in the king, that his view was to set up himself as king in Judea; but for the gates of the courts adjoining to the temple, and of the wall of the outward court, and of the wall which was to encompass the mountain of the house, the whole circumference of it: *and for the wall of the city;* to make gates of in various places for that, where they stood before: *and for the house which I shall enter into;* and dwell in during his stay at Jerusalem: *and the king granted me;* all the above favours: *according to the good hand of my God upon me;* the kind providence of God, which wrought on the heart of the king, and disposed it towards him, and overruled all things for good.

Ver. 9. *Then I came to the governors beyond the river,* &c.] Who these governors were, whether the same who were in the second year of this king's reign 18 years ago, Tatnai and Shethar-boznai, is not certain: *now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me;* both to do him honour, and for his safety; and coming thus attended, must serve to recommend him to the governor, who received him from them at the river Euphrates, and conducted him to Judah.

Ver. 10. *When Sanballat the Horonite,* &c.] Who either presided at Horonaim, or sprung from thence, a city of Moab, Isa. xv. 5. *and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite;* who was formerly a slave, but now raised, from a low mean estate, to be governor in the land of Ammon, though still a vassal of the king of Persia: *heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there came a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel;* to which the Moabites and Ammon-

[r] רע לב πονηρα καρδιας, Sept. malum nescio quod in corde tuo est, V. L.
[s] Herodot. Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 1.

[t] Ptolem. Geograph. l. 5. c. 15. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 23.
[u] Vid. Servium in Virgil. Æneid. l. 2. ver. 485.

ites were always averse, and ever bore an hatred to Israel, and envied every thing that tended to their happiness.

Ver. 11. *So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.*] Before he entered on any business, resting himself from the fatigue of the journey, and receiving the visits of his friends, as Ezra before him did, ch. viii. 32.

Ver. 12. *And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me,* &c.] Both the season of the night, and the small number of men to accompany him, were chosen for greater secresy, that the business he came upon might not as yet be known, and so no schemes formed to obstruct or discourage: *neither told I any man what God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem:* he was satisfied that what he had in view was from the Lord, who had stirred him up to it, but thought it prudent for the present to conceal it, until things were prepared to put it in execution: *neither* was there any *beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon;* he only rode perhaps on a mule, being not yet recovered quite from the fatigue of his journey, and for the sake of honour; the rest went on foot, that there might be no noise made, and so pass on unheard and unobserved.

Ver. 13. *And I went out by night, by the gate of the valley,* &c.] Where that formerly stood, for the gates had been burnt, and were not as yet rebuilt; this was the gate that led to the valley of Jehoshaphat, according to some; or rather to the valley of dead bodies, through which the brook Kidron ran, see 2 Chron. xxvi. 9. Jer. xxxi. 4. it is the gate through which Christ went to Calvary; it led to Shiloh, Beth-horon, and Galan: *even before the dragon well;* so called from its winding about, just as a crooked winding river is called serpentine; though some think here stood an image of a dragon, either in wood, or stone, or brass, out of the mouth of which the water flowed from the well; and others, that since the desolations of Jerusalem, serpents or dragons had their abode here: *and to the dung-port;* by which they used to carry the dung out of the city, and by which they went to Joppa, the sea, and all the western parts: *and viewed the walls of Jerusalem:* in what condition they were, what was necessary to be wholly taken down, and where to begin to build: it must have been a moon-light night, or he could not have taken a view; for to have carried torches or lamps with them would have discovered them: *and the gates thereof were consumed with fire;* nothing of them remained.

Ver. 14. *Then I went on to the pool of the fountain, and to the king's pool,* &c.] That led to the fountain Siloah or Gihon, so called; it was the way to the potter's field, to Beth-lehem, Hebron, Gaza, and Egypt. Rauwolff says[t], there is still standing on the outside of the valley Tyropæum (which distinguishes the two mountains Zion and Moriah) the gate of the fountain, which hath its name, because it leadeth towards the fountain of Siloah, called the king's pool: *but there was no place for the beast* that was *under me to pass;* because of the heaps of rubbish that lay there.

Ver. 15. *Then went I up in the night by the brook,* &c.] The brook Kidron: *and viewed the wall;* that was on that side: *and turned back;* did not go quite round the wall, the way perhaps being obstructed with rubbish, and was unpassable, or he had not time to do it: *and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned;* into the city, the same way he went out of it, ver. 13.

Ver. 16. *And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did,* &c.] The rulers of the city of Jerusalem, who seem to be officers of the king of Persia, since they are distinguished from Jewish rulers in the next clause: *neither had I as yet told it to the Jews;* what he came about and designed to do: *nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers;* the principal men among the Jews, both ecclesiastical and civil: *nor to the rest that did the work;* of building and repairing; neither those that were employed in it, nor those that overlooked it.

Ver. 17. *Then said I unto them,* &c.] The priests and princes of the Jews: *you see the distress that we are in;* lie open to our enemies, and exposed to their insults: *how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire,* ch. i. 3. and ii. 3, 13. *come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach;* to their neighbours about them, who scoffed at them as a defenceless people, and frequently came in upon them, and spoiled and plundered them of their goods and substance.

Ver. 18. *Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me,* &c.] Of the kind providence of God in exalting him in the court of the king of Persia, in giving him an opportunity of laying the sad case of Jerusalem before him, and in inclining his heart to shew favour to him, and grant his request: *as also the king's words that he had spoken to me;* what passed between them on this subject, the commission he gave him, and the letters he sent by him to his governors on this side the river: *and they said, let us rise up and build;* encouraged by this account of things, they proposed to set about the work immediately: *so they strengthened their hands for this good work;* animated and encouraged one another to proceed to it at once with cheerfulness, and to go on in it with spirit and resolution.

Ver. 19. *But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian,* &c.] This third man might be both an Arabian by birth, and governor of some part of Arabia near Judea: *heard* it; of their beginning to build: *they laughed us to scorn, and despised us;* as very silly people, that undertook what they could never perform: *and said;* adding threatenings to their scoffs: *what is this thing that ye do?* do ye know what ye are about? have ye any authority to do it? it is unlawful, you will certainly suffer for it: *will ye rebel against the king?* the king of Persia; it will be deemed rebellion and treason, and you'll be taken up and treated as rebels and traitors; take care what you do, be it at your peril if you proceed.

Ver. 20. *Then answered I them, and said unto them,* &c.] With much spirit and boldness, not at all intimidated by their scoffs or threats: *the God of heaven,*

[t] Travels, par. 3. c. 3. p. 227.

he will prosper us: whom we serve, and under whose protection we are, who will supply us with every thing we want, and succeed this undertaking, in whose name we engage in it, and on whom we depend, and we care not what man can do to us: *therefore we his servants will arise and build*; in spite of all opposition, difficulties, and discouragements: *but you have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem*; no part of the city belonged to them; they had no jurisdiction there; they had no name there, nor their ancestors, in times past; nor had they done any thing to perpetuate their memory in it: in short, they had nothing to do with them, neither in religious nor in civil things; and it was best for them to mind their own affairs where they presided, and not trouble themselves about theirs.

CHAP. III.

THIS chapter contains the names of the builders of the wall of Jerusalem, the order in which they worked, where they began, and where they ended, which was the sheep-gate, ver. 1—32.

Ver. 1. *Then Eliashib the high-priest rose up with his brethren the priests*, &c.] This was the grandson of Jeshua or Joshua the high-priest, his father's name was Joiakim, ch. xii. 10. being high-priest, and rising first, he set a good example both to the priests and to the people, and served no doubt greatly to animate and encourage them: *and they built the sheep-gate*: so called, because the sheep were led through it to the temple, and near it was the sheep-market, where they were sold, and the sheep-pool, where the sacrifices were washed; and this being near the temple, and for the service of it, the priests undertook that; not that they laboured with their hands at it, though it is possible some of them might; but they were at the expense of it, employed labourers, and paid them, and directed them, and had the oversight of them: this gate was to the south of the city; and Rauwolff[u] says, it was still standing by Moriah, the mountain of the temple, which the Turks have taken to themselves, and built on it a Turkish mosque or temple.—Near the gate you see still, he says, the sheep-pond, which is large and deep, wherein the Nethinim used to wash the beasts, and then gave them to the priests; it is said[w] to lead to the mount of Olives, to Bethany, to Jericho, the desert, and all the east-country to Jordan: *they sanctified it*; this being for sacred use, and they sacred persons; and this the first part of the building, they prayed for a blessing on it, and in it on the whole work undertaken, of which this was the first-fruits: *and set up the doors of it*; and so finished it: *even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel*; so far they built, and what they built they sanctified. The tower of Meah, or a *hundred*, as the word signifies, might be so called, either because it was 100 cubits from the sheep-gate on one side, and as many from the tower of Hananeel on the other side, standing between both; or because it was 100 cubits high: these two towers, perhaps, were firm and strong, and needed no repair, since no mention is made of any; though they seem to me to be one and the same tower; see Jer. xxxi. 38. Zech. xiv. 10.

Ver. 2. *And next unto him builded the men of Jericho*, &c.] The posterity of those that formerly inhabited that city; these began where Eliashib and the priests ended, and went on from thence: *and next to them*; or rather *to him*, the high-priest: *builded Zaccur the son of Imri*; who probably was the chief of the men of Jericho.

Ver. 3. *But the fish-gate did the sons of Hassenaah build*, &c.] So called, because fish was brought from the sea-coasts through it, and near it was the fish-market; this also was southward, according to Dr. Lightfoot[x]; others say northward; some say it led to the sea of Galilee, Jordan, and all the east and north country: but it is most likely to be westward towards the Mediterranean sea, Tyre, and Joppa, from whence fish were brought: and Rauwolff says[y] it is still standing towards the west, behind Mount Sion, and over-against Mount Gihon, see 2 Chron. xxxiii. 14. he also says, this gate was called the gate of Hebron, because the road of Hebron went through it, which is about seven or eight hours' walking distant from it: *who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof*; completely finished it.

Ver. 4. *And next unto them repaired Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Koz*, &c.] And the men under him; see Ezra viii. 33. this part of the wall on which they worked was not wholly demolished, only weakened, and therefore did not rebuild it, but repaired and strengthened it, and this phrase is used all along afterwards: *and next unto them repaired Meshullam, the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel: and next unto them repaired Zadok, the son of Baana*; but who they were cannot be said.

Ver. 5. *And next unto them the Tekoites repaired*, &c.] The inhabitants of Tekoa, a city in the tribe of Judah; see Amos i. 1. *but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord*; either of Nehemiah, as some, or rather of the lord and prince appointed over their families, as Aben Ezra, to whom they would not be subject; though it seems best, with Jarchi, to understand it of the Lord their God, by whose command this work was begun; but they refused to give any assistance to it with their purses or presence, but withdrew from it, as refractory oxen withdraw their necks from the yoke. This is observed to their disgrace, when the common people of their city were ready to work, and did.

Ver. 6. *Moreover, the old gate repaired Jehoiada, the*

[u] Travels, par. 3. c. 3. p. 220, 229.
[w] Vid. Quistorp. in loc.
[x] Chorograph. Cent. of the Land of Israel, c. 25. p. 27. vol. 2.
[y] Ut supra, p. 226, 227.

son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodaiah, &c.] Which some think was so called because it led to the old city Salem. Dr. Lightfoot[a] thinks it is the same with the second or bird-gate, Zeph. i. 10. According to Vatablus, it was the gate of the old pool, Isa. xxii. 11. or rather, perhaps, it was the gate of the old wall Josephus speaks of[b]; it led to the north of the land: *they laid the beams thereof:* as in ver. 3.

Ver. 7. *And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronathite, the men of Gibeon and Mizpah,* &c.] Which places were both in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 25, 26. and one of these men was of the one place, and the other of the other: *unto the throne of the governor on this side the river;* where the governor of those parts under the king of Persia had his seat, and now Nehemiah; but, according to Aben Ezra, Cisse, rendered *throne,* is the name of a man who was the governor.

Ver. 8. *Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths,* &c.] Or Tzorephim, which, according to Jarchi, was the name of a family so called from their trade and business: *next unto him also repaired Hananiah the son of one of the apothecaries:* or confectioners, which also might be the name of a family so called for the same reason: *and they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall:* which reached from the gate of Ephraim to the corner-gate, which was broken down by Joash, king of Israel, but was rebuilt so strong by Uzziah, king of Judah, that it stood firm to this time; wherefore these men repaired up to it, but left that as they found it; see 2 Chron. xxv. 23. and xxvi. 9. were not careful to repair it, it not wanting any repair.

Ver. 9. *And next unto them repaired Rephaiah, the son of Hur, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem.*] That city belonging partly to the tribe of Judah, and partly to the tribe of Benjamin; one part of it was under a governor that was of the tribe of Judah, as this man seems to be; and the other part under one of the tribe of Benjamin; see ver. 12.

Ver. 10. *And next unto him repaired Jedaiah, the son of Harumaph, over-against his house,* &c.] That part of the wall which stood right against his house; and to take this part he could not well object to it, and it might be reasonably thought he would take care to repair it well, and make it strong for his own safety: *and next unto him repaired Hattush, the son of Hashabniah;* but who he was is not known.

Ver. 11. *Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hashub the son of Pahath-moab,* &c.] The fathers of these were heads of families that came out of captivity with Zerubbabel, Ezra ii. 6, 32. *repaired the other piece:* or second piece, below and next to that which Hattush repaired, the last builder mentioned: *and the tower of the furnaces:* near to which were furnaces for the baking of bread, or of bricks.

Ver. 12. *And next unto him repaired Shallum, the son of Halloesh,* &c.] So called, as Ben Melech says, from his being an enchanter of serpents, or a wise prudent counsellor: *the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem;* of the other half; see ver. 9. *he and his daughters;* who were rich widows or heiresses, and employed men to build at their own expense; he seems to have had no sons.

Ver. 13. *The valley-gate repaired Hanun,* &c.] Of which see ch. ii. 13. *and the inhabitants of Zanoah:* a city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 34. *they built it, and set up the doors thereof,* &c. see ver. 3. *and 1,000 cubits on the wall to the dung-gate;* that is, they repaired the wall to such a length from the valley-gate to the dung-gate; see ch. ii. 13.

Ver. 14. *But the dung-gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab,* &c.] If this was one of the Rechabites, they were forbid to build houses, Jer. xxxv. 7. but, perhaps, though they might not build private houses for themselves to dwell in, they might be employed in building walls and fortresses for public security; though it is more probable that this man was not of that family: *the ruler of part of Beth-haccerem;* or of the tract of Beth-haccerem, a place between Tekoah and Jerusalem; see Jer. vi. 1. *he built it, and set up the doors thereof;* &c. as in ver. 3.

Ver. 15. *But the gate of the fountain,* &c.] Of which see ch. ii. 14. *repaired Shallum, the son of Colhozeh, the ruler of part of Mizpah;* of a tract, district, town, or city so called; perhaps that in the tribe of Benjamin; see ver. 7. *he built it, and covered it;* roofed it, which is not said of any of the other gates, whether because of the fountain at it: *and set up the doors thereof,* &c. finished it completely: *and the wall of the pool of Siloah, by the king's garden;* which was formerly without the wall, on the west, but afterwards taken in by Manasseh, who built it; see 2 Chron xxxiii. 14. and from hence the king's garden was watered: *and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David;* Zion, which was built on an eminence, from which they went down by steps into the lower city Acra.

Ver. 16. *After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of the half part of Bethzur.*] A strong fortified place in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 58. *unto the place over-against the sepulchres of David;* where he and his family, and the kings of his race, were buried, which remained to this time untouched by the Babylonians, and to many ages after; see Acts ii. 29. *and to the pool that was made;* not a natural, but an artificial one, which was made by Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 20. *and unto the house of the mighty;* where was a garrison of soldiers in former time for defence.

Ver. 17. *After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani,* &c.] Who was one of them, as he that follows was another: *next unto him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of the half part of Keilah;* a city of the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 4. *in his part;* either with the men of that part of Keilah under his jurisdiction, or at the expense of that part of it.

Ver. 18. *After him repaired their brethren,* &c.] Either the brethren of the two before named particularly, or the Levites their brethren in general, as Jarchi: *Bavai, the son of Henadad, the ruler of the half part of Keilah;* the other half of that place.

Ver. 19. *And next to him repaired Ezer, the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah,* &c.] Either of another Mizpah, or of the other half of Mizpah, ver. 15. *another*

[a] Ut supra.

[b] De Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 2, 2.

piece: or a second piece; one of the two pieces; for another is mentioned in the next verse: *over-against the going up to the armoury, at the turning* of the wall; the western wall towards the south, near to which was a place where armour was laid up; perhaps the same with the tower of David, to which there is an allusion in Cant. iv. 4.

Ver. 20. *After him Baruch the son of Zabbai earnestly repaired the other piece*, &c.] Towards and next to that Ezer the last builder mentioned had repaired; and this he did *earnestly*, or in anger as the word signifies, being angry with himself or others that there was any backwardness shewn to the work; and therefore, with all haste and eagerness imaginable, attended to it: *from the turning* of the wall; see the preceding verse: *unto the door of the house of Eliashib the high-priest*: of whom see ver. 1. now either his house was upon the wall, or that part of the wall that was right against the door of his house is here meant.

Ver. 21. *After him repaired Meremoth the son of Uriah, the son of Koz, another piece*, &c.] He had wrought before in another part, ver. 4. but having finished that, he sets his hand a second time to the work: *from the door of the house of Eliashib, even to the end of the house of Eliashib*; the door of his house seems to have been at one end of it, and from that end to the other was a considerable length; he being a great man, the high-priest, had a large house.

Ver. 22. *And after him repaired the priests, the men of the plain*.] Either of the plain of Jericho, where, in after-times at least, there was a station of the priests, or of the plain about Jerusalem; those also assisted in the repairs of the wall.

Ver. 23. *After him*, &c.] The last of the priests before mentioned: *repaired Benjamin, and Hashub, over-against their house*; as much of the wall as the length of their house, or houses, were: *after him repaired Azariah the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, by his house*; as far as that reached.

Ver. 24. *After him repaired Binnui the son of Henadad, another piece*, &c.] Beginning where Azariah ended: *unto the turning* of the wall, *even unto the corner*; the corner where the wall turned from the south to the east.

Ver. 25. *Palal the son of Uzai, over-against the turning* of the wall, &c.] Who dwelt there, and so repaired what was right against him: *and the tower which lieth out from the king's high house*: which might be built for prospect, or his upper house: *that* was *by the court of the prison*; and we often read in Jeremiah of the court of the prison being in or near the king's house, see ch. xxxii. 2. *after him Pedaiah the son of Parosh*; went on from hence with the repair.

Ver. 26. *Moreover, the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel*, &c.] An high tower upon the wall, in this part of it, see 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. these were servants to the Levites, and repaired here, where their dwellings were: *unto* the place *over-against the water-gate toward the east*; and as one part of their work was to fetch water for the temple, they were here very properly situated; it led to the king's garden, the valley of Jehoshaphat, and from thence a plain way to Bethany: *and the tower that lieth out*; from the wall.

Ver. 27. *After them the Tekoites repaired another piece*, &c.] Having finished what they undertook in another part of the wall, ver. 5, they engage in this part of it; which shews their great zeal and diligence, when their nobles were so backward to it, and withdrew from it: *over-against the great tower that lieth out*; the same as in the preceding verse: *even unto the wall of Ophel*; from right against the great tower unto the wall the Tekoites repaired.

Ver. 28. *From above the horse-gate repaired the priests*, &c.] So called, either because near it were stables for horses; or through it horses were led to be watered at the brook of Kidron, to which it was near; or to be exercised in the valley; Josephus[*] speaks of the *hippic*, or horse-tower, which might be near it: *every one over-against his house*; for it seems there was a row of houses in which the priests dwelt, and each of them repaired as much of the wall as was right against his house.

Ver. 29. *After them repaired Zadok the son of Immer, over-against his house*, &c.] After the last of the priests, this begun where they ended, and repaired as far as his house reached; and being, perhaps, a person of some note, his house might be a large one: *after him repaired also Shemaiah, the son of Shemaiah, the keeper of the east gate*; that is, of the temple; for the gates of the city having been burnt so long, it cannot be thought there should be a keeper of any of them.

Ver. 30. *After him repaired Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, another piece*, &c.] This last man had six sons; but only his youngest son wrought at this work, which is observed to his great commendation: *after him repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, over-against his chamber*; the same as in ver. 4. who having finished what he engaged in there, took his part where his chamber was, and repaired over-against that.

Ver. 31. *After him repaired Malchiah, the goldsmith's son*, &c.] Or the son of Tzoreph, as some, so called from his business: *unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants*; he repaired up to the place where these dwelt: *over-against the gate Miphkad*: where some think was an house of visitation or correction; and others, where the sanhedrim sat, tried causes, and exercised justice: *and to the going up of the corner*: from the east to the north.

Ver. 32. *And between the going up of the corner unto the sheep-gate*, &c.] Where the building first began, and where it now ended: *repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants*; or druggists; which was done at their expense; and so the wall all round, with the gates of it, were rebuilt and repaired, which was all done in 52 days, ch. vi. 15.

[*] Ut supra.

CHAP. IV.

THIS chapter relates, how the Jews, whilst building, were mocked by their enemies, to which no answer was returned but by prayer to God, and they went on notwithstanding in their work, ver. 1—6. and how that their enemies conspired against them, to hinder them by force of arms, ver. 7—12. to oppose which, both spiritual and temporal weapons were made use of, so that the work was still carried on, ver. 13—23.

Ver. 1. *But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall,* &c.] Or were building it: for as yet it was not finished, see ver. 6. *he was wroth, and took great indignation:* inwardly, though outwardly he pretended to treat the work with contempt, as if it never would be accomplished, which yet he feared: *and mocked the Jews:* as a set of foolish builders, and unable to finish what they had begun.

Ver. 2. *And he spake before his brethren,* &c.] Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, and perhaps some other governors of the king of Persia in those parts: *and before the army of Samaria:* which, and the inhabitants of it, were implacable enemies of the Jews: *and said, what do these feeble Jews?* what do they pretend to do, or what can they do? *will they fortify themselves?* by building a wall about their city; can they think they shall ever be able to do this, or that it will be allowed? *will they sacrifice?* meaning not their daily sacrifice, as Jarchi, that they had done a long time, but for the dedication of their building, as Aben Ezra: *will they make an end in a day?* they seem to be in as great a hurry and haste as if they meant it; and indeed, unless they can do it very quickly, they never will: they'll soon be stopped: *will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burnt?* where will they find materials? do they imagine that they can make burnt stones firm and strong again, or harden the dust and rubbish into stones, or make that, which is as if dead, alive? to do this is the same as to revive a dead man, and they may as well think of doing the one as the other: burnt stones being reckoned as dead, as Eben Ezra observes.

Ver. 3. *Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him,* &c.] Who was one of his brethren he spake before, ver. 2. *and he said:* in the like contemptuous and scoffing manner: *even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall:* signifying not only that it was so low that a fox could easily get up to it, or leap over it; but that the materials were so bad, and the work so poorly done, that the weight of a fox would break it down; of which creatures many were thereabout, since Jerusalem was desolate, see Lam. v. 18.

Ver. 4. *Hear, O our God, for we are despised,* &c.] Here begins the prayer of Nehemiah, who had been informed of what these men said in contempt of him, and his builders, and to whom he sent no answer, but applied to God: *and turn their reproach upon their own head:* as they have despised and reproached us, let them be despised and reproached by their neighbours: *give them for a prey in the land of captivity:* let them be carried captive, as we have been, and become a prey and booty to their enemies.

Ver. 5. *And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee,* &c.] Let it not go unpunished, and even let it not be pardoned; which is spoken, not from a private spirit of revenge, but from a public spirit for the glory of God, and his justice; and not as a mere imprecation, but as a prophecy of what would be the case, in like manner as many of David's petitions in the Psalms; and for this there was a good foundation, since God had threatened the Moabites and Ammonties with utter destruction: *for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders;* by despising his people, and mocking at the work the Lord had called them to; and this they did publicly, and on purpose to discourage the workmen.

Ver. 6. *So built we the wall,* &c.] Went on in building it, notwithstanding their scoffs and threats: *and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof:* it was carried all round the city to half the height of it: *for the people had a mind to work:* their heart was in it, they had a good will to it, and they made haste to finish it.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians,* &c.] Who were under and influenced by Geshem the Arabian: *and the Ammonites:* over whom Tobiah was governor: *and the Ashdodites:* who were of Ashdod or Azotus, one of the principalities of the Philistines, who were always enemies to the Jews: *heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up;* or *the length* of them *went up*[d]; that is, the height of them; that they rose up high apace, and were got up to, or almost to their proper height: *and that the breaches began to be stopped:* for the walls were not all thrown down by the Chaldeans, but breaches made here and there, which were now repaired: *then they were very wroth:* and could not avoid shewing it: before they mocked them, as attempting what they could not go through with; but now, perceiving the work went on with great success, they were enraged.

Ver. 8. *And conspired all of them together,* &c.] All the above men and people entered into a confederacy and combination: *to come and to fight against Jerusalem:* to bring an army with them, and by force cause the Jews to desist; the Jews[e] pretend they came to war, and brought with them an army of 180,000 men, which is not probable: *and to hinder it:* the building of the walls of it; or *to make a wandering for him*[f]; for Nehemiah, or the people, or both, to cause them to stray from their work, to fright them from it, that they might become like men at their wits end, not knowing what to do, where to turn themselves, or

[d] עלתה ארוכה ascendisset longitudo, Montanus; so Cocceius in rad. ארך.

[e] Pirke Eliezer, c. 38.

[f] לעשות לו תועה ad faciendum ei errorem, Montanus; ei aberrationem, Genevenses; vagationem & palationem, alii apud De Dieu.

what course to steer, but to wander about as persons out of their senses; so Aben Ezra. De Dieu joins this clause to the next verse, to cause every one of them to wander, we prayed, &c.

Ver. 9. *Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto our God*, &c.] Spread their case before him in prayer, entreating direction and help from him: *and set a watch against them day and night, because of them*: to give notice of their approach, that they might prepare to defend themselves; though they prayed to God, and trusted in him for deliverance, they did not neglect the use of means.

Ver. 10. *And Judah said*, &c.] Several of the men of Judah: *the strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed*: through much labour, in carrying heavy loads of stone and timber to the builders, and yet more through fear of the enemy: *and there is much rubbish*: which ought to be removed, but that the labourers were so weak that they could not do it: *so that we are not able to build the wall*: to finish it before the enemy comes to attack us.

Ver. 11. *And our adversaries said, they shall not know*, &c.] Our designs upon them: *neither see*; or perceive what we are about to do: *till we come in the midst of them*: with an army suddenly, at an unawares, and unexpected: *and slay them*: they being unarmed, and not prepared to defend themselves: *and cause the work to cease*: as it must in course, the builders being slain.

Ver. 12. *And it came to pass, when the Jews that dwelt by them*, &c.] Near Samaria, Arabia, and Ashdod, and had intelligence of their designs: *came, they said to us ten times*: that is, they came to them at Jerusalem, and often told them, as this phrase *ten times* signifies, see Gen. xxxi. 7. *from all places whence ye shall return unto us*: they will be upon you, come which way you will, so that ye are in the utmost danger: or *from all places*; where you are repairing and rebuilding: *return to us*; that ye may enjoy peace and prosperity with us under Sanballat, &c. and escape the wrath and fury you are now exposed to; or *from all places* we come, *that ye may return to us*: so De Dieu; these Jews, though they pretended to be friends to their brethren, yet seemed to be in friendship with their enemies, and sought to discourage them, and weaken their minds, and cause them to cease building.

Ver. 13. *Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall*, &c.] Where the wall was lowest, and the enemy could more easily break it down, or get over it: *and on the higher places*: where the wall was higher; or rather on the towers upon the walls, as the word signifies the tops of rocks, which are dry and smooth, see Ezek. xxiv. 2, 8. *I even set the people after their families*: according to their rank, number, strength, and valour: *with their swords, their spears, and their bows*: with weapons they could use both near, and at a distance.

Ver. 14. *And I looked*, &c.] Took a view of the people, and observed that they were in their proper place, and sufficiently armed, and also whether the enemy was coming: *and rose up and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people*; who were under their nobles and rulers, as their captains and commanders: *be not ye afraid of them*: of their enemies, their numbers, and their threats: *remember the Lord, which is great and terrible*; who is greater than they, and is to be feared and trusted in by his people, and is terrible even to the kings of the earth: *and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses*; intimating, that they were in danger of losing all that was near and dear, valuable and precious to them, if they did not fight for them; and therefore it became them to quit themselves like men, and be strong.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, when our enemies heard it was known unto us*, &c.] What they intended, as might be reported to them from the preparations made by the Jews to receive them, and defend themselves: *and God had brought their counsel to nought*: which was to come upon them secretly and unawares; but being discovered, they dropped their design, and their scheme came to nothing: *so that we returned all of us to the wall, every man to his work*: to that part of it where he wrought, in order to finish it.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass from that time forth*, &c.] That they were thus alarmed of danger from their enemies: *that the half of my servants wrought in the work*; of building the wall; his domestic servants, his guards, or mighty men, as Jarchi, men of war, the soldiers: *and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows*; some offensive, others defensive weapons; some to fight with at a distance, others near at hand: *and the habergeons*; coats of mail, which they took and clothed themselves with: *and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah*; the Jews that were working at the wall, to animate and encourage them, protect and defend them.

Ver. 17. *They which builded on the wall*, &c.] That laid the mortar and stones upon it, and timber where it was necessary: *and they that bore burdens*: that carried the mortar, stones, and timber to the builders, and served them: *with those that laded*; which prepared the above for them, and laid them on their shoulders: every one *with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other* hand *held a weapon*; which is not to be understood strictly and literally, for without both hands they could not well perform either of the above works; but proverbially, signifying that they were intent on both working and fighting, and were ready and prepared to do the latter, as well as the former, having weapons lying by them, or girt about them, as is explained in the following verse.

Ver. 18. *For the builders had every one his sword girded by his side, and so builded*, &c.] Thus accoutred he wrought, and was prepared for either service: *and he that sounded the trumpet* was *by me*; to give the alarm of war, that every one might lay aside his work, and prepare for the battle: this officer stood by Nehemiah, that when he found it necessary, might give him orders to sound his trumpet, for the men to gather to him.

Ver. 19. *And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people*, &c.] See the note on ver. 14. *the work is great and large*; the building of the wall all around the city of Jerusalem: *and we are separated upon the wall one far from another*; some at work on one part of it, and some at another, so that the distance between one another, at least in the further part, was very considerable.

Ver. 20. *In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet*, &c.] Be it what part of the wall soever

they were at work, even the most distant: *resort ye thither to us;* to Nehemiah, and the half of his servants armed, where the trumpet was blown; that was to be the place of rendezvous: *our God shall fight for us:* and give us victory over our enemies; none have any reason to be intimidated, when they shall hear the sound of the trumpet.

Ver. 21. *So we laboured in the work,* &c.] Of building the wall: *and half of them held the spears;* and other weapons before mentioned, ver. 16. *from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared;* that is, from morning to evening, the space of time the builders and labourers worked.

Ver. 22. *Likewise at the same time said I unto the people,* &c.] That were at work upon the wall: *let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem;* every builder had a servant, or a lad, as the word signifies, to wait upon him, to bring mortar or stone, or what he wanted; and some of these builders, with their lads, came out of the country-towns and villages in the morning, and returned at night; now Nehemiah proposed, for the safety of the city and its walls, that for the present they would lodge in Jerusalem: *that in the night they may be a guard unto us, and labour on the day;* might help to protect them in the night, should they be surprised with the enemy, and be ready for their work in the day-time.

Ver. 23. *So neither I, nor my brethren,* &c.] The nobles and rulers: *nor my servants;* his domestic servants that waited upon him: *nor the men of the guard which followed me;* his body-guard, which attended him as a commissioner of the king of Persia for state and grandeur: *none of us put off our clothes;* at night when they laid themselves down to sleep, but laid in them, that they might be ready upon an alarm made: saving that *every one put them off for washing;* not for common washing, because dirty, but for washing on account of ceremonial uncleanness, which required washing both of bodies and garments, see Lev. xv. 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, &c. and the Vulgate Latin version expresses it by baptism, as the apostle calls such ceremonial ablutions in Heb. vi. 2. and ix. 10. It is in the margin of our Bibles, *every one* went *with his weapon* for *water;* when he went to Siloam, or any other place, for water, he took a weapon with him to defend himself upon occasion; which is no bad sense of the words. Noldius[s] renders the words, *every one with his weapon* (and) *water;* both were at his bolster, ready, if wanted, see 1 Sam. xxvi. 11, 12.

CHAP. V.

IN this chapter is a complaint of the poor against the rich for oppression of them, ver. 1—5. for which Nehemiah being angry, reproved them, and made them promise, and swear to it, to make restitution, ver. 6—13. and set them an example himself, taking nothing of them during his 12-years' government, supporting himself and his at his own expenses, ver. 14—19.

Ver. 1. *And there was a great cry of the people, and of their wives,* &c.] Those of the poorer sort: *against their brethren the Jews;* the rich that oppressed them; and this cry or complaint was made to Nehemiah for redress.

Ver. 2. *For there were that said, we, our sons, and our daughters,* are *many,* &c.] Not that they complained of the number of their children, for a numerous offspring was always reckoned a blessing with the Jews; but this they observed to shew that their families, being large, required a considerable quantity of food to support them: *therefore we take up corn* for them, *that we may eat and live;* that is, they were obliged to take it at an exorbitant price, which is the thing complained of: or otherwise they must starve, the rich taking the advantage of their poverty and present dearth.

Ver. 3. *Some also there were that said, we have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses,* &c.] Made them over to others, put them into their hands as pledges for money received of them: *that we may buy corn;* for the support of their families: *because of the dearth;* or famine, which might be occasioned by their enemies lying in wait and intercepting all provisions that might be brought to them; for this seems not to be the famine spoken of in Hagg. i. 10, 11. for that was some years before this, and for a reason which now was not.

Ver. 4. *There were also that said,* &c.] Who though they were able to buy corn for their families without mortgaging their estates: yet, say they, *we have borrowed money for the king's tribute,* and that upon *our lands and vineyards;* for though the priests, Levites, and Nethinim, were exempted from it, yet not the people in common; and some of these were so poor, that they could not pay it without borrowing upon their estates, and giving large usury for it, see Ezra vi. 8. and vii. 24.

Ver. 5. *Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren,* &c.] We are of the same nature, nation, stock, and religion: *our children as their children;* are circumcised as they, and have a right to the same privileges in church and state: *and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and daughters to be servants;* shall be obliged to it, unless relieved: *and some of our daughters are brought into bondage* already; sold to be servants, as they might in case of the poverty of parents, Exod. xxi. 7, and some were sometimes taken to be bondmen in payment of their parents' debts, 2 Kings iv. 1. *neither is it in our power* to redeem them, *for other men have our lands and vineyards;* as pledges for money borrowed.

Ver. 6. *And I was very angry when I heard their cry, and these words.*] Their complaint expressed in this manner; it not only raised pity and compassion in his breast towards these poor distressed people, but indignation at the rich that oppressed them.

Ver. 7. *Then I consulted with myself,* &c.] What was to be done, what method to be taken to redress

[s] Ebr. Concord. Partic. p. 322.

such grievances: *and I rebuked the nobles and the rulers;* who were the men that monopolized the corn in this dear season, and sold it at an extravagant price, and had got the lands, vineyards, and houses of the poor mortgaged to them, and to whom they had lent money on usury: *and said unto them, you exact usury every one of his brother;* which was contrary to the express law of God, Exod. xxii. 25. and which even the Indians[h] strictly observed, who neither let out money, nor took any upon usury: *and I set a great assembly against them;* either of the poor that were oppressed, who brought in their accusations and complaints against them, or a large body of the people, who were not guilty, to hear them, that the delinquents might be put to public shame; or he called a large court of judicature, and set them to examine these allegations, and to do justice.

Ver. 8. *And I said unto them,* &c.] The nobles, and rulers, and other rich persons that exacted usury of the poor: *we after our ability;* speaking of himself in the plural number, which now obtained in the court of Persia; or of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and others, who, according as their worldly circumstances, having been captives, would admit of: *have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the Heathen;* not that they had given a ransom for them to Cyrus, or any other king of Persia, which would be contrary to the prophecies concerning their redemption, Isa. xlv. 13. and lii. 3. but such who had sold themselves to particular persons in Babylon, who, without being redeemed, could not take the advantage of the liberty granted by Cyrus, and his successors; and it may be there were others also in the like circumstances, in other neighbouring nations, that had been redeemed this way. The Jewish canon[i] now is, he that sells himself, and his children, to Gentiles, they don't redeem; but they redeem the children after their father's death; which the commentators[k] explain of the third time that he sells himself: *and will you even sell your brethren?* their lands and vineyards mortgaged to them, and even their persons: *or shall they be sold unto us?* must we be obliged to buy them, and to redeem them: *then they held their peace, and found nothing* to answer; being convinced they had done wrong, by the arguments used, to which they could make no reply.

Ver. 9. *Also I said, it is not good that ye do,* &c.] The meaning is, that it was very bad; it is a *meiosis,* by which more is intended than is expressed: *ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God,* in reverence of him and his law, and according to that: *because of the reproach of the Heathen our enemies?* whose mouths will be open to reproach the true religion, and the good ways of God; and say, these are the men that pretend to fear God, and serve him, and yet break his law, and use their brethren ill, see Rom. ii. 24.

Ver. 10. *I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn,* &c.] For our maintenance, in consideration of the services done by us, which would appear but reasonable, but this we decline for the sake of easing our poor brethren: *I pray you let us leave off this usury;* and not exact it, as has been too much and too long used.

Ver. 11. *Restore, I pray you, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses,* &c.] Which they had made over to them for corn they had had, or money they borrowed of them; it is entreated that an immediate restitution be made, and the rather, if what Aben Ezra observes is true, that this was the year of release, when debts were not to be exacted, but forgiven, Deut. xv. 1, 2, 3. *also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them;* the hundredth part of the money might be what they took for usury, as the Romans did in after-times, even so much a month; so that if the loan was 100 pounds, a pound was given every month for it, and so 12 pounds in the year; and the hundredth part of the corn, wine, and oil, might be the hundredth part of those fruits of the earth, which the rulers demanded for their salary, see ver. 15.

Ver. 12. *Then said they, we will restore* them, &c.] The lands, vineyards, oliveyards, and houses: *and will require nothing of them;* not the hundredth part of the fruits of the earth by way of salary: *so will we do as thou sayest;* they approved of his proposal, and readily agreed to it: *then I called the priests, and took an oath of them that they should do according to this promise;* not that the priests were delinquents, they were not charged with any thing of this kind, nor were they the men that promised restitution; but the priests were called to administer the oath to the nobles, and rulers, and rich men, to oblige them the more to keep their word; an oath being sacred, priests in an holy office were made use of to give it, that it might be the more solemn, and the more strictly regarded.

Ver. 13. *Also I shook my lap,* &c.] The fore skirts of his garment, shaking the dust out of them, as a symbol of what follows; a like rite was used in the case of peace and war, the choice of either, by the Romans, as proposed by their ambassadors to the Carthaginians, as having either in their bosom to shake out[l]: *and said, so God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour;* what he has got by his labour: *that performeth not his promise;* confirmed by an oath: *even thus be he shaken out, and emptied;* of all that he has in the world, and out of the world too, as Jarchi adds: *and all the congregation said, Amen;* so let it be, even those that had taken pledges and usury, as well as others: *and praised the Lord;* that had given them such a governor to direct, advise, and exhort them to their duty, and had inclined their hearts to attend thereunto: *and the people did according to this promise;* they punctually kept it, and the oath they had sworn.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah,* &c.] That is, by the king of Persia, which was not done when he was first sent into Judea; but very probably when he had finished the wall in 52 days, he returned to Persia, and gave the king an account of his success, and how things stood in those parts, when he judged it neces-

[h] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 4. c. 1.
[i] Misn. Gittin, c. 4. sect. 9.
[k] Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.
[l] Florus, l. 2. c. 6. Liv. l. 21. c. 18.

sary to send him again in the character of a governor, and which was still within the same year, as follows: *from the 20th year, even unto the 32d year of Artaxerxes*, that is, 12 *years*; see ch. xiii. 6. *I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor*: which was fit and proper for him, and used to be given him; neither he, nor those that assisted him in the government, the principal men he brought along with him, and put into posts and places under him.

Ver. 15. *But the former governors, that* had been *before me, were chargeable to the people*, &c.] Between him and Zerubbabel, for Ezra was no governor; according to the Jewish chronology [m], when Ezra came to Jerusalem, Zerubbabel returned to Babylon, and there died, and his son Methullam was in his stead, and after him succeeded Hananiah his son: *and had taken of them bread and wine, besides* 40 *shekels of silver*; which amounted to between four and five pounds, and this they had every day: *yea, even their servants bare rule over the people*; required a salary, or at least perquisites of them, which the governors connived at: *but so did not I, because of the fear of God*: neither took any thing himself of the people, nor suffered his servants; because the fear of God was upon his heart, and before his eyes, and therefore could not allow himself to oppress the poor.

Ver. 16. *Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall*, &c.] Of building the wall of Jerusalem; here he gave his constant attendance to direct and encourage the workmen, and see that they kept to their work, and did it well: *neither bought we any land*: neither he nor the principal men with him, though they could have bought it cheap, but they chose not to take the advantage of the poverty of the people: *and all my servants* were *gathered thither unto the work*: all were employed in it, taking no wages for their work, being maintained at his expense.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, there were at my table* 150 *of the Jews and rulers*, &c.] Every day at his own cost, which must be considerable to provide for such a number, and of such rank: *besides those that came unto us from among the Heathen that are about us*; who were proselytes, and came thither to worship, or on a civil account, to give intelligence, and take directions.

Ver. 18. *Now that which was prepared* for me *daily was one ox and six choice sheep*, &c.] Or fat ones; of beef and mutton a considerable quantity, abundantly sufficient for his guests and servants, and shews what a good table he kept: *also fowls were prepared for me*; what number is not said: *and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine*; the country afforded; that is, either once in ten days his stock of wine was renewed, or a more liberal entertainment was made, a banquet of wine, Esth. v. 6. *yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor*; the salary that used to be given him, but did this at his own expense, out of his own estate in Judea; or what he had got by his office as cupbearer to the king of Persia, the salary of which perhaps was continued: *because the bondage was heavy upon the people*; the tribute of the king of Persia, and their labour and expense in building the walls of the city.

Ver. 19. *Think upon me, my God, for good*, according *to all that I have done for this people*.] He expected not any recompense from the people, but from the Lord; and from him not in a way of merit, but of grace and good will, who forgets not what is done for his name's sake, Heb. vi. 10.

CHAP. VI.

SANBALLAT and his brethren, hearing the wall was finished, sent to Nehemiah, to have a meeting with him at a place named, which he refused, ver. 1, 2. then they sent him a terrifying letter, suggesting that he, and the Jews with him, would be treated as rebels, since their intention, as reported, was to make him king, which letter he regarded not, ver. 3—9. then they employed some that pretended to be prophets to advise him to flee to the temple for safety, which he rejected, ver. 10—14. and so the work went on and was finished, though there was a secret correspondence carried on between their enemies and some false brethren among themselves, ver. 15—19.

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass, when Sanballat and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall*, &c.] Quite finished it: *and that there was no breach left therein*: but all was made up firm and strong: *though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates*; not upon all of them, though some might by the particular builders of them; and they all of them might be ready made, though not as yet put upon the hinges.

Ver. 2. *Then Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me*, &c.] Messengers: *saying, come, let us meet together in* some one of *the villages*; in Cephirim, which Jarchi takes to be the name of a place, perhaps the same with Cephirah, a city in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 26. *in the plain of Ono*; which was in the same tribe, see 1 Chron. viii. 12. they might pretend a friendly meeting, to accommodate differences between them, or to converse together about the general interest of the king of Persia in those parts: *but they thought to do me mischief*; to kill him, or at least to confine him; this he either conjectured from their general character and behaviour, or he had intelligence of their design.

Ver. 3. *And I sent messengers unto them*, &c.] He did not shew any open contempt of them, nor did he even return answer by the messenger that came from them, but sent some of his own people to them: *saying, I* am *doing a great work*; was about an affair of great importance, very busy, and not at leisure to give them a meeting: *so that I cannot come down*; Jerusalem being built on an eminence, and the place proposed to meet at in a plain, going thither is expressed

[m] Seder Olam Zuta, p. 108, 109.

by coming down: *why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?* signifying that it would cease if he left it; and it being of greater consequence than any thing they could have to converse about, he argues it would be wrong to relinquish it on such an account; this was the reason he thought fit to give, but was not the only, nor the principal reason, which is suggested in the preceding verse.

Ver. 4. *Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort*, &c.] Being very desirous of getting him into their hands, and therefore were very pressing and importunate: *and I answered them after the same manner;* every time as before, he being as much bent on finishing the work as they were to divert him from it.

Ver. 5. *Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the 5th time*, &c.] In his own name, neither Tobiah nor Geshem joining with him, he being more solicitous and anxious to get him into his hands than any of them; and it may be, as some think, pretending more friendship for him than the rest, and therefore writes alone, as if they knew nothing of his writing: *with an open letter in his hand:* which having in it an intimation of Nehemiah being guilty of treason, any one that would might read it, and so spread the defamation.

Ver. 6. *Wherein* was *written, it is reported among the Heathen*, &c.] Among the several neighbouring nations; it was an affair that was not whispered about among a few only; it was common talk, it was in every body's mouth in divers nations: *and Gashmu saith it;* the same with Geshem the Arabian; he affirms it, and will abide by his assertion, and engages to make good what he says; he mentions him by name, who he knew would not be offended with him for making use of it, and who doubtless agreed that he should; that Nehemiah might not think this was the talk of some of the lower rank of the people, but even was averred by no less than the king's governor in Arabia: *that thou and the Jews think to rebel;* that they had formed a scheme, and were taking measures to raise a rebellion against the king of Persia, and revolt from him: *for which cause thou buildest the wall;* the wall of Jerusalem, for their security against any force that might be sent to quell them: *that thou mayest be their king, according to these words;* written in this epistle, and reported among the Heathens.

Ver. 7. *And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem*, &c.] This he said to cover what he and Tobiah had been doing, tampering with, corrupting, and hiring the prophets to discourage him, and put him upon methods, whereby the work would cease: *saying*, there is *a king in Judah;* besides Artaxerxes, whose yoke they were casting off, having got a king of their own, and among them: *and now shall it be reported to the king, according to these words;* such a report as this, and in those very words, will soon reach the ears of the king of Persia: *come now, therefore, and let us take counsel together;* contrive the best method to put a stop to this report, if a false one, and to wipe off the reproach that is upon thee, and may affect us; and thus partly terrifying him, and partly pretending friendship to him, hoped to get him into his hands.

Ver. 8. *Then I sent unto him*, &c.] Whether a letter, or a messenger, is not said: *saying, there are no such things done as thou sayest;* that there was any scheme formed to rebel, and make him king, or that prophets were appointed to declare him such: *but thou feignest them out of thine own heart;* in short, that they were no other than lies of his own inventing.

Ver. 9. *For they all made us afraid*, &c.] Or you all, as Aben Ezra interprets it; or all the Heathen nations, as Jarchi; this was the design of all those scandalous reports, to intimidate them, and with this they pleased themselves, as follows: *their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done;* this they hoped would be the effect of those reports sent to them: *now, therefore, O God, strengthen my hands;* and let them not have what they will, and hope for; according to Aben Ezra, these words are directed to Sanballat, that if he was a friend, as he pretended, that instead of weakening, he would strengthen his hands by a sincere reconciliation; so Vatablus; but they are an address to God, such short ejaculations being usual with Nehemiah.

Ver. 10. *Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up*, &c.] Either in his own house, or in a chamber in the temple, as if he had given himself up to meditation, fasting, and prayer; or, as he might suggest to Nehemiah, for his safety, and so designed it as an example to him; this man might be a priest of the course of Delaiah, 1 Chron. xxiv. 18. or however he was a person Nehemiah had a good opinion of, and came to him on the letters sent to him by his enemies, to consult with him, and the rest, since they had suggested that he had appointed prophets to speak of him as a king: *and he said let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple;* this looks as if he was in his own house, or if in a chamber of the temple, that he thought that was not secret and safe enough, and therefore proposed going within the temple, into the holy place, where none but priests might go: *for they will come to slay thee;* meaning his enemies, Sanballat and his companions: *yea, in the night they will come to slay thee;* that very night, and therefore no time should be lost in providing for his safety.

Ver. 11. *And I said, should such a man as I flee?* &c.] The king's commissioner, who had the conducting and management of the whole affair of building the wall of Jerusalem, on whom it wholly depended; for, should he absent himself, the people would depart and leave their work, and the city and wall be left defenceless, which was what was hoped for from this scheme; and who had expressed such confidence in God, and had had such success: *and who* is there, *that*, being *as I* am; in such a post, and in such circumstances, and on whom so much depended: *would go into the temple to save his life?* or where there was little reason to believe it would be preserved long, should he take such a step as that: *I will not go in:* as being neither lawful, nor honourable, nor safe.

Ver. 12. *And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him*, &c.] Because he advised to that which was against the cause of God and true religion: *but that he pronounced the prophecy against me;* for by fleeing, as he advised, it would seem that he was guilty of the

crimes of rebellion and treason he was charged with: and leaving the people, as they would in course break up, he himself could not be long in safety, no, not in the temple: *for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him*: this he found out afterwards, on purpose to intimidate him, and take such measures as that thereby he would lose his character and his influence.

Ver. 13. *Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin*, &c.] By distrusting the power and providence of God to protect him, and by going into such a part of the temple, which he, being no priest, had no right to go into: *and that they might have* matter *for an evil report, that they might reproach me*: as a rebel and traitor against the king, which had been reported of him, and which would be strengthened by such a step.

Ver. 14. *My God, think thou on Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works*, &c.] Their wicked counsels and schemes, and not only confound and disappoint them, but reward them as they deserve: *and on the prophetess Noadiah*; whom Aben Ezra takes to be the same with Shemaiah, because he said, נועד, *let us meet*, &c. ver. 10. but no doubt it is the name of a woman, a false prophetess, and was hired, and in the same scheme with Shemaiah: *and the rest of the prophets that would have put me in fear*; and so put him on leaving the people, and the work he was engaged in, and flee for his safety; it seems there were more than are by name mentioned, who sought to discourage and intimidate him.

Ver. 15. *So the wall was finished in the 25th* day *of the month Elul*, &c.] The sixth month, answering to part of August and part of September: *in 52 days*: which Aben Ezra reckons from the time that Sanballat sent his letter to Nehemiah, when no more were wanting than to set the doors upon the gates, ver. 1. but rather these, with Jarchi, must be reckoned from the time the building was begun: which, reckoning back from the 25th of Elul, it will appear it was begun the third day of the fifth month Ab; nor need this be thought incredible, considering the number of workmen, their ardour and diligence in building, and that the walls were not wholly built all around, only repaired, and breaches made up, and much of the old materials were made use of, which were at hand, and stone unhewed, and especially being attended with the blessing of God, which succeeded the undertaking: nor are there wanting examples similar to this; and as it is observed by many from Curtius [x], the walls of new Alexandria, which were sixty furlongs in length, or more than seven miles, were finished in 17 days; if Nicephorus [y] is to be credited, the high walls which surrounded Constantinople, and were twenty miles in circumference, were finished in two months time. Josephus is not to be regarded, who, contrary to the Scriptures says [z], this wall of Jerusalem was two years and four months in building.

Ver. 16. *And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof*, &c.] That the wall was finished: *and all the Heathen that* were *about us saw these things*; the neighbouring nations, who not only heard with their ears, but saw with their eyes what was done: *they were much cast down in their own eyes*; through shame and confusion, because of their own scoffs and jeers; through grief and vexation at the unexpected success of the Jews, and through the fear of them that was fallen upon them, as Jarchi notes: *for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God*; his special providence and blessing attending it, as appeared by its being so soon effected.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, in those days*, &c.] While the wall was building: *the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and* the letters *of Tobiah came unto them*; letters passed between them frequently, they informing him how things went on at Jerusalem, and he advising them to what was detrimental to the true interest of their nation; such false friends had Nehemiah about him, and yet the work succeeded under him; which shewed it the more to be of God.

Ver. 18. *For* there were *many in Judah sworn unto him*, &c.] To Tobiah, who not only in a private manner corresponded with him by letters, but bound themselves by an oath to him to be true to his interest, and do as he should advise them: *because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah, the son of Arah*; of a family that came up with Zerubbabel from the captivity, Ezra ii. 5. and very probably of considerable note: *and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah*; a very eminent person, concerned in building the wall, ch. iii. 4, 30.

Ver. 19. *Also they reported his good deeds before me*, &c.] Recommended him as a very worthy man, deserving of respect and notice by Nehemiah, and to be taken into his friendship, and admitted to conversation with him, whose counsel and advice might be of service: *and uttered my words to him*; reported both what he said and did; for the word used signifies both words and actions: *and Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear*: perceiving, by the intelligence of his friends, that Nehemiah would have nothing to say to him, nor to do with him, he threatened him.

CHAP. VII.

NEHEMIAH having built the wall, and set up the doors, appointed two persons to take the charge of the city, and set watches for the safety of it, and to take special care about opening and shutting the gates of it, ver. 1, 2, 3. and concerned he was for the peopling of it, and having found a register of the first comers to it, gives their names, ver. 4—69. and some account of the free-will offerings made for the work they came about, ver. 70—73.

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors*, &c.] Which was not done when Sanballat sent his first letter, but now was, ch.

[x] Hist. l. 7. c. 6. Justin e Trogo, l. 12. c. 5.
[y] Hist. l. 14. c. 1.

[z] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 5. sect. 8.

vi. 1. *and the porters and the singers, and the Levites were appointed*: not to attend the doors of the gates of the wall, but to return to their service in the temple, who had been employed in one thing or another, whilst the wall and gates were building and repairing; see ch. iii. 17.

Ver. 2. *That I gave my brother Hanani*, &c.] Who first brought him the melancholy account of the state of Jerusalem, ch. 1, 2. *and Hananiah the ruler of the palace*: the king's palace, in which the viceroy of the king of Persia dwelt, and now Nehemiah; to these two men he gave *charge over Jerusalem*: committed it to their care during his absence, who may be supposed now to return to Persia, as he had promised, ch. ii. 6. *for he was a faithful man*; this is said of Hananiah, and given as a reason why such a trust was committed to him; Hanani's character was well known, and his journey from Jerusalem to Shushan was a full proof of his hearty concern for the interest of it: *and feared God above many*: Hananiah was exemplary in his fear of God, few were equal to him, and none exceeded him; or of many days, as Jarchi; of a long time he had feared the Lord, and served him many years.

Ver. 3. *And I said unto them, let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot*, &c.] Or until the heat of the day, or near noon; at least not till the sun had been up some time, and shone out clearly, and caused much heat; that if any enemies were near, or lying in wait, they might be discovered, and the inhabitants also up and ready to defend themselves: *and while they stand by*; according to Aben Ezra, Hanani and Hananiah were to be present at the opening and shutting of the gates, and so Grotius; but these being the chief rulers, it is not likely; but rather those whom they appointed to look after them, these were to stand by whilst their servants did it; they were not to leave it wholly to them, but to see it done themselves: *let them shut the doors, and bar them*; or *lay hold*[a] on them, handle them to see whether they are shut fast or no: *and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over-against his house*: no foreigners were to be of the watch, only inhabitants, and those every one in their turn, and to be placed over-against where they dwelt; and so it might be thought would be the more careful and diligent in their watch.

Ver. 4. *Now the city was large and great*, &c.] The circumference of it, all within the wall; for that was built on its old foundation, and enclosed as much ground as ever it did: Hecatæus [b], an Heathen writer, says the circumference of Jerusalem was fifty furlongs, which was more than six miles; but Josephus [c] makes the circuit of it but 33 furlongs: *but the people were few therein*; in comparison of the largeness of the place; for though there were 42,360 that came up at first with Zerubbabel, and many more with Ezra, yet a great number chose to settle in the towns and cities in the country, Jerusalem being in such a desolate condition: *and the houses were not builded*; some were, but they were but few, many of them still lay in ruins.

Ver. 5. *And my God put into mine heart*, &c.] Every good motion in him, and whatever he thought of that was conducive to the good and welfare of Jerusalem, Nehemiah always ascribed it to God; see 2 Cor. iii. 5. *to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy*: that their number might be known, and of what families they were, and in what cities they formerly dwelt; and this was not only of use for the present purpose of Nehemiah, but was of service hereafter to shew the pedigree of families, and that it might be clearly known from whence the Messiah sprung: *and I found a register of the genealogy of them which came up at the first*; from Babylon to Jerusalem, along with Zerubbabel, as appears from ver. 7. and this was of great use to him, whereby he would know not only their names and number, but to what city they belonged, and who to the city of Jerusalem, that they might be called upon to come, and rebuild their houses, and take up their residence there: *and found written therein*; the names of the persons and families after mentioned.

Ver. 6. *These are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity*, &c.] Who were of the province of Judea, as it was now reduced, and came up out of the captivity of Babylon through the edict of Cyrus; see Ezra ii. 1. where the same preface is given to the list of names as here; and from hence to the end of ver. 69 the same account is given of persons and families as there, with some little difference of numbers and names; in some instances there are more in this list, in others fewer, which may be thus accounted for; that list was made in Babylon, when, upon the edict of Cyrus, the Jews, who intended to go up with Zerubbabel, gave in their names, and they were registered; but this was made when they came to Jerusalem; now some of those that gave in their names changed their minds, and tarried in Babylon, and some might die by the way, which makes the numbers fewer in some instances; and others who did not give in their names at first, but, being better disposed towards their own country, followed after and joined those which were returning, and increased the number of others; to which may be added what Abendana observes, that in Ezra an account is given of those that came out of the captivity by the companies, in which they came not genealogized, and had a mixture of persons of other families in them, and some that had no genealogy; but afterwards, when they were genealogized according to their families, a register of their genealogies was made, and is what Nehemiah now found, and here gives; and, as for difference of names, that may be owing to the carelessness of copiers, or to the different pronunciation of names, or some men might have two names; the matter is of no great moment.

Ver. 70. *And some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work*, &c.] Of building the city and the temple, and for that service, Ezra ii. 68. *the Tirshatha gave to the treasure* 1,000 *drachms of gold*; each of which was one pound sterling, and so amounted to so many pounds: of these *dracmons, or darics*, a Persian coin, mention is made in Ezra ii. 69. they were golden staters,

[a] ואחזו & tractate, Junius & Tremellius; contrectate eas, Piscator.
[b] Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 4. p. 408. & apud Joseph. contr. Apion, l. 1. c. 22.
[c] De Bell. Jud. l. 5. c. 4. sect. 3.

or shekels, and had their name, as is said, not from Darius, the father of Xerxes, though it is certain, from Herodotus [d], that he coined golden money; but from some other king of the same name, more ancient [e], which must be Darius the Mede; and if they are the same with the Adarcon in Ezra viii. 27. as they seem to be, then those in 1 Chron. xxix. 7. were pieces of money not so called in the times of David, but of Ezra, the writer of that book: whether this Tirshatha was Zerubbabel, or Nehemiah, is not easy to say, since this donation is not the same with that in Ezra, not made at the same time, nor are the gifts the same, nor the persons that gave them. Zerubbabel was Tirshatha when the Jews came out of Babylon, and Nehemiah now: *fifty basins;* which were vessels, in the which the blood of the sacrifices was received, and out of which it was sprinkled: 530 *priests' garments;* which were laid up in the wardrobe, and used on occasion.

Ver. 71. *And some of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work,* &c.] To be put into the treasure, out of which the expenses of the temple, and service of it were defrayed: 20,000 *drachms of gold;* which were so many pounds of our money, and somewhat more: for, according to Bishop Cumberland [f], a drachm of gold was of the value of 20 shillings and fourpence: *and 2,200 pounds of silver;* the *maneh,* or pound, with the Jews, was of the value of 60 shekels, Ezek. xiv. 12. and so is reckoned by our Brerewood [g] to be of our money seven pounds and ten shillings; he reckoning a shekel at half a crown, whereas it was little more than two shillings and four-pence; and so sixty of them, or a *maneh,* came to about seven pounds; wherefore this sum here was seven times so many pounds of silver.

Ver. 72. *And that which the rest of the people gave* was 20,000 *drachms of gold,* &c.] Worth as many pounds of our money, and somewhat more: *and 2,000 pound of silver;* of which see the preceding note: *and 67 priests' garments;* having been so long in Babylon, and no use of sacrifices, and so not of garments to minister in, no care was taken to provide any: which seems to be the reason why so many were given, when they returned to their own land, and sacrificed.

Ver. 73. *So the priests and the Levites, and the porters, and the singers, and some of the people, and the Nethinim, and all Israel, dwelt in their cities,* &c.] The same is said in Ezra ii. 70. see the note there: *and, when the seventh month came, the children of Israel were in their cities;* the month Tisri, answering to part of September, in which month was the feast of tabernacles; at this time of the year they were in their cities when they came forth out of Babylon, and so they were now; see Ezra iii. 1.

CHAP. VIII.

EZRA being desired to bring forth the book of the law, read it to the people and others, expounded it to them, ver. 1—8. and Nehemiah exhorted the people to express joy and gladness on this occasion, which they did, ver. 9—12. and observing the feast of tabernacles was in the law commanded to be observed, they kept it very strictly and joyfully, ver. 13—18.

Ver. 1. *And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water-gate,* &c.] A large and commodious street for such a company of people, which led to the water-gate, of which see ch. iii. 26. hither the people gathered with great unanimity, zeal, and affection: *and they spoke unto Ezra the scribe;* the same who is called Ezra the priest, and scribe of the law of God, and said to be a ready one, Ezra vii. 6, 11, 12. who came to Jerusalem 13 years before this time; but very probably returned to Babylon again, and was lately come from thence: *to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel;* to observe what was commanded in it, and which he had ordered to be read, particularly every seventh year, at the feast of tabernacles, Deut. xxxi. 10, 11. which was now drawing near, though this was not the precise time of reading it; hence some have thought this year was the sabbatical year; see ch. v. 11.

Ver. 2. *And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation,* &c.] Having a perfect copy of it, which the people knew, and therefore desired him to bring it: he brought it either out of his own case or chest, or out of the temple where it was laid up; some restrain this to the book of Deuteronomy; this he produced in sight of the whole assembly: *both of men and women;* adult persons of each sex, who met promiscuously; though Grotius thinks the women had a separate place: *and all that could hear with understanding;* all under age, who yet were capable of hearing the law read to some advantage to them: *upon the first day of the seventh month;* the month Tisri, answering to part of September and October; this was a high day, for not only the first of every month was a festival, but the first of the seventh month was the feast of blowing of trumpets, Lev. xxiii. 24. and besides, this was New-year's day, the first day of their civil year, as the first of Nisan was of their ecclesiastical year, and was of greater antiquity than that; and so Jarchi says, this was the first day of the year; to which may be added, that this was the day on which the altar was first set up, on the Jews' return from captivity, Ezra iii. 6.

Ver. 3. *And he read therein,* &c.] Some passages in it, here and there, which it was necessary the people should have knowledge of; for it can hardly be thought he began and read on just in the order in which it was: this he did *before the street;* at the top of it, at one end

[d] Melpomene, sive, l. 4. c. 166.
[e] Scholiast. in Aristoph. Eccles. p. 741, 742. So Harpocration. Lexic. in voce Δαρεικος, and Suidas on the same word.

[f] Scripture Weights and Measures, ch. 4. p. 115.
[g] De Ponder. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 4.

of it: *that was before the water-gate;* which looked directly to that: *from the morning until mid-day;* from the rising of the sun to noon, so that he must read six hours; but very probably was relieved at times by the men with him, after mentioned: *before the men and the women, and those that could understand;* see ver. 2. *and the ears of all the people* were attentive *unto the book of the law;* to the hearing of it read, and to the things contained in it; hence Maimonides [h] gathers, that as soon as the reader begins the reading of the law, it is not lawful to speak about any thing, not even the constitutions of the law, but silently to attend to what is read.

Ver. 4. *And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose,* &c.] Or to speak out of, as the Syriac and Arabic versions; this, in the Hebrew text, is called a *tower* [i], partly because of its height, and partly because in the form of one; and also for its largeness, considering the use it was for; for it was so large as to hold fourteen men, as appears by what follows: a pulpit of wood was made for the king in the court, to read the law from [k]; though, according to Jacob Leo, it was a throne like an high tower, see the note on 2 Kings xi. 14. the pulpits, in the Jewish synagogues, made after the same manner, as Aben Ezra observes, are called by the same [l] name: *and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah; and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand: and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah,* and *Meshullam;* in all thirteen; there were six on his right, and seven on his left, who stood here, not merely in honour to him, and as approvers and supporters of the truth of what he read, but to relieve him when weary.

Ver. 5. *And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people),* &c.] So plainly seen by them, and what he did, and the more easily heard, for which purpose the pulpit was made for him to stand in: *and, when he opened it, all the people stood up;* that they might the better hear the law read, as well as in honour and reverence of it; the Jews say [m], that from the times of Moses to Rabban Gamaliel, they learned the law only standing; but after his death a disease came into the world, and they learned it sitting; and now it is a canon with them, that it is not necessary to stand at the reading of the law [n].

Ver. 6. *And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God,* &c.] Before he began to read in the book of the law, he addressed himself to God in a short prayer, wholly in the benedictory way; ascribing blessing, honour, and glory to him, celebrating his being and perfections, setting forth his greatness and his excellency, who was the author and giver of the law he was about to read; and this he the rather did, that what he read might be the more carefully attended to, and come with the greater authority, weight, and influence on those that heard it; and so, Maimonides [o] says, it is the custom with the Jews, in their synagogues, for the reader, after he has opened the book, and looked out the place he reads, to say this blessing, "Blessed art thou, "O Lord our God, King of the world, who hath "chosen us out of all people, and hath given us his "law; blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast given "us the law; and all the people answer, *Amen;*" as they now did, as follows: *and all the people answered, Amen, Amen:* repeating the word, to declare their hearty assent to what Ezra had expressed; the Jews have many rules concerning pronouncing the *Amen,* that it must not be too quick, curt, and short, nor with too high a voice [p]: *with lifting up their hands;* a prayer-gesture, to which the apostle refers, 1 Tim. ii. 8. *and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with* their *faces to the ground;* expressing hereby the awful sense they had of the Divine Being, and their profound adoration of him.

Ver. 7. *Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites,* &c.] That is, others of them besides those named; for they seem all to be Levites, unless they can be thought to be priests, and so the Levites are distinguished from them; but the former seems evident from ch. ix. 4, 5, 6. these also *caused the people to understand the law;* as well as Ezra; from whence it is plain that he did not only read the law, but gave the sense of it, especially where there was any seeming difficulty, and these men were assisting in the same work: *and the people* stood *in their place:* to hear the law read and explained; they did not move from their first station, but continued in it from morning to noon; they were both attentive and constant.

Ver. 8. *So they read in the book,* &c.] Ezra and those with him; he first began to read and expound, and when weary they relieved him, and did the same: *in the law of God distinctly;* which was the book they read in, and which they read plainly and intelligibly, so as to be heard and understood; this seems to respect the clear and distinct pronunciation of the words of it, and not the explanation or meaning of it, which is after expressed; some think the sense is, that they first read it in Hebrew, and then translated it into Chaldee, that the people might better understand it, being just come out of Babylon, where they had been used to the Chaldee language; but though this was a practice in after-times, it does not seem to have obtained so early, or that there was a necessity of it: *and gave the sense, and caused* them *to understand the reading;* not hereby how to read it, but chiefly to understand what was read, that they might clearly know their duty to God and men: the Talmudists [q] give the meaning of the text thus; by *the law of God* they understand the Scripture; by the phrase *distinctly,* the Targum or translation of it into Chaldee; by *the sense,* the verses or the accents; and by *the reading,* the distinction of the accents: some think from hence came

[h] Hilchot Tephillah, c. 12. sect. 9.
[i] על מגדל עץ super turrem ligni, Montanus; so Dionysius is said, concionari ex turri alta, Cicero. Tuscul. Quæst. l. 5.
[k] Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. c. 141. sect. 7.
[l] Misn. Sotah, c. 7. sect. 8.
[m] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 21. 1.
[n] Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. Orach Chayim, c. 146. sect. 4.
[o] Hilchot Tephillah, c. 12. sect. 5.
[p] Schulchan Aruch, ut supra, c. 124. sect. 12.
[q] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 37. 2. & Megillah, fol. 3. 1. & Hieros. Megillah, fol. 74. 4.

the practice of reading the law in the synagogues every sabbath-day, Acts xiii. 15. and xv. 21.

Ver. 9. *And Nehemiah which is the Tirshatha*, &c.] Or governor, as Zerubbabel had been, and now Nehemiah, see Ezra ii. 63. *and Ezra the priest and scribe*: see ver. 1, 2. *and the Levites that taught the people*: see ver. 7. *said unto all the people, this day* is *holy unto the Lord your God*; being both the new moon and the feast of blowing of trumpets: *mourn not, nor weep*; which was unsuitable to a festival, and especially such an one as this, in which trumpets were to be blown, and gladness to be shewn, Numb. x. 10. *for all the people wept when they heard the words of the law*; perceiving they had not kept it, but had broke it in many instances, and so liable to the wrath and judgment of God in case of disobedience.

Ver. 10. *Then he said unto them*, &c.] Nehemiah the Tirshatha or governor: *go your way*; to their own houses, and refresh themselves; it being noon, and they had stood many hours attentive to the reading and expounding of the law: *eat the fat, and drink the sweet*; not a common meal, but a feast, consisting of the richest provisions, the best of food and liquors: *and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared*; for the poor, who had no food at home provided for them; the widow, fatherless, and stranger, who at festivals were to partake of the entertainment, Deut. xvi. 11. *for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be you sorry*; confirming what the Levites had said and exhorted to, ver. 9. *for the joy of the Lord is your strength*; to rejoice, as the Lord commanded them on such days as these, was a means both of increasing their bodily strength and their inward strength, and of fitting them the more to perform their duty to God and men with cheerfulness, which sorrow and heaviness made unfit for; and the joy which has the Lord for its object, and comes from him, is the cause of renewing spiritual strength, so as to run and not be weary, walk and not faint, in the ways of God.

Ver. 11. *So the Levites stilled all the people*, &c.] Made them quiet and easy, being backed by the governor: *saying, hold your peace*; refrain from weeping and mourning: *for the day is holy*; a festival, set apart for joy and gladness: *neither be ye grieved*; inwardly; as they were not to shew any signs of sorrow outwardly, so they were not to cherish grief inwardly.

Ver. 12. *And all the people went their way to eat and to drink*, &c.] Freely and cheerfully: *and to send portions*; to the poor, who had nothing to eat and drink: *and to make great mirth*; with music, vocal and instrumental: *because they had understood the words that were declared unto them*; the meaning of the several laws read and explained unto them, whereby they better understood their duty, and in what instances and in what manner it was to be performed; how much more reason is there for joy and gladness, when the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, are clearly known and understood? Psal. lxxxix. 15.

Ver. 13. *And on the second day were gathered together*, &c.] The second day of the month, and of the new year, the day after the feast of blowing of trumpets, and after the law had been read and explained: *the chief of the fathers of all the people*; heads of tribes and families: *the priests and the Levites*; who, though they were instructors of others, needed to be taught themselves, of which they were sensible: and therefore came *unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law*; some things in it, which, upon reading the day before, they observed had some difficulty in them, and which they did not clearly and thoroughly understand; and therefore applied to Ezra, a ready scribe in the law, for better information, and that they might be better able to teach the people; which was highly commendable in them.

Ver. 14. *And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses*, &c.] The children of Israel, to be observed by them; either by hearing it read the day before, or by conversation with Ezra, they perceived it was enjoined in the law, particularly in Lev. xxiii. 39—43. Deut. xvi. 13. *that the children of Israel should dwell in booths, in the feast of the seventh month*; which was the same month, and this the second day of it, and therefore the time drew near for keeping it; for it was to begin the 15th.

Ver. 15. *And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem*, &c.] That is, as Jarchi interprets it, by supplying it thus, *and they commanded that they should publish*, &c. Ezra and those with him gave orders that heralds should proclaim in all cities where the Jews dwelt that the feast of tabernacles would be kept, and they should prepare for it; and which seems to be the true sense, since it is not written in the law that such a proclamation should be made; but this was an order of their own, thereby to give notice of it, that all might be provided: *go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written*; in Lev. xxiii. 40, where the three first of these seem to be called boughs of goodly trees; though the Jews' commonly understand them of pomecitrons, of which the Syriac version here interprets the myrtle-branches; and by them are meant the citron-branches, with the leaves and fruit, and which the Jews make absolutely necessary to the keeping of the feast, and for beautiful ones will give a large price; some of them go every year to Spain, and buy as many as they can, and dispose of them wherever Jews live[a]; and those branches were to be fetched, not properly speaking to make the booths of, which were made of boards and planks, but for the decoration of them; and it was not necessary, according to Aben Ezra, that some of each of these should be gathered for that purpose, but of any sort of them; for he interprets the words disjunctively olive-branches, or pine-branches, or myrtle-branches, &c. these, according to the common notion of the Jews, were tied up in little bundles, and carried in the hand, which they call *lulabs*; and they observe[t], the thick branches

[r] T. Bab. Succah, fol. 35. 1.
[s] Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 21. p. 454.

[t] Succah, fol. 12. 1.

were for them, which included the rest; now these they were to fetch from the mount of Olives, and other mountains about Jerusalem; near to which also there was a place called Motza*; whither they went, and gathered the willows of the brook mentioned in Lev. xxiii. 39.

Ver. 16. *So the people went forth, and brought them, &c.*] Went out of Jerusalem to the mountains adjacent, and fetched in branches of the said trees, one or another: *and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house*; which were flat, Deut. xxii. 8. and they might be made anywhere, so be it they were open to the air: *and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God*; the common people in the courtyards belonging to their houses, and the priests and Levites in the courts of the temple, the yards or open places adjoining to them: *and in the street of the water-gate*; which led to that, and seems to have been a very large street, in which many booths might be built, ch. iii. 26. see ver. 3. *and in the street of the gate of Ephraim*; which led to the gate through which the road lay to the tribe of Ephraim, see 2 Kings xiv. 13. none were erected without the walls of the city, for fear of the enemy.

Ver. 17. *And all the congregation of them that were come again out of captivity made booths, &c.*] These came to Jerusalem, and made them booths there; for there only was this feast kept, see John vii. 2, 10. *and sat under the booths*; there they dwelt during the seven days of it, in commemoration of their ancestors dwelling in booths in the wilderness, see Lev. xxiii. 42, 43. *for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so*: Joshua observed it, when he had brought and settled the people of Israel in the land of Canaan; and it had been observed since, before this time, as appears from 1 Kings viii. 2, 65, 66. Ezra iii. 4. but not so, with such exactness, with such zeal and affection, with such a regard to the law of God, as to read it every day of the feast, as in the next verse, and with such joy and gladness; wherefore there is no reason to suspect a corruption in the text, as a learned man* does, who supposes that Jeshua is put for Josiah: *and there was very great gladness*; that they were restored unto and settled in their land, had the book of the law, and the knowledge of it, and were directed and enabled to observe it.

Ver. 18. *Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God, &c.*] That is, Ezra; this was done by him every day during the feast, whereas only the first and last days were the holy convocations on which it seems to have been read: *and they kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according to the manner*; prescribed in Lev. xxiii. 39.

CHAP. IX.

IN this chapter we have an account of a fast kept by the Jews, which was observed, as by outward acts of humiliation, so by confession of sin, reading the law, and worshipping the Lord, ver. 1, 2, 3. and of a long prayer that the Levites made, in which they celebrate the divine perfections, take notice of various instances of the goodness of God to the people of Israel, acknowledge their manifold transgressions, observe the Lord's correction of them for them, in which they own he was righteous, ver. 4—38.

Ver. 1. *Now in the 24th day of this month, &c.*] The seventh month, the month Tisri or September, two days after the feast of tabernacles was ended: *the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackcloths, and earth upon them*; which were all outward tokens of mourning and humiliation, see Joel i. 8, 14. 1 Sam. iv. 12. which they could not shew during the festival; but that being over, they return to it, see ch. viii. 9.

Ver. 2. *And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, &c.*] Such as were genuine Israelites, of the seed of Abraham, who had married wives of the Gentiles, strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, either before the reformation by Ezra, not being then discovered, or had fallen into this evil since; but now, on the reading of the law, were convinced of it, and so separated themselves from such wives, which was a proof of the truth of their repentance: *and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers*; particularly their taking of strange wives, which their fathers had also done, and set them a bad example, which they had followed; of standing and confessing, see Luke xviii. 13.

Ver. 3. *And they stood up in their place, &c.*] In the outward court of the temple, where men used to stand when they prayed and confessed their sins: *and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God*; that they might the better know the mind and will of God, and do their duty: this they did *one 4th part of the day*; the space of three hours, from sun-rising, or six o'clock in the morning, to the time of the morning sacrifice, which was about nine o'clock: *and another 4th part they confessed*; the goodness of God to them, and the sins they had been guilty of: *and worshipped the Lord their God*; bowed down before him in prayer and supplication, and so spent three hours more, which reached to noon or 12 o'clock; and from thence to 3 o'clock, about the time of the evening sacrifice, and from thence to sun-setting, or 6 o'clock, and so spent the whole day in the above exercises alternately.

Ver. 4. *Then stood up upon the stairs of the Levites, &c.*] On an ascent; an elevated place where the Levites used to stand when they sung at the time of sacrifice, and where they might be seen and heard by the people: *Jeshua and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani*, and *Chenani*; who seem to be all Levites, see ch. viii. 7. *and cried with a loud voice unto the Lord their God*; praying with great fervency, and

* Misn. Succah, c. 4. sect. 5.

* Delaney's Life of King David, vol. 1. p. 292. marg.

making bitter lamentation for the sins of the people and their own.

Ver. 5. *Then the Levites, Jeshua,* &c.] Or, then the Levites, even Jeshua: *and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah,* and *Pethahiah*; the same as before, with a little variation of their names, and perhaps some of them might have two names: and *said*: to the men that stood and confessed their sins, ver. 2. *stand up*; for though they are before said to stand, yet, through shame and confusion of face, and awe of the Divine Majesty, might be fallen on their faces to the ground: and *bless the Lord your God for ever and ever*; for all the great and good things he had done for them, notwithstanding their sins; and particularly for his pardoning grace and mercy they had reason to hope for: *and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise*; the glory of which name, nature, and perfections of his, cannot be set forth by the highest praises of men, and the largest ascriptions of blessing and honour to him.

Ver. 6. *Thou*, even *thou art Lord alone*, &c.] Whose name alone is Jehovah, the one only true and living God: *thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host*; the airy and starry heavens, and the sun, moon, and stars in them, and the third heaven, the seat of God, angels, and saints: *the earth, and all things that* are *therein*; men, beasts, trees, metals, minerals, &c. *the seas, and all that* is *therein*: fishes, sea-plants, &c. see Acts iv. 24. *and thou preservest them all*; they consist in thee, and are upheld in their being by thee, Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 17. Psal. xxxvi. 6. *and the host of heaven worshipped thee*; not the sun, moon, and stars, only in their way, Psal. cxlviii. 2, 3. but the angels chiefly, Heb. i. 6.

Ver. 7. *Thou* art *the Lord the God, who didst choose Abram*, &c.] From among the Chaldeans, and out of his father's family: *and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees*; by calling him from thence, of which see Gen. xi. 28, 31. and xii. 1. to which may be added what Amama[x] on that place observes; that some think that the sacred fire, which the Chaldeans worshipped, was kept in this city, from whence it was called Ur, that being worshipped by them and by the Assyrians under the name of Ur[y]: *and gavest him the name of Abraham*; which was changed when the covenant of circumcision was given him, Gen. xvii. 5.

Ver. 8. *And foundest his heart faithful before thee*, &c.] A true believer in his word and promises, Gen. xv. 6. and closely attached to the fear of him, and observance of his commands, as abundantly appeared in the trial of him, in offering up his son, Gen. xxii. 1, 2, 12. *and madest a covenant with him, to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give* it, I say, *to his seed*; not to him personally, but to his posterity, at least including and chiefly designing them; of which covenant see Gen. xv. 18—21. *and hast performed thy words, for thou* art *righteous*; in all his ways and works, faithful to his promise, a covenant-keeping God, and who kept and fulfilled this covenant, assisting Joshua to conquer the land of Canaan, and put Israel into the possession of it.

Ver. 9. *And didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt*, &c.] The hard bondage in which their lives were made bitter; and was not a mere spectator of it, but looked upon them in it with pity and compassion, and sent them a deliverer, Exod. ii. 23. and iii. 7. *and heardest their cry by the Red sea*; which was before them, and the rocks on both sides of them, and the host of Pharaoh behind, pressing upon them, when he heard them, and wrought salvation for them, Exod. xiv. 10, 13.

Ver. 10. *And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land*, &c.] By inflicting the ten plagues upon them: *for thou knowest that they dealt proudly against them*; behaved haughtily to them, and despised them, see Exod. xviii. 11. *so didst thou get thee a name, as* it is *this day*; displayed his power on Pharaoh, and his goodness to Israel, the fame of which reached all over the world, and continued to that day, see Exod. ix. 16.

Ver. 11. *And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land*, &c.] That is, the Israelites, see Exod. xiv. 21. *and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps*; with great ease, and with indignation, meaning the Egyptians, that pursued hotly after them, and were thrown into the sea: *as a stone into the mighty waters*; where they sunk and perished, see Exod. xv. 4, 10.

Ver. 12. *Moreover, thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar*, &c.] The Israelites, to shelter them from the heat of the sun in a dry and barren wilderness: *and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go*; through a trackless desert, see Exod. xiii. 21, 22.

Ver. 13. *Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai*, &c.] By some visible tokens of his presence, as a cloud, fire, smoke, &c. which must be understood consistent with his omniscience, see Exod. xix. 18. *and spakest with them from heaven*; the decalogue or ten commandments, Exod. xx. 1, &c. *and gavest them right judgments and true laws, good statutes and commandments*; both judicial and ceremonial, which were of excellent use to them in their civil and ecclesiastical polity; these were not spoken to Israel, but given to Moses on the mount, to be delivered to them.

Ver. 14. *And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath*, &c.] Which was not made known to others, and was peculiar to the Jewish nation, and a privilege granted to them, to have rest corporeal and spiritual, typical of the rest in Christ: *and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant*; moral, ceremonial, and judicial, such as other nations had not, Deut. iv. 8.

Ver. 15. *And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger*, &c.] To satisfy that, meaning the manna, Exod. xvi. 3, 4. *and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock, for their thirst*; to quench it; this was done both quickly after they came out of the land of Egypt, and a little before their entrance into the land of Canaan, see Exod. xvii. 6. Numb. xx. 8, 11. *and pro-*

[x] Anti-barbar. Biblic. l. 3. p. 632.

[y] Fortunati Schacch. Eleochrism. Myrothec. l. 1. c. 9. col. 44.

misedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them: which oath was made to them and to their fathers also, see Numb. xiv. 30. Deut. i. 8.

Ver. 16. *But they and our fathers dealt proudly*, &c.] Behaved in a haughty manner towards God, their kind benefactor: *and hardened their necks*: refused to take the yoke of his law, as refractory oxen, that withdraw their necks from the yoke: *and hearkened not to thy commandments*; to do them, though they promised they would, Exod. xxiv. 7.

Ver. 17. *And refused to obey*, &c.] Though exhorted, admonished, and threatened, such was their obstinacy: *neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them*; in delivering them at the Red sea, in raining manna about them, and giving them water out of the rock: *but hardened their necks*; see the preceding verse: *and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage*: they not only proposed it, but determined upon it, which is reckoned the same as if they had done it, see Numb. xiv. 4. *but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness*: as he had proclaimed his name before Moses, and as the whole of his conduct towards the people of Israel abundantly shewed, see Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. *and forsookest them not*: when in the wilderness, where otherwise they must have perished, but still fed and protected them, notwithstanding their provocations.

Ver. 18. *Yea, when they had made them a molten calf*, &c.] In imitation of the Apis, or ox of the Egyptians: *and said, this is thy god that brought thee out of Egypt*; or the image of thy god, as the Arabic version, see Exod. xxxii. 4. *and had wrought great provocations*; of all which nothing was greater than idolatry.

Ver. 19. *Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness*, &c.] Where no supply could be had, if he had cast them off, see ver. 17. *the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way*; which, if it had, they would have been scorched by the heat of the sun: *neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go*; or otherwise they would have lost their way, and not have known which way to have gone.

Ver. 20. *Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them*, &c.] In the knowledge of the laws delivered to them; the spirit of prophecy, according to Ben Melech, and which Aben Ezra interprets of the spirit put upon the 70 elders, Numb. xi. 17, 25. *and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth*; all the while they were in the wilderness, until they came to Canaan's land; called the Lord's manna, because prepared by him, and given by him to them; a part or portion and gift from the Lord, as Ben Melech, from whence it had its name, see Exod. xvi. 15. *and gavest them water for their thirst*: which seems to have respect to the last rock stricken for them, after their many provocations in the wilderness, Numb. xx. 11.

Ver. 21. *Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness*, so that *they lacked nothing*, &c.] As not for food, so neither for raiment, as follows: *their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not*; of which see Deut. viii. 4.

Ver. 22. *Moreover, thou gavest them kingdoms and nations*, &c.] The two kingdoms of Sihon and Og, and the seven nations of Canaan: *and didst divide them into corners*; or *corner*; into every corner of the land of Canaan, so that they possessed the whole of it, a few cities excepted; Jarchi interprets it of one corner, that they might not be mixed with the people of the land, but be all together in one place; but Aben Ezra understands it of the Canaanites, of their being divided and scattered into corners, when they fled from the Israelites; but the former sense seems best: *so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon*; or *even*, or *namely* [x], *the land of the king of Heshbon*; for Sihon was king of Heshbon, and so the land the same: *and the land of Og king of Bashan*; those lands both lay on the other side Jordan, and were possessed by the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

Ver. 23. *Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven*, &c.] Fulfilling the promise made to Abraham, Gen. xv. 5. and xxii. 17. Deut. i. 10. their number when they came out of Egypt, and just before they entered into the land of Canaan, being upwards of 600,000 men, besides women and children, Exod. xii. 37. Numb. xi. 21. and xxvi. 51. *and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it*; the land of Canaan, promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed; into which the Lord brought them by Joshua; he was the instrument, but the thing was of God.

Ver. 24. *So the children went in and possessed the land*, &c.] Not the fathers of the Israelites that came out of Egypt, they died in the wilderness, all excepting two, but their children, which seems to be the reason of this manner of expression, see Numb. xiv. 30—33. *and thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites*; by means of Joshua, the general of the armies of Israel; there is an elegant paronomasia in the word for *subdue*, and the Canaanites, which cannot be expressed in our language: *and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would*; no less than 31 kings, see Josh. xii. 9—24.

Ver. 25. *And they took strong cities*, &c.] Such as, in an hyberbolical way, are said to be walled up to heaven, Deut. i. 28. *and a fat land*; of a good and fruitful soil, abounding with all good things, Deut. viii. 7, 8. *and possessed houses full of all goods*; ready built and furnished for them, both with good provisions and good furniture: *wells digged*; to supply them with water: *vineyards, and olive-yards, and fruit-trees in abundance*; which they planted not: *and they did eat, and were filled, and became fat*; in body, though in mind became wanton and wicked; they made their hearts fat, or stupid, as Aben Ezra interprets it, see Deut. xxxii. 15. Isa. vi. 10. *and delighted themselves in thy great goodness*; not in praising the Lord for it, and using it to his honour and glory, but indulged themselves to luxury and intemperance; though it may be

[x] So Piscator, Patrick, Rambachius.

understood of a lawful pleasure in the enjoyment of the great affluence they were brought into, which last agrees with what follows.

Ver. 26. *Nevertheless, they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee,* &c.] Notwithstanding all these favours and mercies bestowed upon them, which was great ingratitude: *and cast thy law behind their backs;* as of no account, and unworthy of their regard; that which they should have had continually before their eyes, as the rule and guide of their actions, they cast behind them, not caring to look into it, and read it: *and slew thy prophets, which testified against them to turn them to thee;* the prophets that bore a testimony against their sins, admonished them of them, called heaven and earth to record against them should they continue in them, and all to turn them from them by repentance to the Lord; those they were so wroth with on this account as to slay them, see Matt. xxiii. 37. Acts vii. 52. *and they wrought great provocations;* serving Baalim and Ashtaroth, and other gods of the nations, than which nothing was more provoking to the Lord.

Ver. 27. *Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them,* &c.] As the kings of Mesopotamia, Moab, Canaan, and others: *and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee;* as they usually did, Judg. iii. 9, 15. and iv. 3. and vi. 6, 7. *thou heardest* them *from heaven; and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hands of their enemies;* such were the judges, Othniel, Ehud, Barak, Gideon, *&c.* and this was done for them, not on account of their merits, but the abundant unmerited mercy of the Lord towards them.

Ver. 28. *But after they had rest,* &c.] From their enemies, enjoyed their liberty, and were in prosperity: *they did evil again before thee;* relapsed into idolatry: *therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them;* as the Philistines had for the space of forty years, Judg. xiii. 1. *yet when they returned and cried unto thee, thou heardest* them *from heaven, and many times didst thou deliver them, according to thy mercies;* this was their case frequently in the times of the judges; they sinned and fell into the hands of their enemies, then they repented, and cried to God for help, and he had compassion upon them, and saved them.

Ver. 29. *And testifiedst against them,* &c.] By sending prophets to them, to admonish them of their sins, and remind them of their duty: *that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law;* to regard it, and walk according to it: *yet they dealt proudly;* with an haughty air rejected the counsel of God: *and hearkened not unto thy commandments;* yielded not obedience to them: *but sinned against thy judgments;* transgressed his laws, which were so just, righteous, reasonable, and equitable: *which if a man do, he shall live in them;* or by them, in the land of Canaan, see Lev. xviii. 5. *and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear;* like oxen, that wriggle and struggle, and draw back, and will not admit the yoke upon them.

Ver. 30. *Yet many years didst thou forbear them,* &c.] Throughout the reigns of several kings, such was God's long-suffering towards them: or, *thou didst draw upon them;* that is, his mercy, as Jarchi interprets it; he drew it out of his heart, and prolonged it towards them: *and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets;* who reproved and admonished them, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit of God in them, who spoke in his name, and what he suggested to them: *yet they would not give ear;* to what the prophets said, and the spirit of God in them: *therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands;* people that were lords of many countries, as the Assyrians and Chaldeans.

Ver. 31. *Nevertheless, for thy great mercies' sake,* &c.] For the displaying of that, and the glorifying of it, which is so large and exceeding abundant: *thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them;* some were left in the land, and those that were carried captive found favour in the eyes of those that carried them away, and were suffered to live, and many of them now had returned to their own land: *for thou* art *a gracious and merciful God;* of which they had abundant proof and evidence.

Ver. 32. *Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy,* &c.] The same titles Nehemiah gives to the Lord, ch. i. 5. and it may be reasonably thought the whole prayer is his composure, which was delivered by him to the Levites: *let not all the trouble seem little before thee;* as if it was not enough; let it be judged sufficient, and no more be added, but mercy shewn; Aben Ezra thinks the word *little* is not to be connected with *trouble,* but with the nearest antecedent *mercy,* and so Gussetius[z]; as if the sense was, let not thy mercy be small with thee, but let it be largely extended along with all the trouble, or at the time when trouble of every kind *comes upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the times of the kings of Assyria unto this day;* but this sense is not clear, and makes it have respect to times to come; whereas it relates to time past, and to all the trouble and affliction they had met with from the Assyrian kings, from the time they invaded their land, and carried them captive, until this very time.

Ver. 33. *Howbeit, thou art just in all that is brought upon us,* &c.] They own the justice of God, could not complain of any wrong done them; and had he shewn them no mercy at all, it was but what they deserved: *for thou hast done right, but we have done wickedly;* he had done according to the truth of his word of promise, he had faithfully kept it, but they had transgressed his righteous law.

Ver. 34. *Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law,* &c.] All ranks of men, from the highest to the lowest, had shewn no regard, nor yielded obedience to the holy law of God: *nor hearkened unto thy commandments, and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them;* moral and ceremonial, which were a testification of the will of God to them, and a testimony against them if they observed them not.

Ver. 35. *For they have not served thee in their kingdom,* &c.] When in it, whether of Israel or of Judah, and when in the most flourishing circumstances: *and*

[z] Ebr. Comment. p. 937.

in thy great goodness that thou gavest them: amidst all the prosperity and affluence of good things they enjoyed, which was an obligation upon them to serve the Lord: *and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them*; the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk, which lay open for them, their enemies being driven out before them, see ver. 25. *neither turned they from their wicked works*; their idolatries more especially.

Ver. 36. *Behold, we are servants this day*, &c.] For though they had leave to return to their land, and rebuild their city and temple, yet they were still in subjection to the kings of Persia: *and for the land thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it*; though the rightful owners and proprietors of it by the gift of God to their ancestors, to hold it and enjoy the good of it, and yet were obliged to pay tribute for it to the kings of Persia, all excepting priests and Levites; see Ezra vi. 8. and vii. 20, 24.

Ver. 37. *And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our sins*, &c.] Though a very fruitful land, and brought forth much, yet not for them, but for foreign kings, that had the sovereignty over them, and enacted much toll, tribute, and custom from them, which greatly lessened the profit of the earth to them: *also they have dominion over our bodies*; and could oblige them to work for them, and do any service they should command: *and over our cattle, at their pleasure*; to carry burdens for them, or ride post with them: *and we are in great distress*; being servants and tributaries to a foreign power.

Ver. 38. *And because of all this*, &c.] Of all this distress, and that it might be removed, and be clear of it; or *in all this* distress and evil, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra, in the midst of it all: *we make a sure covenant*; or faithfully promise to observe the law of God, and particularly put away strange wives, and not intermarry with the people of the land: *and write it*; that it may remain and be a testimony against them should they break it, being their own handwriting: *and our princes, Levites*, and *priests, seal unto it*; as witnesses of it, and thereby binding themselves to observe the same things; their names that sealed are given in the next chapter.

CHAP. X.

IN this chapter we have the names of the persons that signed and sealed the covenant mentioned in the last, ver. 1—27. and the things they agreed unto and promised to perform; in general to observe the law of God, in particular not to marry with the people of the land, to keep the sabbaths weekly and yearly, to pay annually the third part of the shekel for the service of the temple, to bring into it the wood-offerings, first-fruits, first-born, and tithes, ver. 28—39.

Ver. 1. *Now those that sealed* were, *&c.*] That sealed the covenant, made ch. ix. 38. *Nehemiah the Tirshatha, the son of Hachaliah*; the governor of the Jews: *and Zidkijah*; who seems also to have been a prince, since, without, it could not be said it was sealed by their princes, ch. ix. 38. though some think both these were priests, and then the princes must be supposed to be among the chief of the people, ver. 14. from hence to the end of the 27th their names follow; the names of the priests, ver. 2—8. who were in all 21; no mention is made either of Eliashib the high-priest, nor of Ezra the priest and scribe; some think the former had not behaved well in his office, and that the latter was either sick, or returned to Babylon, or however hindered by some providence or another, since we hear of him both a little before and after, ch. viii. 2, 13. and xii. 36. then the names of the Levites, ver. 9—13. in all 17, most of which we have met with in this book before; next follow the names of the chief of the people, ver. 14—27. their number in all 44; and their names may be observed in the list of those that came out of Babylon with Zerubbabel: the whole number of those that sealed, princes, priests, Levites, and chief of the people, were 84.

Ver. 28. *And the rest of the people*, &c.] That did not sign and seal: *the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims*; the porters and singers were Levites; but those so called were such as waited upon the priests, as the Nethinim were persons that waited on them: *and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God*; proselytes, who had renounced Heathenism, and embraced the true religion, had received the law of God, and professed to walk according to it; *their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding*; of the nature of the covenant, and the things contained in it, of what was required of them, and of what they promised, of the nature of an oath they entered into, and of the sin of perjury.

Ver. 29. *They clave to their brethren, their nobles*, &c.] Who had signed and sealed the covenant, they declared their approbation of it, attended to it, and ratified what they had done in their name: *and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God*; they bound themselves with an oath that they would keep the law of God, and added a curse or imprecation on themselves to it should they break it; or, according to Piscator, they went into the space between the two pieces of the calf, which they cut asunder for the confirmation of the covenant, and so they cursed themselves if they should break it, see Jer. xxxiv. 18. *and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our God, and his judgments and his statutes*; all the laws, moral, ceremonial, and judicial; this they engaged to do in general; some particulars follow.

Ver. 30. *And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons*, &c.] Intermarry with them as they had done, and were prone to do, and even did after this, ch. xiii. 23.

Ver. 31. *And if the people of the land bring ware*, &c.] Any thing to be sold, any sort of goods, that being sold might be taken away, as the word signifies:

or any victuals on the sabbath-day to sell; any thing to make food of; wheat or barley, as Aben Ezra interprets it; the same word is rendered *corn* in Gen. xlii. 1. see the note there; to sell which was not lawful on the sabbath-day, see Amos viii. 5. that *we would not buy it of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day;* any festival, as the feast of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles: *and that we would leave the 7th year;* the ground untilled in that year, the vines unpruned, and the fruits of the earth, which sprung of themselves, for the poor to gather, Lev. xxv. 4—7. *and the exaction of every debt;* that they would not demand the payment of any debt on the 7th year, as the law required they should not, Deut. xv. 2.

Ver. 32. *Also we made ordinances for us,* &c.] Laws among themselves, binding them to that which the laws of God did not: *to charge ourselves yearly with the third part of a shekel, for the service of the house of our God;* the particulars of which follow in the next verse; for the defraying of which there used to be a treasury in the temple; but now there was none, and therefore they took this method to assess themselves; and being poor, instead of the half-shekel, which in some cases was required, they only charged themselves with the third part of one; though Aben Ezra thinks this was superadded to the half-shekel, and was paid over and above that; according to Brerewood [a], it was of the value of ten-pence of our money: Waserus [b] has given us the figure of one of these coins, with this inscription, a *third* part of a shekel of Israel.

Ver. 33. *For the shew-bread,* &c.] To defray the expenses of the 12 loaves, which every week were set on the table of shew-bread, Lev. xxiv. 5—9. *and for the continual meat-offering, and for the continual burnt-offering;* for the daily sacrifice, morning and evening, which always had a meat-offering along with it, Exod. xxix. 38—42. *of the sabbaths, and of the new moons;* on which were additional sacrifices, Numb. xxviii. 9—15. and *for the set feasts;* of passover, pentecost, and tabernacles; in which also were offered other sacrifices, besides the daily one, Numb. xxviii. 16—31. and xxix. 1—39. *and for the holy things;* which were both by way of thanksgiving to God, and that they might feast and rejoice together: *and for the sin-offerings, to make an atonement for Israel;* for the whole body of the people, and so were made at the public expense: *and for all the work of the house of our God;* whatever else was necessary that is not mentioned.

Ver. 34. *And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people,* &c.] The priests and Levites were in one lot, and the people in another, as Aben Ezra: *for the wood-offering;* for providing wood to burn upon the altar continually, concerning which Maimonides [c] thus writes: "what is the wood-offer-"ing? there was a time fixed for families to go out "unto the forests, and bring in wood of disposition "(to be laid in order on the altar); and the day when "it came to the turn of a family to bring the wood, "they offered up free-will burnt-offerings, which "were called a wood-offering; and it was to them as "a good day (or festival), and they were forbid to "mourn, fast, or do any work on it;" and he observes, that if a single person brought wood of his own free will, he was obliged to the same; and Josephus [d] speaks of a feast called ξυλοφορια, when it was customary for all to bring wood to the altar, to keep alive the sacred fire, that it might not go out, which, according to him, was on the 14th of the month Lois, or August; but this was not the business of all the people, lots were cast, as here said, who should do it, and when: *to bring it into the house of our God;* the temple, where there was a place called the *wood-room,* into which the wood was brought after it had been wormed by the priests [e]: *after the houses of our fathers;* or families on whom the lot fell to do it: some render it, *into the house of our fathers,* meaning the same as before; the temple so called, because they built it, and worshipped God in it; so Jarchi and Aben Ezra: *at times appointed, year by year;* as the lot directed; these, according to the Jewish doctors [f], were nine times in the year; on the first of Nisan (or March), the sons of Arach, of the tribe of Judah, brought the wood: on the 20th of Tammuz (or June), the posterity of David, of the tribe of Judah; on the 5th of Ab (or July), the children of Parosh, of the tribe of Judah; on the 7th of the same month, the sons of Jonadab the son of Recab; on the 10th of the same month, the posterity of Senaah, of the tribe of Benjamin; on the 15th of the same month, the children of Zattu, and with them the priests and Levites, and all who were of an uncertain tribe, &c. on the 20th of the same month, the posterity of Pachath-moab, of the tribe of Judah; on the 20th of Elul (or August), the children of Adin, of the tribe of Judah; on the 1st of Tebeth (or December), the posterity of Parosh again brought the wood: *to burn upon the altar of the Lord our God, as* it is *written in the law;* the wood should be burnt upon it, and fire kept on it continually, Lev. vi. 12, 13. for this refers only to that, the wood-offering is nowhere spoken of in the law.

Ver. 35. *And to bring the first-fruits of our ground,* &c.] Not that they cast lots to do this, but they bound themselves with an oath, according to the law, to do it; this is the first of all the fruits of the earth, Exod. xxiii. 19. though Aben Ezra restrains it to the sheaf of the first-fruits, and to the two wave-loaves, Lev. xxiii. 10, 17. *and the first-fruits of all fruit of all trees;* which, as Aben Ezra observes, their wise men restrain to the seven kinds only mentioned in Deut. viii. 8.

Ver. 36. *Also the first-born of our sons and of our cattle,* &c.] Such as were unclean, as Aben Ezra notes, as the ass, &c. and are distinguished from clean ones mentioned in the following clause; now both these, their sons, and this sort of cattle, were to be redeemed by a price paid to the priests: *as* it is *written in the law,* Exod. xiii. 2, 13. Numb. xviii. 15, 16. *and the firstlings of our herds, and of our flocks;* clean

[a] De Pond. & Pret. Vet. Num. c. 1.
[b] De Antiqu. Num. Heb. l. 2.
[c] Hilchot Cele Hamikdash, c. 6. sect. 9, 10. Vid. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 5.
[d] De Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 17. sect. 6.
[e] See Lightfoot's Prospect of the Temple, ch. 22.
[f] Misn. Taanith, c. 4. sect. 5.

cattle, which were to be offered, Numb. xviii. 17, 18. *to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God*: a price for the one sort, and the other for sacrifice.

Ver. 37. *And that we should bring the first-fruits of our dough*, &c.] According to the law in Numb. xv. 20, 21. *and our offerings*: their heave-offerings, Numb. xviii. 8, 11. *and the fruit of all manner of trees*; bore by them on the 4th year after their planting, Lev. xix. 23, 24. *of wine and oil*: to which Aben Ezra restrains the fruit of the trees, see Numb. xviii. 12. all these they were to bring *unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God*: there to be laid up for the use of it; and oil and wine were frequently used in sacrifices: *and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage*; the tenth part of the produce of their agriculture everywhere throughout the land, see Numb. xviii. 21.

Ver. 38. *And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes*, &c.] There was always to be a priest with the Levites at such times, to take notice what quantity they received, that they might not be under any temptation, or lie under any suspicion of defrauding the priests of their due, who were to have a part in the tithes, as follows: *and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure-house*: which were in the court of the priests for that purpose; for out of the tithes of the Levites there was another tithe or tenth part taken, and given to the priests, see Numb. xviii. 26—30.

Ver. 39. *For the children of Israel, and the children of Levi, shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers*, &c.] In the temple: *where* are *the vessels of the sanctuary*; to put the said things into, that they might be ready at hand when wanted, as they often were for the meat and drink offerings: *and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers*: who dwelt there when in their ministrations, and were supported by the above tithes and gifts: *and we will not forsake the house of our God*; neither forsake the assembling themselves there for worship, nor neglect to make the necessary provisions for the service of it, as they had too much done, but now resolve for the future to behave better.

CHAP. XI.

THIS chapter treats of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who settled there by lot, or of their own accord, their names and numbers, ver. 1—9. and of the priests and Levites who dwelt there, ver. 10—19. and of the rest of the people, priests, and Levites, that dwelt in the other cities and villages of Judah and Benjamin, ver. 20—36.

Ver. 1. *And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem*, &c.] Where it was proper they should, being the metropolis of the nation, both for the performance of their offices, and to protect and defend it, as well as to set an example to the people, and encourage them to dwell there also: *the rest of the people also cast lots to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city*; so called, because of the temple and the worship of God in it; and so it is called by Julian the emperor[g]; and some[h] have thought that the Cadytis of Herodotus[i] is the same with Jerusalem, which had its name from קדשה, *holy*, and is now called by the Turks *cuds*, that is, *holy*[k]: now, though it was the chief city, and the place of public worship, yet the people were not forward of settling in it, partly because of the rage of the enemy, which this city was the butt of, and partly because it was more to their worldly advantage to dwell in the country, and where they could have better supplies; they consulted their own ease, safety, and profit; wherefore this method was taken to oblige some to dwell in it, by taking one out of ten by lot, that there might be a sufficient number to rebuild the houses of it, re-people and defend it: *and nine parts* to dwell *in* other *cities*: to which they belonged, or where they pleased, any where in the land of Israel.

Ver. 2. *And the people blessed all the men that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem*.] Who were not taken by lot, but of their own accord settled at Jerusalem; they praised them for it, and wished them all happiness and prosperity, since they denied themselves of ease and profit for the sake of the public good; and it is this which makes the difference between the list of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in 1 Chron. ix. 2, &c. and this here, that takes in all that settled there, whether voluntarily or by lot; this only such as were fixed by the lot, and of them only those who were of greatest note and esteem, as Jarchi observes, and so it follows.

Ver. 3. *Now these* are *the chief of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem*, &c.] That is, of Judea, reduced to a province by the king of Babylon, and now a province of the Persian monarchy: *but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities*; in which they or their ancestors had formerly dwelt: to wit, Israel: the people in general of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and such of the other tribes that returned with them: *the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants*; of whom see Ezra ii. 55, 58.

Ver. 4. *And at Jerusalem dwelt* certain *of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin*, &c.] It belonging partly to one tribe and partly to the other, and so inhabited by both, as it originally was, Josh. xv. 63. and xviii. 28. *of the children of Judah; Athaiah*: called Uthai, 1 Chron. ix. 4. whose lineage is traced through Uzziah, Zechariah, Amariah, Shephatiah, Mahalaleel, *of the children of Perez*; a son of Judah, see 1 Chron. ix. 4.

Ver. 5. *And Maaseiah*, &c.] Who seems to be the

[g] Ep. 25. p. 154.
[h] Prideaux's Connection, par. 1. p. 56, 57.
[i] Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 159. & Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 5.
[k] Sandys's Travels, l. 3. p. 121. Ed. 5.

same with Asaiah, 1 Chron. ix. 5. and whose genealogy is carried up through Baruch, Colhozeh, Hazaiah, Adaiah, Joiarib, Zechariah, to Shiloni: perhaps the same with Shelah, another son of Judah, see 1 Chron. ix. 5.

Ver. 6. *All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem were 468 valiant men.*] And so well qualified to defend the city against its enemies.

Ver. 7. *And these are the sons of Benjamin,* &c.] That were of that tribe, and inhabited Jerusalem, namely, that follow: *Sallu the son of Meshullam:* who from him is traced up through Joed, Pedaiah, Kolaiah, Maaseiah, Ithiel, to Jesaiah.

Ver. 8. *And after him,* &c.] That is, Sallu: were Gabbai and Sallai; in all 928; there were more of the tribe of Benjamin than of the tribe of Judah, they having perhaps a greater share in the city, or were better disposed to dwell in it.

Ver. 9. *And Joel the son of Zichri* was *their overseer,* &c.] Or chief governor of the city: *and Judah the son of Senuah* was *second over the city;* or the deputy-governor of it; so Pitholaus is called an under governor in Jerusalem by Josephus[1].

Ver. 10, 11. *Of the priests,* &c.] Who dwelt in Jerusalem, of whom the same account is given in these two verses as in 1 Chron. ix. 10, 11. only Seraiah here is called Azariah there.

Ver. 12. *And their brethren that did the work of the house* were 822, &c.] That offered the sacrifices, burnt incense, set on the shew-bread, lighted the lamps, &c. *and Adaiah the son of Jeroham;* see 1 Chron. ix. 12. whose genealogy is traced here through Pelaliah, Amzi, Zechariah, Pashur, to Malchiah.

Ver. 13. *And his brethren, chief of the fathers,* 242, &c.] That is, the brethren or relations of Adaiah: *and Amashai;* called Maaseiah, 1 Chron. ix. 12. whose lineage is traced here through Azareel, Ahasai, Meshillemoth, to Immer.

Ver. 14. *And their brethren, mighty men of valour,* 128, &c.] The brethren of Adaiah and Amashai, who were able men to do the work of their office as priests, and men of courage to fight the enemy, and defend the city upon occasion: *and their overseer* was *Zabdiel, the son of* one of *the great men:* or the son of Hagedolim, or Gedolim, as some, who take it to be the proper name of a man.

Ver. 15. *Also of the Levites,* &c.] Who dwelt in Jerusalem: *Shemaiah the son of Hashub:* traced from him through Azrikam and Hashabiah to Bunni; these were of the sons of Merari, the third son of Levi, see 1 Chron. xi. 14.

Ver. 16. *And Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites,* &c.] Along with Shemaiah; these had *the oversight of the outward business of the house of God;* who had the care of the repairs of the temple, and of getting in the wood for the altar, as Jarchi, and collecting the third part of the shekel, to purchase things with for the use of the temple.

Ver. 17. *And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph,* &c.] Zabdi is called Zichri in 1 Chron. ix. 15. *was the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer;* he was the precentor, or led the song at the time of the daily sacrifice, in which prayer was also made, as in many of the songs, hymns, and psalms of David: *and Bakbukiah the second among his brethren;* he was the next singer, or deputy to Mattaniah; perhaps the same that is called Bakbakar, 1 Chron. ix. 15. *and Abda the son of Shammua;* called Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, 1 Chron. ix. 16. *the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun;* one of the three principal singers.

Ver. 18. *All the Levites in the holy city were* 284.] Who had their residence there, see ver. 1.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, the porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept the gates,* were 172.] Of whom see 1 Chron. ix. 17, 18.

Ver. 20. *And the residue of Israel, of the priests* and *the Levites,* &c.] All of them, besides those that dwelt at Jerusalem: were *in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance;* the Israelites in the cities, houses, and estates enjoyed by their ancestors, and the priests and Levites in the cities given out of the several tribes.

Ver. 21. *But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel,* &c.] An high place or tower on the wall of Jerusalem, see 2 Chron. xxvii. 3. *and Ziha, and Gispa,* were *over the Nethinims;* had the oversight of them, and took care that they did their work; they were such themselves, but the principal of them, see Ezra ii. 43.

Ver. 22. *The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem* was *Uzzi, the son of Bani,* &c.] He was the supervisor of them, that looked after them that they did their work in ministering to the priests, as they had occasion for them; this man's genealogy is further traced through Hashabiah and Mattaniah, to Micha the son of Asaph, ver. 17. *of the sons of Asaph, the singers* were *over the business of the house of God;* which, according to Jarchi, was to take care of the repairs of the temple and other things; but one would think rather that part of the service of the house which lay in singing the songs of it is respected.

Ver. 23. For it was *the king's commandment concerning them,* &c.] Either of King David, as some, see ch. xii. 24. or rather of the king of Persia: *that a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day;* he settled a daily salary for them, to be paid out of his treasury; having perhaps a peculiar respect for such sort of men, being a lover of music, by means of which they had a settled habitation in Jerusalem.

Ver. 24. *And Pethahiah the son of Meshezabeel, of the children of Zerah, the son of Judah,* &c.] The twin-brother of Pharez, Gen. xxxviii. 30. was *at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people;* to speak for them to the king, as Jarchi; when they had a favour to ask of him, a petition to present to him, he delivered it for them, and by him the king returned the answer.

Ver. 25. *And for the villages, with their fields,* &c.] The cities and villages in the country, an account of the inhabitants of them next follows: some *of the children of Judah dwelt at Kirjath-arba, and in the villages thereof;* the same with Hebron, Josh. xv. 54. *and at Dibon;* the same with Dimonah, Josh. xv. 22. *and at Jekabzeel, and in the villages thereof;* the same with Kabzeel, one of the uttermost cities of the tribe of Judah southward, Josh. xv. 21. of which city was

[1] Antiqu. l. 14. c. 6. sect. 1.

Benaiah, one of David's worthies, 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. from hence to the end of ver. 30 mention is made of various cities and towns in the tribe of Judah, inhabited by the men of it, which are to be met with in Josh. xv. excepting Jeshua and Mekonah, ver. 26, 28. of which we nowhere else read.

Ver. 31. *The children also of Benjamin, from Geba, dwelt at Michmash, &c.*] Geba was a city on the southern border of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 24. and Michmash on the northern, of which see 1 Sam. xiii. 2. in this and the four following verses are the names of several cities in the tribe of Benjamin, inhabited by the men of that tribe, as Aija, the same with Ai, that lay on the east of Beth-el, here also mentioned, see Josh. vii. 2. Anathoth, the birth-place of Jeremiah the prophet, Jer. i. 1. Nob, a city of the priests, 1 Sam. xxi. 1. and xxii. 19. Ananiah is nowhere else mentioned; Hazor is to be distinguished from another of this name in the tribe of Naphtali, Josh. xix. 36. Ramah, a place well known in Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 25. Gittaim, of which see 2 Sam. iv. 3. Hadid, the same with Adida, which lay in a plain, 1 Maccab. xii. 38. Zeboim, a valley of this name, is read in 1 Sam. xiii. 18. Neballat we read of nowhere else; of Lod and Ono, see 1 Chron. viii. 12. and the valley of craftsmen, or Chorasin, 1 Chron. iv. 14.

Ver. 36. *And of the Levites* were *divisions in Judah, and in Benjamin.*] They were scattered about, some here and some there, in both these tribes, for the better instruction of the people.

CHAP. XII.

THIS chapter gives an account of the chief of the priests and Levites in the days of Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Joiakim, Eliashib, and Nehemiah, ver. 1—26. of the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, and of the joy expressed on that occasion, ver. 27—43. and of the appointment of some persons over the treasuries for the priests, Levites, singers, and porters, ver. 44—47.

Ver. 1. *Now these* are *the priests and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua, &c.*] Who went up from the captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem with them; the one was the prince, the other the high-priest, the same with Joshua the high-priest, Zech. iii. 1. the names of the priests are given in this and the six following verses: *Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra;* not Jeremiah the prophet, who cannot be thought to live so long as through the captivity; but Ezra may be Ezra the priest and scribe, who might come up with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem, and return to Babylon again, and from thence come again as he did, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, Ezra vii. 1. 6, 7. though this by some[m] is not thought very probable.

Ver. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. *Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, &c.*] Whose names are among the sealers of the covenant, ch. x. 3, 4. Malluch is afterwards called Melicu, ver. 14. *Shechaniah,* called Shebaniah, ver. 14. and so in ch. x. 4. *Rehum,* who, by transposition of letters, is Harim, ver. 15. and so in ch. x. 5. *Meremoth,* called Meraioth, ver. 15. *Iddo, Ginnetho,* read Ginnethon, ver. 16. so in ch. x. 6. *Abijah;* there was a course of a priest of this name, of which Zechariah the father of John the Baptist was, Luke i. 5. *Miamin, Miadiah, Bilgah;* the first two are called Miniamin and Moadiah, ver. 17. *Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, Sallu;* called Sallai, ver. 20. *Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah: these were the chief of the priests, and of their brethren, in the days of Jeshua;* heads of courses; or, however, priests of the greatest note in the times of Jeshua the high-priest.

Ver. 8. *Moreover the Levites, &c.*] Who lived in the same times: were *Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah,* and *Mattaniah;* most of these are made mention of in ch. viii. 7. and x. 9, 10. and xi. 15, 17. the last of them is said to be *over the thanksgiving, he and his brethren:* he was the precentor, or had the directing and conducting of the songs of the temple, particularly the thanksgiving-song at the daily sacrifices; Jarchi takes the word here used to be the name of a musical instrument.

Ver. 9. *Also Bakbukiah and Unni, &c.*] Two other Levites; the first is mentioned in ch. xi. 17. *their brethren,* were *over-against them in the watches;* the Levites were divided into 24 wards, and these were placed one against another, 1 Chron. xxiii. 6. and xxvi. 12.

Ver. 10, 11. *And Jeshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada, and Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.*] This is an account of the high-priests in succession in the second temple, the first six of them; and if Jaddua, the last mentioned, is the same with Jaddus, as Josephus[*] supposes, who went forth in his pontifical robes to meet Alexander the great returning from his conquests of Tyre and Gaza, from whom he obtained many favours, and whom he had into the temple, and shewed him the prophecy of Daniel concerning himself; this paragraph must be written by another hand, and not Nehemiah, since it can hardly be thought he should live so long; and as to his times, this account of him, or the history of his own times, seems not to have gone through the priesthood of Eliashib, the third of those high-priests, see ch. xiii. 28. and to reach no further than to the 32d of Darius Hystaspis, ch. xiii. 6. this fragment therefore might be inserted by some godly man under a divine direction in after-times, as we have several insertions in the books of Moses and Joshua of the like kind; and particularly in 1 Chron. iii. 19, *&c.* where the genealogy of Zerubbabel is carried down beyond the times of the Maccabees, and so could not be placed there by Ezra.

Ver. 12—21. *And in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers, &c.*] This was the son and successor of Jeshua, or Joshua, the first high-priest of the second temple; the principal men of the priesthood in his time were as follow, and who were the

[m] Vid. Rainold de Lib. Apocryph. prælect. 153 p. 402, &c.

[*] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 8. sect. 5.

sons, or however the descendants of the priests in the time of his father before mentioned: these were Meraiah, Hananiah, Meshullam, Jehohanan, Jonathan, Joseph, Adna, Helkai, Zechariah, (the prophet of that name,) Meshullam, Zichri, Piltai, Shammua, Jehonathan, Mattenai, Uzzi, Kallai, Eber, Hashabiah, Nethaneel; in all 20, whereas there are 22 named, as in his father's days, there being no sons or descendants from two of them, namely, Hattush and Miamin.

Ver. 22. *The Levites, in the days of Eliashib,* &c.] The third priest of the second temple: *Joiada;* he was the son of Eliashib, and the fourth high-priest: *and Johanan;* the same with Jonathan, ver. 11. and whom Josephus[x] also calls Joannes: *and Jaddua;* the same as in ver. 10. in the days of each of these were *recorded chief of the fathers;* the principal men among the Levites: *also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian;* thought to be Darius Codomannus, the last king of the Persian monarchy, whom Alexander conquered; and if so, this verse must be inserted after the death of Nehemiah, and as the next verse also seems to be; for these two verses interrupt the natural order of the relation: an account is given of the priests in the times of Joiakim, ver. 12—21. these verses being inserted, the account goes on, ver. 24, &c. of the chief of the Levites in the times of Joiakim only.

Ver. 23. *The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, were written in the book of the chronicles,* &c.] Some think this refers to 1 Chron. ix. 14, &c. *until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib;* from whence Dr. Lightfoot[y] concludes, that the Chronicles were written by Ezra in the times of this Johanan.

Ver. 24. *And the chief of the Levites,* &c.] Here the thread of the history of Nehemiah, interrupted by the insertion of the two preceding verses, is carried from the priests to the Levites in the times of the third high-priest: *Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel;* these were singers, since it follows: *with their brethren over-against them, to praise* and *to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, ward over-against ward;* which office of theirs they performed by turns in courses, as David under a divine direction ordered, see 1 Chron. xxiii. 5, 30.

Ver. 25. *Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub,* were *porters,* &c.] At the gates of the temple, see 1 Chron. ix. 15, 16, 17. *keeping the ward, at the thresholds of the gates;* of the temple, where they stood and watched; or *at the collection of the gates,* meaning either where the people were gathered together, or where money gathered was laid up; and so some render it, *the treasuries of the gates;* unless a place called Asuppim should be meant, 1 Chron. xxvi. 15, 17.

Ver. 26. *These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak,* &c.] Who was high-priest in Babylon, and whose grandson was now high-priest in the time referred to: *and in the days of Nehemiah the governor;* the writer of this book: *and of Ezra the priest, the scribe;* who was cotemporary with him.

Ver. 27. *And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem,* &c.] In which many priests and Levites assisted, and seems to be the reason of the above account of them; the dedication of the wall takes in the whole city, gates, and houses, ver. 30. and if a new house was to be dedicated, much more a new city, and especially the holy city, in which stood the temple of the Lord, see Deut. xx. 5. this dedication was made by prayer and songs of praise, as follow, and no doubt by sacrifices, and was kept as a festival; and indeed, according to the Jewish writers[z], it was annually observed on the 7th of Elul, or August; it was on the 25th of that month that the wall was finished, ch. vi. 15. but the gates were not set up, and all things for the dedication were not ready till Elul, or August, following; and then all being finished, they made and observed the 7th of that month as a festival: *they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness;* to assist in the solemnity of the day both with vocal and instrumental music, as follows: *both with thanksgiving and with singing;* with songs of praise and thankfulness vocally, that they had been able, notwithstanding all the malice of their enemies, to build the wall in so short a time; or with a song, perhaps the 30th psalm was sung on this occasion: with *cymbals, psalteries, and with harps;* some playing on one, and some on another, which were the three principal instruments of music used by them, see 1 Chron. xv. 16.

Ver. 28. *And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together,* &c.] Such of the Levites that were singers, and their sons that were trained up as such: *both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem;* the plain of Jordan by Jericho, and the plain of Saron and Lydda: *and from the villages of Netophathi;* see 1 Chron. ix. 16. here they dwelt, when not in their courses, to minister in the temple; but on this public occasion were summoned together.

Ver. 29. *Also from the house of Gilgal,* &c.] Which likewise was in a champaign country in the plains of Jericho, Deut. xi. 30. Josh. v. 9, 10. *and out of the fields of Geba;* which was a Levitical city in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xxi. 17. *and Azmaveth;* the same with Beth-azmaveth, ch. vii. 28. where it follows Anathoth and Netophah, as it does in Ezra ii. 24. and was very probably in the tribe of Benjamin: *for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem;* that they might be near it, to do their duty when required; by which it appears that the said places were near Jerusalem.

Ver. 30. *And the priests and the Levites purified themselves,* &c.] By washing their bodies and their clothes, perhaps by sprinkling the water of purification on them, see Numb. viii. 6, 7, 21. and xix. 9.

Ver. 31. *Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall,* &c.] Which was so broad as to walk upon it, and there was a procession of the princes on it at its dedication, and here is described the manner of it;

[x] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 7. sect. 1.
[y] Works, vol. 1. p. 146.
[z] Megillath Thainith, c. 3. apud Selden. de Synedr. l. 3. c. 13. sect. 12.

the princes of Benjamin must be included here: *and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks;* he divided the people who were met together to praise God on this occasion into two companies: whereof one *went on the right hand upon the wall:* that is, on the southern part of it: *towards the dung-gate;* of which see ch. ii. 13. some Jewish writers, as Jarchi and Ben Melech, give a different sense of שתי תודות, which we render *two companies,* and take them to be two eucharistical loaves of leavened bread, with which a rite or ceremony was performed at the enlargement of a court or city; at the utmost boundary of which those were carried, and one was eaten and the other burnt[t]; which rite is thus described by Maimonides[u], "how do they add to a city? the sanhedrim make two "eucharistical sacrifices, and they take the leavened "bread in them, and the sanhedrim go after the two "eucharistical sacrifices, which follow one another, "and they stand with harps, and psalteries, and cym- "bals, at every corner and at every stone in Jeru- "salem, and say, *I will extol thee, for thou hast lifted "up,* &c. (Psal. xxx.) until they come to the end of "the place they consecrate, there they stand and eat "the thanksgiving-loaf, one of the two, and the other "is burnt."

Ver. 32. *And after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah.*] The other half of them, with Hoshaiah at the head of them.

Ver. 33. *And Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam.*] Not Ezra the priest and the scribe, for he has another place assigned him in this procession, ver. 36. but this seems to be one of the princes.

Ver. 34. *Judah and Benjamin,* &c.] Not the tribes, but the names of the two princes, as Jarchi: *and Shemaiah and Jeremiah;* who were two others.

Ver. 35. *And* certain *of the priests' sons with trumpets,* &c.] To blow with on this occasion; for these the priests sounded: namely, *Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph;* not the Levite, but a priest of this name.

Ver. 36. *And his brethren,* &c.] The brethren of Zechariah, the priest's son, and such are those that follow: *Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God;* which were invented by him, and ordered by him to be used in religious service, under the divine direction: *and Ezra the scribe before them;* for he being a priest also, and a man of great eminence, was placed at the head of them in this procession.

Ver. 37. *And at the fountain-gate, which was over against them,* &c.] Of which see ch. ii. 14. and which was to the south of the dung-gate: *they went up;* that is, one of the two companies, that which took to the right on the wall, ver. 31. with which these words are to be connected: *by the stairs of the city of David;* which went up to the city of Zion, built on an eminence: *at the going up of the wall, above the house of David;* where the wall was higher, and there was an ascent to it: *even unto the water-gate eastward;* of which see ch. iii. 26. and viii. 16. turning from the south to the east, and so drew nigh the temple.

Ver. 38. *And the other company of them that gave thanks went over-against them,* &c.] On the left hand, on the northern part of the wall: *and I after them;* Nehemiah, he brought up the rear of his company, as Ezra led the van of his: *and the half of the people upon the wall;* the chief of them, for all could not walk upon it: *from beyond the tower of the furnaces;* where they baked their bread, or their bricks, see ch. iii. 11. *even unto the broad wall;* where the wall was broader than common, for some reason or another, see ch. iii. 8.

Ver. 39. *And from above the gate of Ephraim,* &c.] The gate which led to the tribe of Ephraim, where that tribe formerly dwelt, see ch. viii. 16. *and above the old gate;* of which mention is made, ch. iii. 6. *and above the fish-gate, and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep-gate;* of all which see ch. iii. 1, 2. *and they stood still in the prison-gate;* which was not a gate of the city, but of the court of the prison, ch. iii. 25. which was near both the king's palace and the temple, see Jer. xx. 1, 2. and xxxii. 2.

Ver. 40. *So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God,* &c.] Having made their procession on the wall in different ways, they met in the temple, that is, in the great court of it, for no other would hold them: *and I, and the half of the rulers with me;* Nehemiah, and the other half with Hoshaiah, ver. 32.

Ver. 41. *And the priests,* &c.] They stood there also, whose names follow: *Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah,* and *Hananiah, with trumpets;* to sound on this occasion.

Ver. 42. *And Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer,* &c.] These seem to be all priests that blew the trumpets: *and the singers sang loud, with Jezrahiah* their *overseer;* these were the Levites, that sung the songs of praise vocally, and raised their voices very high, Jezrahiah being precentor, who led the tune, as well as played on instruments.

Ver. 43. *Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced,* &c.] Or many sacrifices, as Ben Melech interprets it; and these perhaps of the larger sort of cattle, oxen; and which, at least many of them, being peace-offerings, the people feasted on them, so that it was a festival-day: *for God had made them rejoice with great joy;* on account of the wall being set up all around, and so were in greater safety from their enemies: *the wives also and the children rejoiced;* while the priests blew the trumpets, and the singers sung and played on their instruments, the women and children gave loud shouts for joy: *so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off;* as at the laying of the foundation of the temple, Ezra iii. 13.

Ver. 44. *And at that time were some appointed over the chamber for the treasuries,* &c.] On the self-same

[t] Misn. Shebuot, c. 2. sect. 2. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[u] Hilchot, Beth-habechirah, c. 6. sect. 12. Vid. Selden. de Synedr. l. 3. c. 13. sect. 6.

day the dedication was; whilst the people were in a good disposition, and a suitable frame for such service, certain persons from among the priests were appointed to be overseers of the chambers fixed upon for treasuries, to lay up safe in them the following things, and take care of them, that they were put to the use for which they were designed: *for the offerings, for the first-fruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites;* what by the law of God were assigned them for their maintenance, and which the people had lately bound themselves to bring in, ch. x. 35—39. *for Judah rejoiced for the priests, and for the Levites that waited;* at the temple, and performed their services there; they were so pleased with their ministrations that day, that they were determined to take care of them, and provide well for them, and that nothing should be wanting to them, enjoined by the law of God, and that they might not be obliged to dwell in fields and villages for the sake of their living, ver. 28, 29. and ch. xiii. 10.

Ver. 45. *And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of their purification,* &c.] The singers kept their turns in course in the temple, and were not wanting to officiate on all occasions, besides morning and evening services; and the porters they diligently kept the gates of the temple, that no impure person or thing in a ceremonial sense entered: *according to the commandment of David, and Solomon his son;* who made very good rules and orders relative to the better and more regular performance of service by them; see 1 Chron. xxv. 1, *&c.* and xxvi. 1, *&c.* 2 Chron. viii. 14.

Ver. 46. *For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers,* &c.] Persons appointed over the rest to instruct them, and see that they did their work aright, as besides Asaph, Haman, and Jeduthun, and their sons, 1 Chron. xxv. 2—8. *and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God;* such were made by them, some under divine inspiration, which bear the names of David and Asaph, as may be observed in the book of Psalms.

Ver. 47. *And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters every day his portion,* &c.] Whilst these two men governed they did their duty, and punctually paid the Levites their dues at the proper season: *and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites;* set them apart for their use, and brought them to them, their offerings, first-fruits, and tithes: *and the Levites sanctified them unto the children of Aaron;* the Levites set apart the tenth part of the tithes, and delivered them to the priests, and so each had what belonged to them.

CHAP. XIII.

THIS chapter relates the reformation of various abuses crept in among the Jews by Nehemiah, who removed the Moabites and Ammonites, mixed with them, ver. 1, 2, 3. threw the household goods of Tobiah out of a chamber of the temple, and restored it to its former use, ver. 4—9. took care that the Levites had their portion given them which had been kept from them, ver. 10—14. prevented the profanation of the sabbath by selling goods on that day, ver. 15—22. and put a stop to the marrying of strange wives, which had prevailed again among them, ver. 23—31.

Ver. 1. *On that day,* &c.] Not when the wall of the city was dedicated, nor quickly after; for it cannot be thought that people should be so corrupted so soon as this chapter shews; but when Nehemiah had governed them twelve years, and had been at Babylon, and was returned again, as appears from ver. 6. compared with ch. ii. 1, 6. and vii. 2. *they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people;* for from the time of the reading of the law by Ezra, ch. viii. it became a custom to read the law publicly: *and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of the Lord;* that is, be admitted to marry with any of the people of Israel; see the note on Deut. xxiii. 3.

Ver. 2. *Because they met not the children of Israel with bread,* &c.] The same reason is given, and what follows in this verse is observed in Deut. xxiii. 4, 5. see the notes there.

Ver. 3. *Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law,* &c.] Or the law concerning the Ammonite and the Moabite, and which included other nations also, and forbad marriage with them: *that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude;* all of these, and other nations, they had contracted affinity with.

Ver. 4. *And before this,* &c.] Before the above law was read, and observed and acted upon: *Eliashib the priest;* whom some take to be a common priest; so Bishop Usher*; but he seems rather to be the high-priest, by comparing it with ver. 28. *having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God;* which has led some to the notion of his being a common priest; but chamber may be put for chambers, and those for the whole house or temple, which the high-priest had the greatest concern in, and oversight of: was *allied to Tobiah;* the servant and Ammonite, an inveterate enemy of the Jews, ch. ii. 10, 20. having married a daughter of Shecaniah, and his son a daughter of Meshullam, who were both priests, and so as it seems related to Eliashib, ch. vi. 18.

Ver. 5. *And he had prepared for him a great chamber,* &c.] In the temple, by throwing together several chambers, as Piscator observes: *where afore-time they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and to the singers, and the porters, and the offerings of the priests;* see ch. x. 37, 38, 39. and xii. 44.

Ver. 6. *But in all this* time was *not I at Jerusalem,* &c.] Nehemiah, who was absent all the while these

* Annal. Vet. Test. p. 200.

things were done by Eliashib, or otherwise they would not have been suffered: *for in the 32d year of Artaxerxes, king of Babylon, came I unto the king* from Jerusalem; after he had governed there 12 years, to whom he came to give an account of affairs there; this was not Xerxes, as some [b] have thought, for he reigned but 21 years; but Darius Hystaspis, who reigned 36 years, according to Ptolemy's canon, and with which Herodotus [c] agrees; he is called king of Babylon, because that, with the whole empire, was in the hands of the king of Persia, as it had been from the times of Cyrus: *and after certain days obtained I leave of the king;* to return to Jerusalem again; not after five years, as Dr. Prideaux [d] thinks; for it is not likely that Nehemiah would stay so long ere he asked leave of the king to return to Jerusalem, which was so much his care, and on whose prosperity his heart was so much set; rather at most it was but a full year he stayed ere he got leave to return, as Vatablus and Piscator interpret it; in which sense the phrase of *certain days* is used in Lev. xxv. 29. and in other places quoted by the last-mentioned interpreter.

Ver. 7. *And I came to Jerusalem,* &c.] Through the king's leave, and with a commission from him: *and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah:* was informed of the mal-administration of his office: *in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God:* whereby it was profaned and polluted.

Ver. 8. *And it grieved me sore,* &c.] That such a sacred place should be converted to common use, and to that of an Heathen, and of an enemy to the Jews and their religion: *therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber;* as being chief magistrate, and acting by commission under the king of Persia, and to regulate every thing amiss, according to the Jewish laws, as well as those of the king, his power being, no doubt, as large as Ezra's, ch. vii. 25, 26. by *household stuff* is meant what is movable in the house, as chairs, tables, vessels for dressing, eating, drinking, *&c.* there are various opinions about this with the ancients [e].

Ver. 9. *Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers,* &c.] By which it appears there were more than one, or that several were thrown into one; which was done not only by washing them, but as this was a ceremonial uncleanness, contracted by the habitation of an Heathen in them, their purification might be by the water of separation, Numb. xix. 9. *and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense;* replaced them where they were before.

Ver. 10. *And I perceived that the portion of the Levites had not been given* them, *&c.*] The tithes, being removed to some other place, might be converted to another use; or the people, seeing what was done by Eliashib, neglected to bring them in, as judging they would not be properly disposed of; and besides, the Levites had deserted their station upon this: *for the Levites and the singers that did the work were fled every one to his field:* to look after their country-farms, or to get their living by agriculture, since there was no care taken of them at Jerusalem; see ch. xii. 28, 29.

Ver. 11. *Then I contended with the rulers,* &c.] The ecclesiastical rulers, the priests that were appointed over those chambers, ch. xii. 44. he expostulated with them warmly, and chode them severely for their conduct: *and said, why is the house of God forsaken?* no care being taken of the maintenance of the ministers of it, contrary to the promise made ch. x. 37. *and I gathered them together;* the Levites and singers that were dispersed in the countries round about: *and set them in their place;* in the temple, and in the course of their ministry there.

Ver. 12. *Then brought all Judah the tithe of corn, and the new wine, and the oil, into the treasuries.*] When they saw a reformation made, and things were going in their proper channel, and a right use would be made of their tithes, these given to proper persons, who were now reinstated in their office.

Ver. 13. *And I made treasurers over the treasuries,* &c.] New ones, since the others appointed were either dead or unfaithful to their trust, ch. xvii. 44. *Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe;* who also was a priest, as Ezra was both priest and scribe; one that besides his office as a priest was expert in the law, and capable of instructing others: *and of the Levites, Pedaiah, and next to them* was *Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah, for they were counted faithful;* had a good report of all that knew them, for men of fidelity and uprightness, and so fit for such a trust: *and their office was to distribute unto their brethren;* to deliver to them their share in the tithes, first-fruits, *&c.*

Ver. 14. *Remember me, O my God, concerning this,* &c.] Not in a way of strict justice, as if he thought he merited any thing at the hand of God for what he had done; but in a way of grace and mercy, that he would graciously accept thereof, as done for the honour of his name, and overlook all failings and infirmities therein, see ver. 22. *and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof;* for the support of the worship of God in the temple, and for the regulating of the wards and courses in it, both priests and Levites, and for the maintenance of them; which being done from a right principle, love to God, and with a right view, the glory of his name, might be truly reckoned good works: and which he desires might not be wiped or blotted out of the book of his remembrance, see Hos. vi. 10.

Ver. 15. *In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the sabbath,* &c.] Which was not a work of necessity, and so did not drive away the sabbath, as the Jews express themselves, but might have been deferred to another day: *and bringing in sheaves;* of wheat, it being the time of wheat-harvest: *and lading asses;* with goods to be carried from place to place, and sold on that day; this was contrary to the express law, for the ass was to rest, Deut. v. 14. *as also wine, grapes, and figs;* it being the time of ingathering the fruits of the earth: *and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sab-*

[b] Apud Gans. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 6. 2.
[c] Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 1.
[d] Connect. par. 1. p. 397.
[e] Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 19.

bath-day: besides those borne on asses, others were carried on men's shoulders; this was contrary to the law of the sabbath, which required that both men and beasts should have rest: *and I testified* against them *in the day wherein they sold victuals*; that is, the sabbath-day; and if it was not lawful to sell food, then not any thing else; so far from it, that according to the Jewish canons [f], such that were in partnership might not discourse together of what they should sell or buy on the morrow, the day after the sabbath; and so far from gathering and carrying grapes and figs, that a man might not go into his gardens and fields to see what were wanting, or how the fruits were: now Nehemiah admonished the Jews of these evils they committed, and testified against them as breakers of the law, and called heaven and earth to testify against them, should they go on to violate it.

Ver. 16. *There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish*, &c.] From Tyre and Zidon, and the parts adjacent: these they brought from Joppa, and from thence to Jerusalem, and had houses or lodgings near the fish-gate or fish-market, where they sold them: *and all manner of ware*; or merchandise, which, being a trading city, they had from all nations: *and sold on the sabbath-day unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem*; or even in Jerusalem, the holy city, where stood the temple, and where the worship of God was kept, and where the magistrates lived, who should have been terrors to evil-doers: indeed, the law of the sabbath was not binding on these Tyrians, but then they tempted the Jews to break it, by bringing their ware to sell.

Ver. 17. *Then I contended with the nobles*, &c.] The rulers of the city, the civil magistrates, sharply reproved them for their neglect of duty: *and said unto them, what evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath-day?* by suffering servile works to be done in it, and things sold on it.

Ver. 18. *Did not your fathers thus*, &c.] Profane the sabbath in like manner: *and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon our city?* suffered them to be carried captive into a strange land, and their city destroyed for their sins, and for this of sabbath-breaking among the rest, see Jer. xvii. 21—27. Ezek. xx. 16, 21, 24. *yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath*; additional judgments to those that had been already upon them for the same evil with others.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath*, &c.] Or *were shaded* [g]; that is, as Jarchi interprets it, when the shadows of the eve of the sabbath were stretched out upon the gates; the sabbath did not begin till sun-setting, and the stars appeared; but before that, as the sun was declining, the shadows through the houses in Jerusalem, and mountains about it, spread themselves over the gates: and when it was duskish, and as soon as it was so, *I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath*; until sun-setting the next day: *and some of my servants set I at the gates*, that *there should be no burden brought in on the sabbath-day*; the porters being not to be trusted, being liable to be bribed and corrupted, which he knew his servants were not; and therefore, since it might be necessary on a few occasions to open the gates to let some persons in and out, and especially such who dwelt near, and came to worship, he placed his servants there, to take care that none were admitted that had any burdens upon them.

Ver. 20. *For the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware*, &c.] The Tyrians particularly, ver. 16. *lodged without Jerusalem once or twice*; one sabbath-day or two, not being able to get into the city, such strict watch and care being taken to keep the gates shut; this they did, hoping the Jews would come out to them and buy their goods, though they were not admitted to bring them within the city.

Ver. 21. *Then I testified against them*, &c.] Against their continuance there, and threatened them, and called heaven and earth to witness what he would do to them, if they did not depart: *why lodge ye about the wall?* of the city, waiting an opportunity to get in, and tempting the Jews to come out and buy their ware: *if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you*; beat them, or slay them, at least imprison them: *from that time forth came they no more on the sabbath*; finding there was no likelihood of getting into the city, and that they were liable to be taken up and punished.

Ver. 22. *And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves*, &c.] From all ceremonial uncleanness, that they might be fit in a ceremonial sense to perform the duties of the office on the sabbath-day: *and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath-day*; not the gates of the city, his servants were placed there, nor was this the work of the Levites, and much less did this require a particular purification to fit for it; but the gates of the temple, that no impure person might enter there; and on that day it required the greater diligence, because of the number of people that came to worship: *remember me, O my God*, concerning *this also*; with respect to his care to have the sabbath kept holy, as well as his concern for the honour of the house of God, and the maintenance of his ministers, ver. 14. *and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy*; he desired to be dealt with, not according to any merits of his own, but according to the abundant mercy of God; that he would kindly and graciously vouchsafe to accept any good that he had done for his mercy-sake, and forgive whatever was amiss in him.

Ver. 23. *In those days also I saw Jews that married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab.*] Ashdod, or Azotus, as it is called in Acts viii. 40, was one of the five cities of the Philistines; which, though none of the seven nations with whom marriage was forbid, yet it was very unfit and improper to marry with them, Judg. xiv. 3. This place was a mart of the Arabians [h], where they sold their goods, to which the Jews might resort, and thereby be insnared into such marriages; and which with the Ammonites and Moabites were unlawful, ver. 1.

Ver. 24. *And their children spake half in the speech*

[f] Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 24. sect. 1, 2.

[g] צללו obumbratæ, Pagninus, Montanus; obumbrarentur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Rambachius; incidentibus umbris, Tigurine version.

[h] Mela de Situ Orbis, l. 1. c. 10.

of Ashdod, &c.] Which they learned of their mothers, so that it was a mixed language they spoke, partly Jewish and partly Philistine; but some refer this not to their speech, but to the number of their children; that half of them, which Jarchi interprets many of them, spoke in the language of Ashdod, even as many as were most with their mothers, and chiefly brought up by them: *and could not speak in the Jews' language;* not at all, or so much as to be understood well, which inclines to the last sense: *but according to the language of each people;* their mothers were of, whether of Ashdod, or of Ammon, or of Moab.

Ver. 25. *And I contended with them,* &c.] Argued with them, faithfully admonished them, and sharply reproved them: *and cursed them;* assuring them that the curse of God would come upon them, unless they repented. Aben Ezra interprets it of excommunicating them, either with *Cherem* or *Niddui,* which were two sorts of excommunication among the Jews: but it is a question whether as yet those were used by them: *and smote certain of them;* ordered them to be beaten with rods or scourges, as transgressors of the law: *and plucked off their hair,* or ordered it to be plucked off by the executioner that smote them; which sort of punishment, as it was painful, it was disgraceful and ignominous, see Isa. l. 6. *and made them swear by God,* saying, *ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves;* not intermarry with them; this they had sworn to before, ch. x. 29, 30.

Ver. 26. *Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things?* &c.] By marrying strange wives, by whom he was drawn into idolatry, 1 Kings xi. 3, 4. *yet among many nations was there no king like him;* as not for grandeur and riches, so not for wisdom, and yet was insnared by his idolatrous wives: *who was beloved of God;* alluding to his name Jedidiah, which signifies beloved of the Lord, 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25. *and God made him king over all Israel;* which was a proof of his love to him, and so he was under the greater obligation to serve him, and him only, and yet his heart, through his wives, was turned after other gods: *even him did outlandish women cause to sin;* and if so great and wise a man was enticed by them to idolatry, much more may you, and therefore it was very dangerous to marry with them.

Ver. 27. *Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil,* &c.] To suffer it to be done, and connive at it, and not punish for it: *to transgress against our God;* his law, his mind, and will: *in marrying strange wives?* forbidden by him, Deut. vii. 1, 3. 1 Kings xi. 1, 2.

Ver. 28. *And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high-priest,* &c.] A grandson of the high-priest; for the high-priest here is Eliashib, according to our version, and not Joiada his son, according to Dr. Prideaux[1]; the person designed, Josephus[2] makes to be Manasseh, the brother of Jaddua the high-priest: was *son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite;* married a daughter of his, who was the avowed enemy of the Jewish nation; and for whom, according to the same writer, Sanballat obtained leave of Alexander to build a temple on Mount Gerizzim; but this is to protract the age of Nehemiah and Sanballat to too great a length; besides, Eliashib seems to have been now high-priest, and not even his son Joiada, and much less Jaddua, a grandson of Joiada: *therefore I chased him from me;* drove him from his court, suffered him not to minister at the altar; banished him from the city, as Jarchi, and even from the land of Judea.

Ver. 29. *Remember them, O my God,* &c.] The priests, and punish them: *because they have defiled the priesthood;* by marrying strange wives, and rendering themselves unfit to officiate in it: *and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites;* made with Levi, Aaron, and Phinehas, see Numb. xxiv. 11—13. of the corruption of which, complaint is made, Mal. ii. 4—8.

Ver. 30. *Thus cleansed I them from all strangers,* &c.] Both people and priests from strange wives, obliging them to put them away, or flee their country: *and appointing the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business;* to do the work of their office in their courses and turns.

Ver. 31. *And for the wood-offering, at times appointed,* &c.] Of which see ch. x. 39. Levites were appointed to receive the wood that was brought at the times and by the persons fixed, and lay it up in its proper place, and carry it to the altar when wanted: *and for the first-fruits,* to receive and take care of them, and distribute them to the persons to whom they belonged: *remember me, O my God, for good;* to bless him with all good things, temporal and spiritual, to keep him faithful, to make him useful in church and state, and protect him from all his enemies: or rather this may respect what goes before, that as to the wood-offering and the first-fruits, that God would graciously remember him as to them, since the one was as necessary to the altar as the other was to those that minister at it.

[1] Connect. par. 1. p. 412.

[2] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 8. sect. 2, 4.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

THIS book has its name from the person who is the principal subject of it; it is by Clemens of Alexandria[a] called the Book of Mordecai also; it is commonly called, in the Hebrew copies, *Megillat Esther*, the Volume of Esther; and sometimes in the Jewish writings only *Megillah*, by way of eminency, *the Volume*. It was written, according to the Talmudists[b], by the men of the great synagogue, composed by Ezra; and some think it was written by Ezra himself[c]; but Aben Ezra is of opinion it was written by Mordecai, since he was concerned in, and had perfect knowledge of, all things related in it; which is rejected by Spinosa[d], who conceits that this, and the books of Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, were written by one and the same historian long after the times of Judas Maccabæus: as to the canonical authority of it, it has been generally received by Jews and Christians; our wise men, says Maimonides[e], openly and plainly affirm of the book of Esther, that it was dictated by the Holy Spirit; so Aben Ezra on ch. vi. 6. and he himself[f] affirms, that "all the books of the prophets, "and all the Hagiographa (or holy writings), shall cease "in the days of the Messiah, except the volume of "Esther; and, lo, that shall be as stable as the Pentateuch, and as the constitutions of the oral law, which "shall never cease." Though the versions of other books of Scripture might not be read in the synagogues, versions of this book might to those who did not understand Hebrew[g]; and so Luther[h] says, the Jews more esteem the book of Esther than any of the prophets. Whence Mr. Baxter[i] had that notion, I cannot devise, that the Jews used to cast to the ground the book of Esther before they read it, because the name of God was not in it: nor is that any objection to its authenticity, since the hand and providence of God may be most clearly seen in it; in raising Esther to such grandeur, and that for the deliverance of the people of the Jews, and in counter-working and bringing to nought the plots of their enemies, and in saving them: nor that it is not quoted in the New Testament; it is sufficient there is no disagreement between them, yea, an entire agreement, particularly in the account of the captivity of Jeconiah, which is expressed almost in the same words in ch. ii. 6. as in Matt. i. 11, 12. It stands in Origen's catalogue[k] of the books of the Old Testament; nor is it any material objection that it appears not in the catalogue of Melito[l], since in that list is comprehended under Ezra not Nehemiah only, but Esther also, which Jerom[m] mentions along with it. This book is not only of use to the Jews, as it shews the original and foundation of a feast of theirs, still kept up by them, the feast of Purim, and makes for the glory of their nation, and therefore it is no wonder it should be so highly esteemed by them; but serves to shew the singular providence of God in taking care of his people in adversity, in humbling the proud, and exalting the lowly, and saving those that pray to him, and trust in him; it furnishes out various instructions in the conduct of the several persons herein mentioned; it is a history but of ten or eleven years at most, from the third of Ahasuerus, to the twelfth of his reign, ch. i. 3. and iii. 7.

CHAP. I.

THIS chapter relates, how that Ahasuerus, a great king of Persia, made a feast, first for the grandees of his kingdom, and then for his people, as his queen did for the women, ver. 1—9. who being sent for by him, and she refusing to come, was, by the advice of one of his counsellors, divorced from him, and an order made and published throughout his dominions, that every man should bear rule in his own house, ver. 10—22.

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus*, &c.] Who he was is not easy to say; almost all the kings of Persia are so named by one or another writer. He cannot be the Ahasuerus in Dan. ix. 1. he was Astyages, the father of Cyaxares or Darius the Mede; but this must be one who had his royal palace in Shushan, which was never the royal city of the Medes, but of the Persians only; nor does he seem to be the Ahasuerus in Ezra iv. 6. who is thought to be Cambyses, the son and successor of Cyrus; since, according to the canon of Ptolemy, he reigned but eight years, whereas this Ahasuerus at least reigned twelve, ch. iii. 7. though indeed some account for it by his reigning in his father's life-time; besides, Cambyses was always an enemy to the Jews, as this was not; and yet this way go many of the Jewish writers[n]; and so

[a] Stromat. l. 1. p. 329.
[b] T. Bab. Bathra, fol. 15. 1.
[c] August. de Civ. Dei, l. 18. c. 36. Isidor. Origin. l. 6. c. 2.
[d] Tract. Theolog. Politic. c. 10. p. 189, &c.
[e] Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 45.
[f] Hilchot Megillah, c. 2. sect. 18.
[g] Misn. Megillah, c. 2. sect. 1. T. Bab. Megillah, fol, 18. 1.
[h] Mensal. Colloqu. c. 31. p. 358.
[i] The Saints everlasting Rest, part 4. c. 3. sect. 1.
[k] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 6. c. 25.
[l] Apud ib. l. 4. c. 26.
[m] Ad Domnion. & Rogat. tom. 3. fol. 7. F.
[n] Targum & Jarchi in loc. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 29. Zuta, p. 108.

a very learned man, Nicolaus Abram [o]; according to Bishop Usher [p], this was Darius Hystaspis, who certainly was a friend to the Jewish nation; but he is rather the Artaxerxes of Ezra and Nehemiah; and so says the Midrash [q]. Dr. Prideaux [r] thinks Ahasuerus was Artaxerxes Longimanus, which is the sense of Josephus [s], and who is thought by many to be the Artaxerxes in the foresaid books. Capellus [t] is of opinion, that Darius Ochus is meant, to which Bishop Patrick inclines; but I rather think, with Vitringa [u] and others [w], that Xerxes is the Ahasuerus that was the husband of Esther here spoken of; so the Arabic writers [x]; and as he was the son and successor of Darius Hystaspis, if he is meant by Artaxerxes in the preceding books, the history of which is carried to the 32d year of his reign, Neh. xiii. 6. and who reigned but four years more; this book of Esther stands in right order of time to carry on the history of the Jewish affairs in the Persian monarchy; and Mr. Broughton [y] owns, that the name of Xerxes, in Greek, agrees with Achasuerus in Hebrew; and in ch. x. 1. his name is Achashresh, which, with the Greeks, is Axeres or Xerxes [z]: *this is Ahasuerus, which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia;* properly so called; the Ethiopians had been subdued by Cambyses the son and successor of Cyrus [a], and the Indians by Darius Hystaspis the father of Xerxes [b]; and both, with other great nations, were retained in subjection to him [c]; and many of both, as well as of other nations, were with him in his expedition into Greece [d]: *over 127 provinces:* there were now seven provinces more under his jurisdiction than were in the times of Darius the Mede, Dan. vi. 1.

Ver. 2. *That in those days, when the King Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom,* &c.] Not only was placed upon it, but settled in it; after Xerxes had subdued Egypt, in the second year of his reign [e], and enjoyed great peace and tranquillity: *which was in Shushan the palace;* that is, the throne of his kingdom was in Shushan, the royal city of the kings of Persia; of which see the notes on Neh. i. 1. and Dan. viii. 2.

Ver. 3. *In the third year of his reign he made a feast unto all his princes, and his servants,* &c.] The nobles and officers in his court; on what account this was cannot be said with certainty, whether the first day of it was his birth-day, or the day of his coming to the throne, on which day Xerxes used to make a feast annually, as Herodotus relates [f]: *the power of Persia and Media;* the mighty men therein, the potentates thereof; or the *army,* the principal officers of it: *the nobles and princes of the provinces being with him.* The first word Aben Ezra declares his ignorance of, whether it is Hebrew or Persic; Jarchi interprets it governors; and the persons intended by both seem to be the deputy-governors of the 127 provinces who were present at this feast. Xerxes, having reduced Egypt, meditated a war with Greece, to which he was pressed by Mardonius, a relation of his; upon which he summoned the chief men of his kingdom, to have their advice about it [g], which perhaps was taken at this time; for it was in the third year of his reign he resolved upon the war, and began to make preparations for it; and it was usual, at banquets and feasts, that the Persians debated their most important affairs [h].

Ver. 4. *When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom,* &c.] Xerxes was the fourth king of the Persian monarchy, and was *far richer than all* that went before him, all their riches coming into his hands, Dan. xi. 2. and now that prophecy began to be fulfilled, that *by his strength, through his riches, he should stir up all against the realm of Grecia;* which he began to do in the third year of his reign; and for which these his nobles might be called together, as to have their advice, so to animate them to come in the more readily into the expedition, by shewing them the riches he was possessed of; for to none of the kings of Persia does this largeness of riches better belong than to Xerxes: *and the honour of his excellent majesty;* the grandeur he lived in, the pomp and splendour of his court; he was the most grand and magnificent of all the kings of the Medes and Persians [i]: *and this he did many days, even 180 days;* to which seven more being added, as in the following verse, it made 187, the space of full six months; though some think the feast did not last so long, only seven days, and that the 180 days were spent in preparing for it; but the Persian feasts were very long, large, and sumptuous. Dr. Frye [k] says, this custom of keeping an annual feast 180 days still continues in Persia. Cheus [l], a Chinese emperor, used frequently to make a feast which lasted 120 days; though it cannot be well thought that the same individual persons here were feasted so long, but, when one company was sufficiently treated, they removed and made way for another; and so it continued successively such a number of days as here related, which was six months, or half a year; a year then in use consisting of 360 days, as was common with the Jews, and other nations, and so the Persians [m].

Ver. 5. *And when these days were ended,* &c.] The 180, in which the nobles, princes, and great men of the kingdom were feasted: *the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small;* of every age, rank, state and condition of life; these were the common people, whether inhabitants of the city or country-people there on business, whether natives or fo-

[o] Pharus Vet. Test. l. 11. c. 12. p. 305.
[p] Annal. Vet. Test. p. 160. so Broughton, Works, p. 28, 250, 551.
[q] Midrash Esther, fol. 86. 2.
[r] Connection, &c. par. 1. B. 4. p. 252, &c.
[s] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 6. sect. 1. and so Suidas in voce Ἐσθὴρ.
[t] Chronolog. Sacr. p. 224.
[u] Hypotypos. Hist. Sacr. p. 110.
[w] Schickart. de Festo Purim. Rainold. Prælect. 144. p. 231. Alsted. Chronolog. p. 126, 181.
[x] In Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. p. 87.
[y] Ut supra.
[z] Vid. Hiller. Arcan. Keri & Ketib, p. 57. & Onomastic. Sacr. p. 609.

[a] Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 97.
[b] Ib. Melpomene, sive, l. 4. c. 44.
[c] Ib. Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 9.
[d] Ib. c. 65, 69, 70.
[e] Herodot. ib. c. 7.
[f] Ib. Calliope, sive, l. 9. c. 109.
[g] Ib. l. 7. c. 8.
[h] Ib. Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 133.
[i] Pausan. Laconica, sive, l. 3. p. 165.
[k] Travels, p. 348. apud Patrick in loc.
[l] In Martin. Sinic. Hist. l. 3. p. 79.
[m] Prideaux's Connect. par. 1. p. 197.

reigners; according to the Targum, there were Israelites there, but not Mordecai and his family; yea, it is said in the Midrash [n], that they were all Jews, and that their number was 18,500; but this is not probable; it is very likely there were some Jews among them, as there were many in the army of Xerxes, when he made his expedition into Greece, according to the poet Choerilus [o]; which is not to be wondered at, since there were so many of them in his dominions, and they men of valour and fidelity, and to whose nation he was so kind and favourable: and this feast was kept *seven days in the court of the garden of the king's palace*: which no doubt was very large, and sufficient to hold such a number as was assembled together on this occasion, when there was not room enough for them in the palace. There is in history an account of a Persian king that supped with 15,000 men, and in the supper spent 40 talents [p].

Ver. 6. *Where were white, green, and blue hangings, &c.*] Or curtains of fine linen, as the Targum, which were of these several colours; the first letter of the word for *white* is larger than usual, to denote the exceeding whiteness of them. The next word is *carpas*, which Ben Melech observes is a dyed colour, said to be green. Pausanias [q] makes mention of Carpasian linen, and which may be here meant; the last word used signifies blue, sky-coloured, or hyacinth: *fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings, and pillars of marble*: these pillars are said, in the Targum, to be of divers colours, red, green, and shining yellow and white, on which the silver rings were fixed, and into them were put linen strings of purple colour, which fastened the hangings to them, and so made an enclosure, within which the guests sat at the feast: *the beds were of gold and silver*: the couches on which they sat, or rather reclined at eating, as was the manner of the eastern nations; these, according to the Targum, were of lambs' wool, the finest and the softest, and the posts of them were of gold, and their feet of silver. Such luxury obtained among the Romans in aftertimes [r]: these were placed *in a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble*: which, according to some, are the porphyrite, Parian, alabaster, and marble of various colours: the marble of the Persians is of four colours, white, black, red and black, and white and black [s]; but others take them to be precious stones, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra; the first is by the Targum interpreted crystal, by others the emerald, one of which Theophrastus [t] speaks of as four cubits long, and three broad, which might be laid in a pavement; the third is, by Bochart [u], supposed to be the pearl; and in the Talmud [w] it is said to be of such a nature, that if placed in the middle of a dining-room, will give light in it as at noon-day, which seems to be what is called lychnites; to which Lucian [x] ascribes a like property: nor need all this seem strange, since great was the luxury of the eastern nations. Philostratus [y] speaks of a temple in India paved with pearls, and which he says all the Barbarians use in their temples; particularly it is said [z], that the roofs of the palaces of Shushan and Ecbatana, the palaces of the kings of Persia, shone with gold and silver, ivory, and amber; no wonder then that their pavements were of very valuable and precious stones: and from hence it appears, that the *lithostrata*, the word here used by the Septuagint, or tesserated pavements, were in use 400 years before the times of Sylla, where the beginning of them is placed by Pliny [a]; there was a *lithostraton* in the second temple at Jerusalem, by us rendered the pavement, John xix. 13. perhaps the same with the room Gazith, so called from its being laid with hewn stone. Aristeas [b], who lived in the times of Ptolemy Philadelphus, testifies that the whole floor of the temple was a *lithostraton*, or was paved with stone: it is most likely therefore that these had their original in the eastern country, and not in Greece, as Pliny [c] supposed.

Ver. 7. *They gave them drink in vessels of gold, the vessels being divers one from another, &c.*] In the pattern and workmanship of them, though of the same metal, which diversity made the festival the more grand: earthen cups, with the Persians, were reckoned very mean; when a king would disgrace a man, he obliged him to use earthen cups [d]. The Targum represents these vessels to be the golden vessels of the temple at Jerusalem Nebuchadnezzar carried away; which could not be, since they had been delivered by Cyrus to Zerubbabel, Ezra i. 7—10. *and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king*; such as the king was able to give, the best he had, and that in great plenty; the wine the kings of Persia used to drink, as Strabo [e] relates, was Chalybonian wine, or wine of Helbon, as it is called, Ezek. xxvii. 18. see the note there; but by the wine of the kingdom, as it may be rendered, is meant wine of the country; the wine of Schiras is reckoned the best in Persia [f].

Ver. 8. *And the drinking was according to the law, none did compel, &c.*] According to the law Ahasuerus gave to his officers next mentioned, which was not to oblige any man to drink more than he chose; the Targum is, "according to the custom of his body;" that is, as a man is able to bear it, so they drank: some [g] read it, *the drinking according to the law, let none exact*: or require it to be, according to the custom then in use in Persia; for they were degenerated from their former manners, and indulged to intemperance, as Xenophon [h] suggests: the law formerly was, not to carry large vessels into feasts; but now, says he, they drink so much, that they themselves must be carried out, because they can't go upright: and so it became a law

[n] Midrash Esther, fol. 94. 1.
[o] Apud Joseph. contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 22.
[p] Ctesias & Dinon in Athenæi Deipnosoph. l. 4.
[q] Attica, sive, l. 1. p. 45.
[r] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 11. Sueton. Vit. Cæsar. c. 49.
[s] Universal History, vol. 5. p. 67.
[t] Apud Plin. l. 37. c. 5.
[u] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 5. c. 8.
[w] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 12. 1.
[x] De Dea Syria.

[y] Vit. Apollon l. 2. c. 11.
[z] Aristot. de Mundo, c. 6. Apuleius de Mundo.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 25.
[b] De 70 Interpret. p. 32.
[c] Ut supra.
[d] Ctesias in Athenæi Deipnosoph. l. 11.
[e] Geograph. l. 15. p. 505.
[f] Universal History, vol. 5. p. 85.
[g] Vid. Drusium in loc.
[h] Cyropædia, l. 8. c. 51.

with the Greeks, at their festivals, that either a man must drink or go out[h]; so the master of a feast, at which Empedocles was, ordered either that he should drink, or the wine be poured on his head[i]; but such force or compulsion Ahasuerus forbad: and thus with the Chinese now, they force none to drink, but modestly invite them[k]: *for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure*; to let them have what wine they would, but not force them to drink more than was agreeable to them.

Ver. 9. *Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women*, &c.] For it was not customary with the Persians, nor other eastern nations, to admit of women to their festivals[m], but they feasted by themselves. Who Vashti was is not known with any certainty. Bishop Usher, who takes Ahasuerus to be Darius Hystaspis, thinks Vashti was Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus, whom he married. The Targumist says, she was the daughter of Evil-merodach, the son of Nebuchadnezzar. Her name seems to be the same with Vesta, a deity worshipped by the Persians, as Xenophon[n], and signifies vehement fire, which was in great veneration with them; and therefore this queen is most likely to be of Persian original: she kept her feast *in the royal house which* belonged *to Ahasuerus*: her guests not being so many, there was room enough in the king's palace for them, and where it was more decent for them to be than in the open air in the garden, and exposed to the sight of men.

Ver. 10. *On the seventh day*, &c.] Of the feast, the last day of it, which the Rabbins, as Jarchi observes, say was the sabbath-day, and so the Targum: *when the heart of the king was merry with wine*; when he was intoxicated with it, and knew not well what he said or did; and the discourse at table ran upon the beauty of women, as the latter Targum; when the king asserted there were no women so beautiful as those of Babylon, and, as a proof of it, ordered his queen to be brought in: *he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains, that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king*; or eunuchs, as the word is sometimes rendered; and such persons were made use of in the eastern countries to wait upon women, and so were proper to be sent on the king's errand to the queen.

Ver. 11. *To bring Vashti the queen before the king*, &c.] Not against her will, or by force; but they were sent to let her know it was the king's pleasure that she should come to him immediately: *with the crown-royal*; that is, upon her head, to make her look the more grand and majestic: *to shew the people and the princes her beauty*; *for she was fair to look upon*; which was not wisely done, neither was it comely nor safe.

Ver. 12. *But the queen refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains*, &c.] Even though he sent by them again, as the Targum; and so says Josephus[o]; which might not purely arise from pride in her, and contempt of him, but because she might conclude he was drunk, and knew not well what he did; and therefore had she come at his command, when he was himself and sober, he might blame her for coming, nay, use her ill for it, and especially if she was to come naked, as say the Jews[p]; and besides, it was contrary to the law of the Persians, as not only Josephus[q], but Plutarch[r] observes, which suffered not women to be seen in public; and particularly did not allow their wives to be with them at feasts, only their concubines and harlots, with whom they could behave with more indecency; as for their wives, they were kept out of sight, at home[s]; and therefore Vashti might think it an indignity to be treated as an harlot or concubine: *therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him*; which was the more fierce, as he was inflamed with wine.

Ver. 13. *Then the king said to the wise men that knew the times*, &c.] Astrologers, as Aben Ezra, that knew the fit time for doing any thing; or that had knowledge of ancient times, historians, well read in history, and knew things that had happened similar to this: *for so was the king's manner towards all that knew law and judgment*; it was customary with him in any case of difficulty to have the opinion and advice of those that were expert in the law, and well understood right and wrong. These are called by Herodotus[t] the king's judges.

Ver. 14. *And the next unto him*, &c.] That sat next to the king, and was the chief in dignity and authority under him: was *Carshena*; and so every one in their rank and order, as next mentioned: *Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena*, and *Memucan*; who, according to the latter Targum, were of different countries; the 1st of Africa, the 2d of India, the 3d of Idumea, the 4th of Egypt, the 5th of Resen, Gen. x. 12. which is framed out of Marsena, who is dropped, and the last of Jerusalem, said to be Daniel; though the former Targum makes him to be Haman: *the seven princes of Persia and Media*; which custom of having seven counsellors with the kings of Persia arose from the seven princes that slew Smerdis the pretender, and made Darius Hystaspis king, the father of Xerxes: *which saw the king's face*; were intimate and familiar with him, often in his presence; yea, might go into it when they pleased, without the ceremony of being introduced; which privilege the above persons reserved to themselves, when they placed Darius on the throne, as Herodotus relates[u]: *and which sat the first in the kingdom*; next to the king, and were assisting to him in the administration of government, see Ezra vii. 14.

Ver. 15. *What shall we do unto the Queen Vashti, according to law*, &c.] The king desired to know what law was provided in such a case as her's, and what to be done according to it: *because she hath not performed the commandment of the king by the chamberlains?* as this was the crime, disobedience to his

[h] Cicero. Tusculan. Quæst. l. 5.
[i] Laert. in Vit. ejus, l. 8. p. 608.
[k] Semedo's History of China, par. 1. c. 12.
[m] Justin e Trogo, l. 41. c. 3.
[n] Cyropædia, l. 1. c. 23.
[o] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 6. sect. 1.

[p] Targum in loc. Midrash Esther, fol. 90. 1.
[q] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 6. sect. 1.
[r] In Themistocle.
[s] Macrob. Saturnal. l. 7. c. 1.
[t] Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 14, 31. so in Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 1. c. 31.
[u] Ib. c. 84, 118.

commands, he would have those who had knowledge of the law consider what punishment was to be inflicted on her for it, according to former laws, usages, and customs, or as reason and justice required; and it being a festival, and they heated with wine, was no objection to a consultation on this head; for it was the manner of the Persians at festivals, and when inflamed with wine, to consult and determine about matters of the greatest moment[w]; yea, reckoned their counsels and decrees firmer than when made when they were sober[x]; so the ancient Germans[y].

Ver. 16. *And Memucan answered before the king and the princes*, &c.] Who was the last, and perhaps the least and the youngest of the counsellors; it being appointed by the king, according to the latter Targum, that when his counsellors sat, the least should give their counsel first; just as puisne judges, and the youngest peers with us, give their opinion in a case first: *Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in all the provinces of the King Ahasuerus*: he means, by setting a bad example to their wives, as after explained; it is an exaggeration of her crime, and made with a design to incense the king the more against her.

Ver. 17. *For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women*, &c.] It will soon be spread all over the king's dominions, and reach the ears of the wives of all his subjects, and become their general talk everywhere: *so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes*: make light of their authority, refuse subjection to them, slight their commands, and neglect to yield obedience to them, and so not give them the honour that is due unto them: *when it shall be reported, the King Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, and she came not*: was disobedient to his commands, refused to go along with the chamberlains sent by the king to fetch her.

Ver. 18. Likewise *shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen*, &c.] From henceforward they'll give a like answer to their husbands, when they lay their commands upon them, as Vashti has to the king; they'll tell them to their faces they'll not obey their orders: *thus* shall there arise *too much contempt and wrath*: there will be in wives a general contempt of their husbands, which will cause discord and strife, quarrels, wrath and anger; contempt on one part, wrath on the other, and contention between both.

Ver. 19. *If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him*, &c.] Not only a proclamation made, but a law enacted and published by royal authority: *and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and Medes, that it be not altered*: for so it was, that when a law was made, and signed, and sealed, and registered among the laws of the kingdom, it remained unalterable, Dan. vi. 8, 15. this precaution Memucan took for his own safety; for had the king acted upon his advice, without passing it into a law in such form, he might change his mind, and recall Vashti, who would not fail of venting her wrath upon the counsellor, and so he be in danger of losing his life for it: *that Vashti come no more before King Ahasuerus*; but be entirely divorced, never to be received any more: *and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she*; or *to her companion*[z]; that was with her in the house of the women in the seraglio; one that was fairer, as the Targum, or of a better disposition than her; let her be made queen, and enjoy all the honour, and dignity, and marks of royalty Vashti did; her throne, her crown, and royal apparel, as it is interpreted in an ancient Jewish writing[a].

Ver. 20. *And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire*, &c.] As it was proper it should, since the report of the queen's deed would be made everywhere: *for it is great*; the empire consisting of 127 provinces, ver. 1. Aben Ezra and Abendana interpret it, *though* it is great, yet the decree should be published throughout; the latter observes, that this may respect the king's decree; and so the Targum is, "for his decree is "great;" it respecting a matter of great importance, and relating to a great personage, and would have great effect on the minds of persons, when it was observed that one so great was treated in this manner: and therefore *all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small*; speaking respectfully to them, yielding a ready and cheerful obedience to all their commands; which would be done to princes and peasants, to high and low, to every rank of men.

Ver. 21. *And the saying pleased the king and the princes*, &c.] The king, and the other six princes and counsellors, approved of the proposal, and unanimously agreed to it: *and the king did according to the word of Memucan*: passed a law according to his advice, and signed and sealed it, and registered it among the laws of the kingdom, not to be revoked.

Ver. 22. *For he sent letters unto all the king's provinces*, &c.] The 127 provinces, ver. 1. which, according to the Targum, were written and sealed with his own seal; which is very probable: *into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language*; that is, these letters were written in the language, and in the characters in which that language was written, used in each of the provinces to which these letters were sent, that they might be easily read and understood by all: the sum of which was, *that every man should bear rule in his own house*; be prince, lord, and master there, and his commands obeyed, not only by his children and servants, but by his wife also: *and that it should be published according to the language of every people*; but as this is expressed, or at least implied, in the first clause of this verse, it should rather be rendered, *and that he should speak according to the language of his people*; and so is the latter Targum; it seems as if a man, who had married a woman in another country, in complaisance to her

[w] Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 133.
[x] Strabo. Geograph. l. 15. p. 505. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 11. & l. 5. c. 21.
[y] Tacitus de Mor. German. c. 22.

[z] לרעותה sodali ejus, Montanus; socio ejus, Tigurine version, Drusius, Rambachius.
[a] Tikkune Zohar, correct. 21. fol. 59. 2.

had neglected his own native tongue, and used her's in the family, by which means he lost, or seemed to lose, his authority in it: now, to guard against this, this part of the law was made; and, according to Jarchi, the husband was to compel his wife to learn and speak his language, if she was a foreigner; to which agrees the first Targum, which paraphrases the whole thus, "that a man rule over his wife, and oblige her to "speak according to the language of her husband, "and the speech of his people;" and, in after-times, Bahram Gaur forbid any other language, besides the Persian, to be used within his port, either in speaking or writing [a].

CHAP. II.

By the advice of the ministers of King Ahasuerus, fair virgins were sought for throughout his dominions, and brought to his chamberlain, the keeper of the women, among whom was Esther, a Jewish virgin, ver. 1—8. who found favour with the chamberlain, and afterwards with the king, who made her queen instead of Vashti, and a feast on that account, ver. 9—18. Mordecai, to whom Esther was related, and according to whose advice she acted, sitting in the king's gate, discovered a conspiracy against the king, which he now made known to Esther, ver. 19—23.

Ver. 1. *After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus was appeased*, &c.] Which went off with his wine, and so was quickly after, a few days at most, unless this can be understood as after the expedition of Xerxes into Greece, from whence he returned to Shushan, in the 7th year of his reign; and if he is the Ahasuerus here meant, he married Esther that year, ver. 16. and it seems certain, that after his expedition he gave himself up to his amours, and in his way to Sardis he fell in love with his brother's wife, and then with his daughter [b]: *he remembered Vashti*; her beauty, and was grieved, as Jarchi observes, that she was removed from him; and so Josephus says [c], that he passionately loved her, and could not bear parting with her, and therefore was grieved that he had brought himself into such difficulties: the Targumists carry it further, and say that he was wroth with those that advised him to it, and ordered them to be put to death, and that they were: *and what she had done*; that it was a trivial thing, and not deserving of such a sentence as he had passed upon her; that it was not done from contempt of him, but from modesty, and a strict regard to the laws of the Persians: *and what was decreed against her*; that she should come no more before him, but be divorced from him; the thought of which gave him great pain and uneasiness.

Ver. 2. *Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him*, &c.] Fearing that, if Vashti should be restored, vengeance would be taken on them; or however to remove the grief and melancholy of the king, they gave the following advice: *let there be fair young virgins sought for the king*; that he might enjoy them, and choose one of them, the most agreeable to him, and put her in the room of Vashti.

Ver. 3. *And let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom*, &c.] Who best knew where beautiful virgins might be found in their respective provinces, in which they dwelt: *that they may gather together all the fair young virgins unto Shushan the palace*; the metropolis of the kingdom, where was the royal palace: *to the house of the women, unto the custody of Hege the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women*; in which house it seems were two apartments, one for the virgins before they were introduced to the king, the other for them when they were become his concubines, which had a keeper also; but this Hege seems to have been over the whole house, ver. 14. It was not only usual with the eastern people, as with the Turks now, for great personages to have keepers of their wives and concubines, but with the Romans also [d]: *and let their things for purification be given them*; such as oil of myrrh, spices, *&c.* to remove all impurity and ill scent from them, and make them look smooth and beautiful.

Ver. 4. *And let the maiden which pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti*, &c.] Have the royal estate, that was taken from Vashti, given to her, the crown-royal set on her head, *&c. and the thing pleased the king, and he did so*; appointed officers in all his provinces to seek out the most beautiful virgins, and bring them to his palace; so with the Chinese now, the king never marries with any of his kindred, though ever so remote; but there is sought throughout his kingdom a damsel of 12 or 14 years, of perfect beauty, good natural parts, and well inclined to virtue; whence, for the most part, the queen is the daughter of some artisan; and in their history [e], mention is made of one that was the daughter of a mason.

Ver. 5. *Now in Shushan the palace was a certain Jew*, &c.] Not one of the tribe of Judah, for he was afterwards called a Benjaminite; but was so called, because he was of the kingdom of Judah, which consisted of both tribes. Jarchi says, all that were carried captive with the kings of Judah were called Jews among the nations, though of another tribe: *whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite*: who was among those that came with Zerubbabel from Babylon to Jerusalem, and returned to Persia again, Ezra ii. 2. Neh. vii. 7. though some think this was another Mordecai; see the note on Ezra ii. 2. who descended not from Kish, the father of Saul, but a later and more obscure person.

Ver. 6. *Who had been carried away from Jerusalem*, &c.] Which, according to some [f], is to be connected,

[a] Vid. Castel. Lexic. Persic. col. 266.
[b] Herodot. Calliope, sive, l. 9. c. 107.
[c] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 6. sect. 2.
[d] Pone seram, cohibe, &c. Juvenal. Satyr. 6. ver. 346, 347.
[e] Semedo's History of China, part 1. ch. 23.
[f] Vid. Rainold. de Lib. Apocryph. Prælect. 110, 117, 146.

not with Mordecai, but with Kish, his great-grandfather; and indeed otherwise Mordecai must be now a very old man, and Esther his cousin-german, they being brothers' children, must be at an age, one would think, not to be reckoned among young virgins, and not be so amiable as she is represented; and indeed, according to the former Targum, she was 75 years of age, which is not credible; and yet this, and more she must be, to be equal to Mordecai, if he was carried captive, as follows: *with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away;* which was eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem, for so long Zedekiah reigned after that captivity of Jeconiah: hence Sir John Marsham[g] makes this affair of Esther to be within the time of the Babylonish captivity, and places Ahasuerus her husband between Darius the Mede and Cyrus, contrary to history and Scripture, see Dan. vi. 28.

Ver. 7. *And he brought up Hadassah (that is Esther) his uncle's daughter,* &c.] Her Hebrew name was Hadassah, which signifies a myrtle, to which the Israelites, and good men among them, are sometimes compared, Zech. i. 8. Her Persian name was Esther, which some derive from *satar*, to hide, because hidden in the house of Mordecai, so the former Targum, and by his advice concealed her kindred: or rather she was so called by Ahasuerus, when married to him, this word signifying in the Persian language a *star*[h]; and so the latter Targum says she was called by the name of the star of Venus, which in Greek is ἀστὴρ; though it is said[i], that the myrtle, which is called *hadassah* in Hebrew, is in the Syriac language *esta;* so *asa* in the Talmud[k] signifies a myrtle; and, according to Hillerus[l], *esther* signifies the black myrtle, which is reckoned the most excellent; and so *amestris*, according to him, signifies the sole myrtle, the incomparable one. Xerxes had a wife, whose name was Amestris, which Scaliger thinks is as if it was הם אסתר, and the same with Esther; but to this are objected, that her father's name was Otanes, and her cruelty in the mutilation of the wife of Masistis, her husband's brother, and burning alive 14 children of the best families of the Persians, as a sacrifice to the infernal gods; and besides, Xerxes had a son by her marriageable, in the seventh year of this reign[m], the year of Ahasuerus, in which he married Esther: but it is observed by some, that these things are confounded with the destruction of Haman's family, or told by the Persians to obliterate the memory of Esther, from whom they passed to the Greek historians: *for she had neither father nor mother;* according to the former Targum, her father died and left her mother with-child of her, and her mother died as soon as she was delivered of her: *and the maid was fair and beautiful;* which was both the reason why she was taken and brought into the king's house, and why Mordecai took so much care of her: *whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter;* loved her, and brought her up as if she had been his daughter, and called her so, as the Targum. The Rabbins, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, say, he took her in order to make her his wife; and so the Septuagint render it; though perhaps no more may be intended by that version than that he brought her up to woman's estate. Josephus[n] calls him her uncle; and so the Vulgate Latin version, his brother's daughter; but both are mistaken.

Ver. 8. *So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and decree was heard,* &c.] In the several provinces of his kingdom: *and when many maidens were gathered unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai;* Josephus[o] says, there were gathered to the number of 400: *that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, the keeper of the women:* by force, as Aben Ezra and the former Targum, and so the word is sometimes used.

Ver. 9. *And the maiden pleased him,* &c.] Not the king, into whose presence she was not yet introduced, but the chamberlain; her beauty and her behaviour recommended her to him, and he concluded within himself that she was the person that of all would be acceptable to the king: *and she obtained kindness of him:* had favours shewn others had not: *and he speedily gave her her things for purification;* as oil, spices, &c. that she might be the sooner fitted to be had into the king's presence: *with such things as belonged to her;* food and drink from the king's table; the Targum interprets it gifts, as chains and royal apparel: *and seven maidens, which were given her, out of the king's house;* to wait upon her the seven days of the week, as the same Targum: *and he preferred her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women;* removed her and them to it, which was the most splendid, had large, airy, and pleasant rooms.

Ver. 10. *Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred,* &c.] What nation or family she was of; it not being asked, she was under no obligation to declare it; and being born in Shushan, as very probable, she was taken to be a Persian: *for Mordecai had charged her that she should not shew it;* lest she should be despised and ill treated on that account; fearing, if the king knew it, he would not marry her, as Aben Ezra; or rather, as the same writer thinks, that she might keep the law of God privately, observe the sabbath, &c.

Ver. 11. *And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house,* &c.] Being one of the court, and in an high post, as Aben Ezra thinks, he might walk there without being examined, and called to an account for it: *to know how Esther did;* to inquire of her health and prosperity, or peace, the word here used signifies, even all sorts of it: *and what should become of her;* or was done to her, whether she was well used, or as yet introduced to the king, how it fared with her, and what befell her.

Ver. 12. *Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to King Ahasuerus, after that she had been 12 months, according to the manner of women,* &c.] That were prepared in the house of the women to be presented to the

[g] Chronicon. sec. 18, p. 609, 621.
[h] Castell. Lex. Persic. Latin. col. 329. Vid. Pfeiffer. difficil. Script. cent. 3. loc. 28.
[i] Caphtor Uperah, fol. 60. 2.
[k] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 1.
[l] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 621, 622.
[m] Herodot. Calliope, sive, l. 9. c. 107, 111. & Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 61. 114.
[n] Ut supra.
[o] Ibid.

king for his liking; for it seems that these virgins came in turns to him, according to the time they had been in the house; as did the wives of the kings of Persia, as Herodotus relates [p]: *for so were the days of their purifications accomplished*; that is, in the space of 12 months, which were thus divided: to wit, *six months with oil of myrrh*; which Ben Melech interprets of musk: *and six months with sweet odours*; the former was used to make the skin smooth and soft, and these to remove all ill scents through sweat, or any other cause: *and with other things for the purifying of women*; by bathing, rubbing, &c. and such a space of time was observed not only for the thorough purification of them, but partly was of state and grandeur, and partly that it might be a clear case they were not with-child by another, before they came to the king.

Ver. 13. *Then thus came every virgin unto the king*, &c.] When her 12 months were up, and she was purified in the manner before observed: *whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house*: whatever she demanded the chamberlain was obliged to furnish her with, or grant it to her, whether for ornament, as jewels, rich apparel, &c. or for attendance; whatever prince or peer she required to accompany her to the king, was to be obtained for her, as the Targum; and every thing for mirth, all kinds of songs, or instruments of music, as Jarchi.

Ver. 14. *In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women*, &c.] Or the other apartment of the house of the women, where were kept those the king had made his concubines or secondary wives. Aben Ezra interprets it the second time, and so the Targum by *again*: *to the custody of Shaashgaz the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines*: of which the kings of Persia had a great number; Darius, whom Alexander conquered, had 360 [q]: *she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she was called by name*: but remained shut up in the house, and might not lie with, nor be married to, another man.

Ver. 15. *Now when the turn of Esther the daughter of Abihail*, &c.] For this was her father's name, and not Aminadab, as the Septuagint version: *the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter*; which makes it quite clear that Mordecai was not Esther's uncle, as Josephus, but her own cousin: now when her turn *was come to go in unto the king*; which the virgins under purification took by turns, ver. 14. *she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed*; what he ordered her to have, or to do, she submitted to, being in his hands, and so obeyed his orders; but more she asked not, either for ornament or attendance, being not at all solicitous whether the king liked her or not; for it was not of choice, but by constraint, she went unto him; nor needed she any thing to recommend her, her virtue, modesty, and beauty, were sufficient: *and Esther obtained favour of all them that looked upon her*; when she came to court, the eyes of all were attracted to her; all admired her beauty, her innocent and modest look, and her graceful mien and deportment.

Ver. 16. *So Esther was taken unto King Ahasuerus, into his house-royal*, &c.] Did not return on the morrow to the house of the women, as those who only became the king's concubines did, ver. 14. but she was taken to be his wife, and designed for his queen, and so was retained in his palace, and placed in an apartment suitable to the dignity she was about to be advanced unto: and this was done *in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth*; and answers to part of December and part of January; not the 12th month Adar, as the Septuagint version, and so Josephus [r], contrary to the original text: either that law had not obtained among the Persians, or the king thought himself not bound by it, which forbid marriage at any other time than the beginning of the vernal equinox [s]: *in the 7th year of his reign*; and the divorce of Vashti being in the third year of his reign, it was four years before Esther was taken by him; who, if Xerxes, it may be accounted for by his preparation for, and engagement in, a war with Greece, which took him up all this time; and from whence he returned in the seventh year of his reign, at the beginning of it, and married Esther at the close of it, see ver. 1. as may be suggested.

Ver. 17. *And the king loved Esther above all the women*, &c.] The virgins he made his concubines, as next explained; though Jarchi interprets it of married women, for such he supposes were gathered and brought to him, as well as virgins: *and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins*; who had been purified, and in their turns brought to him: *so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti*; declared her queen, and gave her all the ensigns of royalty: so it was usual with the eastern kings to put a crown or diadem on the heads of their wives at the time of marriage, and declare them queens [t].

Ver. 18. *Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and servants*, even *Esther's feast*, &c.] A feast to all his nobles, courtiers, and ministers of state, on account of his marriage with Esther; which, according to the Greek version, was held seven days; but, according to Josephus, it lasted a whole month [u]: *and he made a release to the provinces*; of taxes and tribute due to him, as was the custom of the kings of Persia when they came to the throne, as Herodotus [w] relates; so Smerdis the magus, that mounted the throne after Cambyses, pretending to be his brother, released them for three years to come [x]; and Grotius says kings used to do it at their marriage, but gives no instance of it: *and gave gifts*; according to the latter Targum, to the provinces, all of them, that he might be sure that the people of Esther shared his favours, who were as yet unknown; but rather these gifts were given to his nobles, or it may be to Esther; so the former Targum, "he gave to her a gift and "portion:" *according to the state of the king*: his royal ability and munificence, and suitable to his

[p] Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 69.
[q] Curt. Hist. l. 3. c. 3.
[r] Ut supra.
[s] Strabo. Geograph. l. 1. p. 504.

[t] Vid. Paschalium de Coronis, l. 10. c. 8. p. 689.
[u] Ut supra.
[w] Erato, sive, l. 6. c. 59.
[x] Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 67.

grandeur; and it was usual with the Persian kings to give to their wives whole cities for one thing or another, as for necklaces, hairlaces, shoes, *&c.*[x]; Socrates[y] speaks of a whole country in Persia called the *Queen's girdle*, and another her *Head-dress*.

Ver. 19. *And when the virgins were gathered together the second time*, &c.] Some think this second collection is that which was made when Esther was taken and brought to the keeper of the women, called the second, in reference to a former collection of them, made when Vashti was taken and made queen; but as there is no proof of any such collection then made, rather the case was this, such was the lust of the king, though he had a queen he loved, and a multitude of concubines, yet a second collection of virgins was made for his gratification: *then Mordecai sat in the king's gate*; or court, being an officer in it, promoted by the interest of Esther, though not as yet known to be a relation of her's: so θύρα in Xenophon[z] is used of the court of the king of Persia, as the Ottoman or Turkish court is now called the *Porte*.

Ver. 20. *Esther had not shewed her kindred nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her*, &c.] As not before, so neither since she was made queen, see ver. 10. though, according to the Targums, she was urged to it by the king himself: *for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him*: which shewed great humility in her, notwithstanding her advancement, great respect to him, and a sense of gratitude for the kindness he had shewn; and this charge to her was still continued by Mordecai, partly that she might not fall into contempt, and partly to prevent hatred and envy to the Jewish nation, through her promotion; but chiefly so it was ordered in Providence, the proper time being not yet come.

Ver. 21. *In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate*, &c.] Being, as before observed, an officer at court: *two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those that kept the door*; of the inner court, as Aben Ezra, of the doors of his bedchamber; perhaps they were the chief of his body-guards, as the Septuagint version; in after-times, such officers were about the chambers of great personages as their guards[a]: these *were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the King Ahasuerus*; to poison him, as Jarchi and both the Targums; however, to take away his life by some means or another. Gorionides[b] says their design was, while the king was asleep, to cut off his head, and carry it to the king of Greece; there being at that time great wars between the kingdom of Greece and the kingdom of Persia, which exactly agrees with the times of Xerxes, and with this part of his reign, about the seventh year of it; what was the occasion of this wrath is not said, it is thought to be either the divorce of Vashti, whose creatures they were, or the marriage of Esther, and particularly the promotion of Mordecai, fearing they should be turned out of their places; so the former Targum.

Ver. 22. *And the thing was known to Mordecai*, &c.] But by what means does not appear; the Jewish writers say[c], these two men were Tarsians, and spoke in the Tarsian language, which they thought Mordecai did not understand; but he, being skilled in languages, overheard them, and understood what they said; but, according to Josephus[d], it was discovered to him by Barnabazus, a servant of one of the chamberlains; the latter Targum says, it was shewed unto him by the Holy Ghost: *who told it unto Esther, and Esther certified the king* thereof *in Mordecai's name*; whose name she mentioned, partly as a voucher of the truth of what she reported, and partly to ingratiate Mordecai to the king, that he might be still yet more promoted in due time.

Ver. 23. *And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out*, &c.] That these two men had entered into a conspiracy to take away the king's life; full proof and evidence were given of it: *therefore they were both hanged on a tree*; Josephus[e] says they were crucified; but hanging was frequent among the Persians, as Grotius observes, and better agrees with the word here used: *and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king*; in a diary kept by the king's order, in which memorable events were set down, and might be done in the presence of the king, as well as the book lay open before him to read at any time; and this is observed to agree with the manner of Xerxes, who is reported[f] to sit on a throne of gold to behold a sea-fight between the Grecians and Persians, and had several scribes by him to take down whatever was done in the fight.

CHAP. III.

THIS chapter gives an account of the promotion of Haman, and of the mortification of him by Mordecai, who refused to bow to him, upon which he vowed revenge on him, and on all his people the Jews, ver. 1—6. for which purpose, through a false representation of them, he obtained letters of the king, and sent to the deputies of all the provinces to destroy them all on a certain day fixed, ver. 7—15.

Ver. 1. *After these things*, &c.] After the marriage of Esther, and the discovery of the conspiracy to take away the king's life, five years after, as Aben Ezra observes, at least more than four years, for so it appears from ver. 7. *did King Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite*; whom both the Targums make to descend from Amalek, and to be of the stock or family of Agag, the common name of the kings of Amalek; and so Josephus[g]; but this is not clear and certain; in the apocryphal Esther he

[x] Herodot. Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 98. Cicero in Verrem, l. 3. Orat. 8.
[y] In Plat. Alcibiad.
[z] Cyropaedia, l. 8. c. 2, 8, 11, 40.
[a] Vid. Pignorium de Servis, p. 408, &c. & Popma de Servis, p. 33. & Alsturph. de Lectis Vet. c. 12.
[b] Hist. Heb. l. 2. c. 1. p. 72.
[c] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 13. 2. Targum prius & Jarchi in loc.
[d] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 6. sect. 4.
[e] Ibid.
[f] Plutarch. in Themistocle.
[g] Ut supra, sect. 5.

is said to be a Macedonian; and Sulpitius the historian says[k] he was a Persian, which is not improbable; and Agag might be the name of a family or city in Persia, of which he was; and Aben Ezra observes, that some say he is the same with Memucan, see ch. i. 14. *and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that* were *with him;* erected a throne for him, higher than the rest, either of his own princes and nobles, or such as were his captives, see 2 Kings xxv. 28. It was the custom of the kings of Persia, which it is probable was derived from Cyrus, to advance those to the highest seats they thought best deserved it: says he to his nobles, let there be seats with you as with me, and let the best be honoured before others:—and again, let all the best of those present be honoured with seats above others[l].

Ver. 2. *And the king's servants that* were *in the king's gate,* &c.] Or court, all his courtiers; for it cannot be thought they were all porters, or such only that *bowed and reverenced Haman;* gave him divine honours, as to a deity; for such were given to the kings of Persia[k], and might be given to their favourites, and seems to be the case; for, though Haman might not erect a statue of himself, or have images painted on his clothes, as the Targum and Aben Ezra, for the Persians did not allow of statues and images[l]; yet he might make himself a god, as Jarchi, and require divine worship, with leave of the king, which he had, yea, an order for it: *for the king had so commanded concerning him:* which shews that it was not mere civil honour and respect, for that in course would have been given him as the king's favourite and prime minister by all his servants, without an express order for it; this, therefore, must be something uncommon and extraordinary: *but Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence:* which is a further proof that it was not mere civil honour that was required and given; for that the Jews did not refuse to give, and that in the most humble and prostrate manner, and was admitted by them, 1 Sam. xxi. 8. 2 Sam. xiv. 4. and xviii. 28. 1 Kings i. 16. nor can it be thought that Mordecai would refuse to give it from pride and sullenness, and thereby risk the king's displeasure, the loss of his office, and the ruin of his nation; but it was such kind of reverence to a man, and worship of him, which was contrary to his conscience, and the law of his God.

Ver. 3. *Then the king's servants, which* were *in the king's gate,* &c.] Observing the behaviour of Mordecai towards Haman from time to time: *said unto Mordecai, why transgressest thou the king's commandment?* of giving reverence to Haman, which they knew he could not be ignorant of.

Ver. 4. *Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him,* &c.] Putting him in mind of his duty to obey the king's command, suggesting to him the danger he exposed himself to, pressing him to give the reasons of his conduct: *and he hearkened not unto them;* regarded not what they said, and continued disobedient to the king's order, and disrespectful to Haman: *that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand;* they informed Haman that Mordecai refused to give him reverence as the king had ordered; this they did to try whether such a conduct would be suffered and bore with, and whether Mordecai would persevere in it when taken notice of: *for he had told them that he* was *a Jew;* which was all the reason he gave why he would not reverence Haman; and a reason sufficient, because, by a fundamental law of his religion, he was not to worship mere man, but God only; and this confirms what has been before observed; for this would have been no reason for refusing civil respect and honour, but was a strong one for denying religious worship and reverence; and no wonder that the Jews should refuse it, when even the Grecians, though Heathens, refused to give the Persian kings the divine honours they required[m]; yea, the Athenians put Timagoras to death for prostrating himself in such a manner to Darius[n]; for the Persian kings were, as Aristotle says[o], called Lord and God, and said to hear and see all things.

Ver. 5. *And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence,* &c.] For, after the information given him, he observed and watched him, to see whether he bowed and did him reverence or no: *then was Haman full of wrath;* exceedingly displeased and angry; it was such a mortification to him he could not bear.

Ver. 6. *And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone,* &c.] That would not be a sufficient gratification of his revenge; he was too low and mean a person only to wreak his vengeance on; nothing short of his whole nation would satisfy him: *for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai;* that they were the Jews; for Mordecai had told the king's servants, that talked with him on the subject, that he was a Jew, and gave that as a reason why he could not and would not reverence Haman: *wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that* were *throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus;* even the people of Mordecai; and that not merely to be revenged on Mordecai, but because he plainly saw, that both by his example, and upon the same principle with him, they would all to a man refuse to give him reverence; and therefore he was resolved to root them out of the whole empire, that he might not be mortified by them.

Ver. 7. *In the first month, that* is *the month Nisan,* &c.] Which was the first month of the sacred year of the Jews, by divine appointment, Exod. xii. 2. and xiii. 4. there called Abib, and answers to part of February and part of March; from hence it is clear this book was written by a Jew, and very probably by Mordecai: *in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus:* four years and near two months after his marriage of Esther, chap. ii. 16. *they cast Pur, that* is, *the lot, before Haman;* being a Persian word, it is explained in Hebrew a lot, the word signifying *steel* in the Persian language. Reland[p] conjectures that this was that sort of lot

[h] Hist. Sacr. l. 2. p. 73.
[i] Xenophon, Cyropædia, l. 8. c. 41.
[k] Vid. Selden. Otia Theolog. l. 3. Exercitat. 1. sec. 4, 5.
[l] Laert. Proœm. ad Vit. Philosoph. p. 5, 6.

[m] Herodot. Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 136. Justin e Trogo. l. 6. c. 2. Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 1. 21.
[n] Plutarch. in Artaxerxe, Valer. Maxim. l. 6. c. 3.
[o] De Mundo, c. 6.
[p] Antiqu. Heb. par. 4. c. 12. sect. 1.

called *sideromantia*. Who cast this lot is not said; whether Haman himself, or one of his servants; perhaps a diviner. The latter Targum calls him Shimshai the scribe: *from day to day, and from month to month*, to *the twelfth* month, *that is the month Adar*: which answers to part of January and part of February; so that the lot was cast for every month and every day of the month throughout the year, to find out which was the most lucky month, and which the most lucky day in that month, to destroy the Jews in; and none could be found till they came to the last month, and the 13th day of that month, ver. 13. the providence of God so overruling the lot, that there might be time enough for the Jews, through the mediation of Esther to the king, to prevent their destruction; so in other nations the Heathens had their lucky and unlucky days [e].

Ver. 8. *And Haman said unto King Ahasuerus*, &c.] Or *had said* [f], as some choose to render it; nor indeed is it likely that Haman should cast lots to know when would be a proper time to destroy the Jews, until he had got leave of the king to do it: *there is a certain people scattered abroad, and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom*; for, though many of the Jews returned to their own land, on the proclamation of Cyrus, yet others remained, being well settled as to worldly things, and not having that zeal for God and his worship as became them, and not caring to be at the trouble and expense of such a journey, and especially those of the ten tribes; now Haman, through contempt of them, mentions them not by name, only describes them as a scattered insignificant people: *and their laws are different from all people*; concerning their diet and observation of days, and other things; so Empedocles, an Heathen, observes [g] of the Jews, that they were a separate people from all others in those things; for he says, "they separated "not only from the Romans, but even from all men; "for, having found out an unmixed way of living, they "have nothing common with men, neither table nor li-"bations, nor prayers, nor sacrifices, but are more sepa-"rate from us than the Susians or Bactrians, or the more "remote Indians:" *neither keep they the king's laws*; and, no doubt, he had a special respect to the non-observance of the king's command to give him reverence; and in like manner the Jews are represented by Heathen writers, as by Tacitus [t], Juvenal [u], and others: *therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them*; that is, to dwell in his dominions; he got nothing by them, and they might be prejudicial to his subjects, and poison them with their notions; and since they were not obedient to the laws of the kingdom, it was not fit and equitable that they should be continued in it.

Ver. 9. *If it please the king, let it be written, that they may be destroyed*, &c.] That is, a law made, signed and sealed, for their destruction, and letters written and sent everywhere, ordering it to be put in execution: *and I will pay* 10,000 *talents of silver to the hands of those who have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasury*; this he proposed, to prevent any objection that might be made from the loss of tribute paid by this people to the king; and this was a very large sum for him to pay out of his own estate, it being near four millions of our money; it is computed by Brerewood [x] at 3,750,000 pounds; for as to what is suggested by some, that he intended to repay himself out of the spoil of the Jews, it may be observed, that, according to the king's letter, they that were employed in destroying the Jews were to have the spoil for a prey or booty to themselves, ver. 13. Now this sum of money he proposed not to put into the hands of them that should slay the Jews, but into the hands of the king's receivers of the dues, that they might lay it up in the king's treasury or exchequer.

Ver. 10. *And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.*] As a token of his affection for him, and a mark of honour to him; with the Persians [w], for a king to give a ring to any one was a token and bond of the greatest love and friendship imaginable; and it may be this was given to Haman, to seal with it the letters that were or should be written, giving order for the destruction of the Jews. It seems as if as yet Esther had not acquainted the king who her kindred and people were; or it can hardly be thought he would have so easily come into such a scheme, or so highly favoured an enemy of her people.

Ver. 11. *And the king said unto Haman, the silver is given unto thee*, &c.] The 10,000 talents of silver Haman proposed to pay into the treasury were returned to him, or the king out of his great munificence refused to take them: *the people also, to do with them as seemeth good unto thee*: that is, the people of the Jews; he gave him full power to do with them as he thought fit, and who, breathing revenge upon them, would not spare them.

Ver. 12. *Then were the king's scribes called, on the 13th day of the 1st month*, &c.] The month Nisan, ver. 9. after Haman had leave and power from the king to destroy the Jews, and his ring given him in token of it; the king's scribes or secretaries of state were called together on that day, to write the letters for that purpose: *and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded*; whatever he would have done; he had an unlimited power to do what he pleased, and he made use of it, and directed the scribes what they should write: *unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province*; the deputy-governors of the 127 provinces, ch. i. 1. *and to the rulers of every people of every province*; it seems there were different people in every province, which had their rulers; and these were sent to: *according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language*: and letters were written in the language, and character of the language, each people spoke, that they might be understood by them: *in the name of King Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring*. All this Haman took care to have done so early as the 13th of

[e] Vid. Macrob. Saturnal. l. 1. c. 16. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 20.

[f] ויאמר dixerat enim, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, so Patrick.

[g] Apud Philostrat. Vit. Apollon. l. 5. c. 11.

[t] Hist. l. 5. c. 4.

[u] Romanas autem soliti, &c. Satyr. 14. ver. 99.

[x] De Pret. & Ponder. Vet. Num. c. 3.

[w] Alex. ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 26. & l. 2. c. 19.

Nisan, though the execution was not to be until the 13th of Adar, eleven months after; partly that there might be time enough to send the letters everywhere, even to the most distant parts; and chiefly lest Ahasuerus should change his mind, and be prevailed upon to revoke his grant; and, it may be, either to keep the Jews in continual dread, or cause them to flee.

Ver. 13. *And the letters were sent by post into all the king's provinces*, &c.] Or by the runners[s]; by which it seems as if these letters were carried by running footmen, men swift of foot; or rather they were running horses, on which men rode post with letters, and which the Persians called Angari; a scheme invented by Cyrus, for the quick dispatch of letters from place to place, by fixing horses and men to ride them at a proper distance, to receive letters one from another, and who rode night and day[t], as our post-boys do now; and nothing could be swifter, or done with greater speed; neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor night, could stop their course, we are told[u]: the purport of these letters was, *to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the* 13*th* day *of the* 12*th month, which is the month Adar;* see ver. 7. The orders were to destroy, by any means whatsoever, all the Jews, of every age and sex, all in one day, in all the provinces which are here named, that they might be cut off with one blow: *and* to take *the spoil of them for a prey:* to be their own booty; which was proposed to engage them in this barbarous work, to encourage them in it to use the greater severity and dispatch.

Ver. 14. *The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, was published unto all people*, &c.] Not only letters were sent to the governors, but a copy, or the sum of the contents of them, was published by heralds, or stuck up as with us, in various places, that it might be publicly known by the common people everywhere: *that they should be ready against that day;* and fall upon the people of the Jews, and slay them, and seize on their goods as a prey.

Ver. 15. *The post went out, being hastened by the king's command*, &c.] Both to set out and make as much dispatch as possible: *and the decree was given in Shushan the palace;* by the king, and with the advice of his courtiers: *and the king and Haman sat down to drink;* at a banquet which perhaps Haman had prepared, in gratitude to the king for what he had granted him, both being highly delighted with what had been done: *but the city Shushan was perplexed;* the court was agreed, but the city was divided, as the former Targum says, with the joy of strange nations, and the weeping of the people of Israel, there being many Jews in the city; with whom no doubt there were many in connexion, through affinity or friendship, or commerce, that were concerned for them; or, however, were shocked at such a barbarous scheme; and which they knew not where it would end, and how far they themselves might be involved in it, when once a mob had such a power granted to them.

C H A P. IV.

THIS chapter relates the mourning of Mordecai, and of the Jews in every province, on account of the edict to destroy them, ver. 1—3. the information Esther had of it, and what passed between her and Mordecai, through Hatach, a chamberlain, by whom he put her upon making a request to the king in their favour, ver. 4—8. to which she at first objected, because of a law in Persia which forbids any to come to the king unless called, ver. 9—12. but being pressed to it by Mordecai, she agreed, and ordered a general fast among the Jews, ver. 13—17.

Ver. 1. *When Mordecai perceived all that was done*, &c.] By the king, at the instigation of Haman, against the Jews; which he came to the knowledge of, either by some of the courtiers or by common fame, or on the sight of the edicts which were published in Shushan; though the Jews think it was made known to him in a supernatural way, either by Elijah, as the former Targum[x], or by the Holy Ghost, as the latter: *Mordecai rent his clothes;* both behind and before, according to the same Targum; and this was a custom used in mourning, not only with the Jews, but with the Persians also, as Herodotus[y] relates: *and put on sackcloth with ashes;* upon his head, as the former Targum; which was usual in mourning, even both: Job ii. 8, 12. Dan. ix. 3. *and went out into the midst of the city;* not Elam the province, as Aben Ezra, but the city Shushan: *and cried with a loud and bitter cry;* that all the Jews in the city might be alarmed by it, and inquire the reason of it, and be affected with it; and a clamorous mournful noise was used among the Persians, as well as others, on sad occasions[z].

Ver. 2. *And came even before the king's gate*, &c.] Or court, that Esther might if possible be made acquainted with this dreadful calamity coming upon her people: *for none* might *enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth;* or appear in such a dress at court, where nothing was admitted to damp the pleasures of it.

Ver. 3. *And in every province whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came*, &c.] For destroying the Jews on such a day, in every place where they were to be found: there was *great mourning among the Jews, and weeping, and wailing;* which continued all day: *and many lay in sackcloth and ashes;* all night; made use of no other bed to lie on, nor clothes to cover them with.

Ver. 4. *So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came*

[s] בֵּיַד הָרָצִים in manu cursorum, Montanus; so the Tigurine version, Drusius, V. L. Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[t] Xenophon. Cyropædia, l. 8. c. 43.
[u] Herodot. Urania, sive, l. 8, c. 98.

[x] So Midrash Esther, fol. 94. 1.
[y] Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. ——. Urania, sive, l. 8. c. 99.
[z] Calliope, sive, l. 9. c. 24.

and told it her, &c.] Her maids of honour and eunuchs that attended her, which they might tell her merely as a piece of news, there being something shocking in it to tender minds; or perhaps nothing more than that Mordecai was in sackcloth; and they might have observed, by some incident or another, that there was some connexion between Mordecai and Esther, and that she had a peculiar respect for him: *then was the queen exceedingly grieved;* even though she might not know the whole of the matter; but perceiving whatever it was it greatly affected Mordecai, with whom she sympathized: *and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him;* that so he might appear at court, and she get better intelligence of the cause of all this: *but he received* it *not;* refusing to be comforted, or appear cheerful under such melancholy circumstances.

Ver. 5. *Then called Esther for Hatach,* one *of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her,* &c.] Which, according to the Targum, was Daniel [a]; but it is not likely that Daniel should have lived to this time; however, this officer was not only intrusted with the care of the queen by the king, but she had also an high opinion of him, and therefore employed him in this affair: *and gave a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it* was, *and why it* was; what was the reason of his appearing in sackcloth, and why he did not receive the clothes she sent him.

Ver. 6. *So Hatach went forth to Mordecai, unto the street of the city,* &c.] Where he was, in a public manner, expressing his grief and sorrow: *which* was *before the king's gate;* that led to the royal palace.

Ver. 7. *And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him,* &c.] How that, for refusing to reverence Haman, he was incensed against him, and against all the Jews for his sake; and had vowed revenge on them, and had formed a scheme for the ruin of them: *and of the sum of money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them;* the 10,000 talents of silver he proposed to pay into the king's exchequer in lieu of the Jews' tribute; which Mordecai observes, to shew how bent he was upon the destruction of the Jews, and cared not what it cost him to gain his point; and perhaps Mordecai as yet might not know that the king had remitted it.

Ver. 8. *Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them,* &c.] Which had now been published in the city; by which means Mordecai had had a sight of it, and had transcribed it; see ch. iii. 14. *to shew* it *unto Esther, and to declare* it *unto her;* what Haman intended against the people of the Jews; as the Targum adds: *and to charge her;* in his name; whose charges she had always regarded, both before and since she was queen; or in the name of God: *that she should go in unto the king to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people;* signifying there was a necessity of doing it speedily, and of urging her request with great earnestness and importunity, since it was not the life of a single person, but the lives of a body of people, and her own, that lay at stake.

Ver. 9. *And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.*] Both the case of the Jews, and the cause of it, and what he would have her do at this critical juncture.

Ver. 10. *Again Esther spake unto Hatach,* &c.] For there was no other way of corresponding and conversing but by an eunuch; the wives of kings being altogether under their watch and care: *and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;* to go unto him, and what he should say to him from her, which is as follows.

Ver. 11. *All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces do know,* &c.] Not only the princes and courtiers, but all the king's subjects, the meanest of them; there is scarce a person throughout the whole empire, to whom the following law is not known; this is said, to shew how notorious it was: *that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called,* there is *one law of his to put* him *to death;* according to the former Targum, Haman got this law to be made now, to prevent any application to the king about this affair; but then it would not have been so universally known as before declared; and it appears that there was such a law among the Medes, made by Dejoces, that none should go into the king's presence, but all should be done by messengers [b]; and this was altered among the Persians, for the seven princes that slew Smerdis made an agreement, that whoever of them was chosen king, the rest should have the liberty of going unto him when they pleased, without a messenger to introduce them [c]; it seems by this account it was death to go into the inner parlour, where the king usually was, without leave, or being called; this was made both for the king's safety, and for awe and reverence of his majesty, and to prevent any insinuations into him by ill-designing persons: *except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live;* which, whether he would or no, was very precarious; so that a person ran a great risk to go in uncalled: *but I have not been called to go in unto the king these thirty days;* which looked as if the king had not that fond affection for her he formerly had; and therefore there was greater danger in going in to him uncalled, and the less hope of success.

Ver. 12. *And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.*] The messengers she sent to him.

Ver. 13. *Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther,* &c.] Gave in charge to the messengers what they should say to Esther from him, by way of reply: *think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews;* signifying that her being queen, and in the king's palace, would be no protection to her; and she would be no safer there than the Jews elsewhere, since they had no greater enemies any where than in the king's court; and it was or would be known of what nation she was, and therefore must not expect to escape the fury of the enemy.

Ver. 14. *For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time,* &c.] And will not speak to the king in favour of the Jews, because of the danger she would be ex-

[a] So Midrash Esther, fol. 91. 2. & Jarchi in Dan. iv. 5.
[b] Herodot. Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 99.
[c] Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 84.

posed to in doing it: *then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place:* Mordecai seemed confident of it, that by some means or another the Jews would be delivered; if not through the intercession of Esther, yet from some other quarter, or by some other hand: *but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed;* for such neglect of the people of God when in distress, want of pity to them, and not exerting herself as she might in their behalf; so that seeing she and her family must perish, it was better to perish in a good cause than in a bad one: *and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?* he intimates that he believed that the providence of God had raised her to that dignity, that she might be an instrument of saving his people in the time of their distress; and this he said to encourage her to make the experiment.

Ver. 15. *Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer.*] Which follows, and was sent by the messengers she sent the above to him.

Ver. 16. *Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan,* &c.] To acquaint them with what follows; but not to continue in a body together, which might cause suspicion of an ill design in them; according to the latter Targum, 12,000 chosen priests were found in it; but that must be an exaggeration of their number; it can hardly be thought there were so many Jews in all there: *and fast ye for me;* that is, pray for her, that she might have courage to go in to the king, and meet with success; for prayer was the principal thing, fasting only an accessory to it, and as fitting for it, and expressive of affliction and humiliation of soul: *and neither eat nor drink three days, night nor day;* it was to be a continued fast unto the third day; as Aben Ezra interprets it, they were not to eat at evening, but fast two whole days, and two whole nights, until the third day came, on which Esther went in to the king, ch. v. 1. *I also and my maidens will fast likewise;* in the same manner and as long; these maids of honour were either proselytes, perhaps of her making, or Jewish ladies, she being allowed by the king to choose whom she pleased: *and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law;* or *afterwards,* or *and then*[d], when they, and she and her maids, had fasted and prayed so long, then she was determined in the strength of the Lord to go into the king's presence with her petition, though it was contrary to law: *and if I perish, I perish;* signifying, that she readily and cheerfully risked her life for the good of her people; and if such was the pleasure of God, that she should lose it, she was content, and acquiesced in his will, leaving herself entirely in his hands, to dispose of her as he thought fit.

Ver. 17. *So Mordecai went his way,* &c.] About the business he was directed to; the word used having sometimes the signification of passing over or transgressing, Jarchi interprets it of Mordecai's transgressing the command, by fasting on a festival; the letter being written on the 13th of Nisan, ch. iii. 12. the next day was the passover, on which he supposes the fast began; and the three days were, the 14th, 15th, and 16th of the month, and belonged to the feast of the passover and of unleavened bread; so the Targum: *and did according to all that Esther had commanded him;* got the Jews together, and kept a fast three days; according to the Midrash[e], they were the 13th, 14th, and 15th of Nisan.

CHAP. V.

THIS chapter gives an account of Esther's going in to the king, and of his holding out the golden sceptre to her, on which she invited him and Haman to a banquet of wine that day, and to another the next day, ver. 1—8. which highly delighted Haman; and he went to his house and family with great joy, and yet chagrined at Mordecai's not bowing to him; wherefore, at the advice of his wife and friends, he erected a gallows to hang him upon, proposing to get a grant for it from the king the next day, ver. 9—14.

Ver. 1. *Now it came to pass on the third day,* &c.] Of the fast; though the former Targum paraphrases it the third day of the passover, the 16th of Nisan, see the note on ch. iv. 17. though it is probable this was nearer the time fixed for the destruction of the Jews, see ch. viii. 9. yet the Jews have fixed the fast of Esther on that very day, the 13th of Adar[f]: *that Esther put on her royal apparel;* in order to go in to the king, and appear before him; which to do in a mournful habit, such as she had on when fasting, was not proper; for then she put off her crown-royal, as is intimated in the additions to the book of Esther, ch. xix. 11. and as was usual for princes to do in times of mourning[g]; but now she put it on, as both Ben Gorion[h] and the latter Targum affirm: *and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over-against the king's house;* into which none might go but such as were called; yet Esther being queen, the keepers of the door could not forbid her, as Aben Ezra observes: *and the king sat upon his royal throne, in the royal house, over-against the gate of the house;* so that he could see whoever came in at it, into the inner court.

Ver. 2. *And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court,* that *she obtained favour in his sight,* &c.] Which no doubt was of God, who has the hearts of kings in his hand, and turns them as he pleases; the king had not called her for thirty days past, or more, which shewed coolness of affection to her, and now she transgressed a law by coming uncalled for, which might have provoked his wrath; and for a lesser matter than this was Vashti divorced; but yet his mind was inclined to her, and she appeared very amiable and pleasing to him: *and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that* was *in his hand;* as a token of his

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[d] [Hebrew] & postea, Noldius, p. 198. No. 899. so the Targum, και τοτε, Sept. & tunc, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; tum, Tigurine version.
[e] Midrash Esther, fol. 94. 4.

[f] Vid. Reland. Antiqu. Heb. par. 4. c. 10. sect. 5.
[g] Vid. Paschalium de Coronis, l. 10. c. 11. p. 699.
[h] Hist. Heb. Jud. l. 2. c. 4.

well-pleasedness in her, and acceptance of her; and that no harm should come to her for transgressing the law: *so Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre*; as acknowledging his kindness, and her thankfulness for it, as well as subjection and obedience to him.

Ver. 3. *Then said the king unto her, what wilt thou, Queen Esther?* &c.] He supposed she had some business with him, some suit to make to him, by her coming in in this manner: *and what is thy request?* signifying he was ready to grant it, be it what it would: *it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom*; as it was usual with the Persian kings to give their wives cities for certain purposes, see the note on ch. ii. 18. here Ahasuerus, out of his great affection to Esther, offers half of his dominions, his 127 provinces; meaning that he would grant her any thing, and every thing that was reasonable, and even magnificent; it is an hyperbolical and courtly way of speaking, and which has been used in after-times, and in other countries: see Mark vi. 23.

Ver. 4. *And Esther answered, if it seem good unto the king*, &c.] She humbly submits it to his pleasure, suggesting it would be exceeding grateful to her, could it be granted: *let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him*: for the king; and supposing it would be acceptable to him, and the rather engage him to come to it, she invited his favourite; and chiefly, that she might have an opportunity of accusing him before the king to his face, and when alone.

Ver. 5. *Then the king said, cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said*, &c.] That is, he ordered some of his servants to make haste and acquaint Haman with the queen's invitation, and to press him to make haste to comply with it: *so the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared*: which was wisely done, to prepare for what she had to say to the king, when cheerful with wine, and when she had her adversary with him alone.

Ver. 6. *And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine*, &c.] For such it seems the banquet was she prepared; it was not properly a meal, neither dinner nor supper, but a drinking-bout; or, however, it was at that part of the banquet in which wine was drank that the king accosted Esther, when he began to be cheerful with it. The Persians at their meals had two courses: the first consisted of meats, &c. at which they drank water, the other of fruits, when they drank wine; Ælianus[i] says, the Persians, after they are filled with food, indulge themselves in drinking wine: *what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed*; by which it appears he retained the same affection for Esther, and the same disposition to shew her kindness. See ver. 3.

Ver. 7. *Then answered Esther and said, my petition and my request is*.] What she should for the present make; the principal one she had to ask, for wise reasons, she still deferred.

Ver. 8. *If I have found favour in the sight of the king*, &c.] Or, seeing she had; for it was a clear case she had, both by his holding out the golden sceptre to her, and by accepting her invitation to her banquet: *and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request*; as he had been so gracious as to promise in such a large and liberal manner as before expressed: *let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them*: the Targum says, in the evening; but from ver. 12 it appears to be on the morrow; and which agrees with what follows: *and I will do to-morrow as the king hath said*; make her petition and request to him; which she had deferred, partly in hope of still increasing his affection to her, and partly to prepare him to expect something of moment and importance to be asked of him. Jarchi restrains this to what he supposes the king had often importuned her to tell, namely, who were her people and her kindred.

Ver. 9. *Then went Haman forth that day, joyful, and with a glad heart*, &c.] From court to his own house: *but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him*; did not shew him the least degree even of civil respect; which he refused to do, partly lest it should be interpreted an adoration of him, and partly because it was well known to him he had formed a scheme for the destruction of him and all his people; and the rather he refused it to him, as Esther was about to make intercession with the king to revoke his decree, of the success of which he had no doubt; and therefore had nothing to fear from him, but treated him with the utmost contempt, as he deserved: *he was full of wrath against Mordecai*; it was a sad mortification to him, and a great allay of that joy and elation of mind on account of the favour he was in; not with the king only, but the queen also, as he imagined.

Ver. 10. *Nevertheless Haman refrained himself*, &c.] From shewing any outward resentment to Mordecai, from laying hands upon him or taking revenge on him, as being too much below him to avenge himself on a single person, when the whole body of the people Mordecai belonged to would shortly feel the power of his hand for such insolent treatment of him: *and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife*; who, the Targum says, was the daughter of Tatnai, the governor on the other side the river, Ezra v. 3.

Ver. 11. *And Haman told them of the glory of his riches*, &c.] Of the multitude of them; which he did partly in a way of ostentation, and partly, if he could, to make his mind easy under the mortification he received from Mordecai; and, it may be, chiefly to aggravate his rudeness and ill behaviour towards him, a man of so much wealth: *and the multitude of his children*; he had ten, as we learn from ch. ix. 10. but the former Targum enlarges them, beyond credit, to the number of 208, besides his ten sons, and Shimshai the scribe; such were had in great esteem with the Persians who had many children; to such the king used to send gifts annually[k]: *and all the things wherein the king had promoted him*; the high offices of honour and trust he had put him into: *and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king*. See ch. iii. 1.

Ver. 12. *Haman said, moreover*, &c.] To all which he added, and what seemed to delight him most of all, or however was a new additional honour done

[i] Var. Hist. l. 12. c. 1.

[k] Herodot. Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 136. Strabo. Geograph. l. 15. p. 504.

him: *yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself*: which he judged was doing him singular honour; and, by the joint affection of the king and queen to him, he thought himself established in his dignity and grandeur: *and to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king*; had been invited, not by a messenger, but by the queen herself, which was a double honour.

Ver. 13. *Yet all this availeth me nothing*, &c.] Is not equal or sufficient for me; it gives me no satisfaction and contentment: *so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate*; not rising up to bow unto him; this single circumstance spoiled all his joy and pleasure.

Ver. 14. *Then said Zeresh his wife, and all his friends, unto him*, &c.] His wife very probably first moved it, and all his friends present approved of it and united in it: *let a gallows be made, of 50 cubits high*; that the person hanged thereon might be seen at a distance, and so be a greater reproach to him, and a terror to others, to take care they were not guilty of the same offence: Cartalo was ordered by his father to be fixed to the highest cross in the sight of the city [l]; and it was usual for crosses to be erected very high [m], both for that purpose, and for greater infamy and disgrace [n]: *and to-morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon*: get a grant from him for it; of which they made no doubt, since Haman had such an interest in him, and had already obtained an order to destroy all Jews in his dominions: *then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet*; eased of the burden of his mind, and honoured to be a guest with the royal pair: *and the thing pleased Haman, and he caused the gallows to be made*; but it was for himself, as it proved in the issue. See ch. vii. 10.

CHAP. VI.

AHASUERUS, not being able to sleep in the night, ordered the book of records to be brought and read to him, where a fact of Mordecai's was registered, and, upon inquiry, it appeared that nothing had been done to him for it, ver. 1, 2, 3. and Haman being in the outward court, was ordered in, with whom the king consulted what should be done to the man the king delighted to honour; to which Haman gave answer, and was bid to do as he said, ver. 4—10. which he did, but went home after it confounded and sorrowful, and told his mournful case to his wife and friends, who plainly foresaw his downfall, ver. 11—14.

Ver. 1. *On that night could not the king sleep*, &c.] The night after he had been at Esther's banquet, which it might be thought would rather have caused sleep; and therefore Jarchi calls it a miracle; and no doubt it was owing to the overruling providence of God, and not to anxious thoughts about his neglect of Esther so long, nor what should be her request to him, nor jealousy of any amorous intrigue with Haman, nor of any conspiracy of theirs against his life: *and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles*: the diaries or journal, in which memorable facts were recorded; this he did to divert himself, and pass away time; though here also the providence of God was specially concerned; for otherwise he might have sent for any of his wives and concubines, or singing men and women, to have diverted him: *and they were read before the king*; until the morning, until it was time to rise, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 2. *And it was found written*, &c.] Upon reading, and in which there was also a peculiar hand of Providence, directing to the reading of that part of them in which the affair of Mordecai was registered: and if what the latter Targum says is true, it was the more remarkable, that when Shimshai the scribe, who was ordered to bring the book and read, and who, according to the former Targum, was Haman's son, seeing what was recorded of Mordecai, turned over the leaves of the book, being unwilling to read it; but the leaves rolled back again, and he was obliged to read it: *that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the King Ahasuerus*; see ch. ii. 21. and it was usual in such diaries to record the names of persons, who, by any actions, had deserved well of the king, that they might be rewarded as there was an opportunity for it; and such, in the Persian language, were called Orosangæ, as Herodotus relates [o].

Ver. 3. *And the king said, what honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?* &c.] He judged it an action worthy of regard, and what ought to be rewarded, as it was the saving of his life; but had forgot whether any royal favour had been shewn to the person for it: *then said the king's servants that ministered unto him*: the lords of his bedchamber then in waiting: *there is nothing done for him*; not on that account, nothing more than what he had; he had an office at court before, but was not advanced to any thing higher on this account.

Ver. 4. *And the king said, who is in the court?* &c.] Being in haste to confer some honour on Mordecai for what he had done: *now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house*; though it was early in the morning, being eager to get to the speech of the king before he was engaged in any business, to obtain a grant from him: *to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him*; of which he made no doubt of having, and therefore had prepared for it.

Ver. 5. *And the king's servants said unto him, behold, Haman standeth in the court*, &c.] In the outward court; for into the inward court none might enter without being called, for which he was wait-

[l] Justin e Trogo, l. 18. c. 7. Vid. l. 22. c. 7.
[m] Vid. Lipsium de Cruce, l. 2. c. 13.
[n] Suetonius in Galba, c. 9.
[o] Urania, sive, l. 8. c. 85.

ing: *and the king said, let him come in;* into his bedchamber; and it was of God, no doubt, that Haman should be on the spot at this very time, when the king was in the humour to do honour to Mordecai, and by him.

Ver. 6. *So Haman came in,* &c.] But was prevented speaking to the king about the business he came upon by the following speech of the king: *what shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour?* he mentions not the name of any man, that he might the more freely, and unbiassedly, and disinterestedly give his advice; nor might the king know of any resentment of Haman to Mordecai: *(now Haman thought in his heart, to whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?)* who had been advanced above all the princes and nobles of the realm, and was now in such high honour both with the king and queen, with whom he was to be at a banquet that day; and he might conclude, that by putting this question to him, he could have in view none but himself: Aben Ezra observes, that some from hence gather, that this book was written by the spirit of prophecy, because none could know the thoughts of the heart but God; but though he believes it to be written by the Holy Ghost, yet, as he observes, Haman might disclose this thought of his heart to his friends afterwards.

Ver. 7. *And Haman answered the king,* &c.] At once, being very prompt to suggest the honours he hoped to have done to himself: *for the man whom the king delighteth to honour;* let the following things be done.

Ver. 8. *Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear,* &c.] Not a whole suit of clothes, but a single garment; the purple robe, as both the Targums, such as kings wore; that which Cyrus appeared in public in was half purple, and half white, and no other person besides might wear such an one [p]; it was a capital crime with the Persians to wear any of the king's apparel; Trebazus, an intimate of Artaxerxes, having begged an old gown of him, it was granted, on condition that he would not wear it, it being contrary to the laws of Persia; but he, regardless of the order, appeared in it at court; which affront to the king was so resented by the Persians, that they were for punishing him rigorously, according to the law, had not Artaxerxes declared, that he had ordered him to appear in that dress as his fool [q]; hence Artabanus, though uncle to Xerxes, was very unwilling to obey his orders, to put on his royal royal robes, sit on his throne, and sleep on his bed [r]; so that this was a daring proposal in Haman, which he would never have ventured to have made, had it not been for the great confidence he had in the king's favour; *and the horse that the king rideth upon;* the kings of Persia, as Herodotus [s] relates, had horses peculiar to them, and those were Nisæan horses, which were brought from Armenia, as Strabo says [t], and were remarkable for their beauty [u]; and if the same law obtained in Persia as did in Judea, no man might ride on the king's horse any more than sit on his throne, or hold his sceptre [w]: and perhaps this horse here was not proposed for the person to ride on, but to be led in state before him; and though it is afterwards said that Mordecai rode on horseback, yet it might not be on the king's horse, which might be only led; and what follows seems to confirm it: *and the crown-royal which is set upon his head:* or, *let it be set,* &c. not on the head of the man, but on the head of the horse; and so Aben Ezra; and which sense is countenanced by the Targum, and by the Syriac version, and is approved of by Vatablus and De Dieu; and which the order of the words requires, the horse being the immediate antecedent; and no mention is made of the crown afterwards, as set on the head of Mordecai; nor would Haman have dared to advise to that, nor could it be granted; but this was what was wont to be done, to put the crown-royal on the head of a horse led in state; and this we are assured was a custom in Persia [x], as it is with the Ethiopians to this day [y]; and so, with the Romans, horses drawing triumphal chariots were crowned [z]; which Tertullian calls [a] public horses with their crowns.

Ver. 9. *And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes,* &c.] The one, *that they may array the man* withal *whom the king delighteth to honour;* and the other to be led in state before him: *and bring him on horseback through the street of the city;* on another horse, that all might see what honour was done him: *and proclaim before him;* as before Joseph, when advanced next to Pharaoh, Gen. xli. 43. this was not to be done by an herald, but by a nobleman, to whom the apparel and horse were to be delivered, and was done by Haman, ver. 11. *thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour;* these were the words said in the proclamation, signifying this was the man the king delighted to honour, and this the manner in which he would have it done.

Ver. 10. *Then the king said to Haman, make haste,* &c.] And without delay go into the royal treasury, or wardrobe, as the Targum adds: and *take the apparel;* the royal robe, the purple one, or one of the precious purple robes; and then, as the same Targum, go to the king's stable, and take thence the king's *horse,* that stands in the chief place in the stable, whose name is Shiphregaz; but how the Targumist came by the name of it, I know not; however it was not unusual for kings to give a name to their favourite horse, as Alexander the great did to his called Bucephalus, and even for all kings of Persia, as Darius Hystaspis [b]: *as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate;* the person he meant this honour for he describes by name, by nation, and by office, that there might be no mistake: *let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken;* the

[p] Xenophon Cyropædia, l. 8. c. 22.
[q] Plutarch. in Artaxerxe.
[r] Herodot. Polymnia, sive, l. 7. c. 15, 16.
[s] Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 192.
[t] Geograph. l. 11. p. 365.
[u] Julian. Opera, par. 1. Orat. 2. p. 94.

[w] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 2. sect. 5.
[x] Brisson. apud Castell. Lexic. col. 4008.
[y] Alvarez Hist. Ethiop. c. 105. apud ib. col. 3869.
[z] Paschal. de Coronis, l. 8. c. 5. p. 536.
[a] De Corona Militis, c. 13.
[b] Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 88.

king objected not to any thing that had been proposed, and insisted on it that every thing be done punctually by Haman as he had advised, and from which he could not with honour recede; though nothing could be more mortifying to him to do, to a man he came to court to get a grant to hang on a gallows he had prepared.

Ver. 11. *Then took Haman the apparel, and the horse,* &c.] The one out of the wardrobe, the other out of the stable, and the crown also no doubt, though no mention is made of it, since the king made no objection to it, yea, commanded that nothing fail of what had been spoken: but this was included in the pomp and state of the led horse: *and brought him on horseback through the street of the city;* the most grand and public part of it, thus arrayed, and in this state: *and proclaimed before him, thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour;* see the note on ver. 9.

Ver. 12. *And Mordecai came again to the king's gate,* &c.] To attend his post and office at court; which confirms what has been already hinted, that he was in some office in the court, which this phrase is expressive of, and not a porter at the gate; for it is not probable he should return to such a station, after so much honour had been done him; and much less that he returned to his sackcloth and fasting, as Jarchi and the former Targum; since he might reasonably conclude things were taking a turn in his favour, and that of his people; though as yet he knew not what success Esther had had, to wait for which he returned to court: *but Haman hasted to his house;* pushed forward as fast as he could: *mourning;* at his sad disappointment: *and having his head covered;* through grief and sorrow, confusion and shame; so Demosthenes, being hissed, went home with his head covered[c], as confounded and ashamed to be seen[d].

Ver. 13. *And Haman told Zeresh his wife, and all his friends, every* thing *that had befallen him,* &c.] How he was prevented speaking to the king on the errand he went; instead of which, he had the mortification of being obliged to do the honour to Mordecai which he thought would never have been given to any but himself, and so related the whole affair as above: *then said his wise men;* before called his friends; perhaps they were magicians and soothsayers he kept in his house, to advise with about the proper methods and times of advancing himself, and destroying his enemies: *and Zeresh his wife unto him;* who joined with the wise men in giving her opinion, and who set up for a knowing woman, and of whom Haman thought highly: *if Mordecai* be *of the seed of the Jews;* as it was said he was; and therefore Haman had vowed and plotted revenge on the people of the Jews for his sake: *before whom thou hast begun to fall;* as he did, by being obliged to execute the king's will in doing him so much honour: *thou shalt not prevail against him;* to get him hanged, or his people destroyed, though he had prepared a gallows for the one, and had got an edict for the other: *but shalt surely fall before him;* which might be concluded from his being set above him, who would not fail of using his power and interest to crush him, who had shewed himself to be such an implacable enemy to him; or they might have some knowledge of the history of the Jews, and of what wonderful things God often did for them, in defeating the designs of their enemies, and in raising them up from a low to an high estate.

Ver. 14. *And while they* were *yet talking with him,* &c.] About these things, and giving their opinion of the issue of them, upon the present appearance of them: *came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared;* the time appointed for it being very near, or quite up, and Haman being backward and dilatory, having no stomach to go to it, and perhaps fearing worse things were coming upon him he should hear of there.

CHAP. VII.

ESTHER, being solicited by the king to tell him her petition, asks for her life and the lives of her people, who were sold to be destroyed, ver. 1—4. the king, amazed at her request, inquires who was the person that dared to do so vile a thing; and was told by her it was Haman there present, ver. 5, 6. on which the king went out into the garden in wrath, and, returning, found Haman on Esther's bed, which still more incensed him; and being told that Haman had prepared a gallows for Mordecai, the king ordered that he himself should be hanged upon it, which was done accordingly, ver. 7—10.

Ver. 1. *So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.*] Or, *to drink with her*[e], that is, wine; for in the next verse it is called a banquet of wine; so they did according to the invitation the queen had given them, ch. v. 8.

Ver. 2. *And the king said again to Esther on the second day, at the banquet of wine,* &c.] This was the third time he put the following question to her, being very desirous of knowing what she had to ask of him; and it was of God that this was kept upon his mind, and he was moved to solicit her petition, or otherwise it would not have been so easy for her to have introduced it: *what is thy petition, Queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of my kingdom:* see ch. v. 3, 6.

Ver. 3. *Then Esther the queen answered and said,* &c.] Not rolling herself at the king's knees, as Se-

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[c] Plutarch in Demosthene.
[d] See more instances in Lively's Chronology of the Persian monarchy, p. 18, 19.

[e] לשתות ut biberent, V. L. Tigurine version; ad bibendum, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Vatablus.

verus[f] writes; but rather, as the former Targum, lifting up her eyes to heaven, and perhaps putting up a secret ejaculation for direction and success: *if I have found favour in thy sight, O king:* as she certainly had heretofore, and even now: *and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition;* not riches, nor honour, nor any place or post at court, or in any of the king's dominions for any friend of her's, was her petition; but for her own life, that that might not be taken away, which was included in the grant the king had made to Haman, though ignorantly, to slay all the Jews, she being one of them: *and my people at my request;* that is, the lives of her people also, that was her request; her own life and her people's were all she had to ask.

Ver. 4. *For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish, &c.*] She makes use of these several words, to express the utter destruction of her and her people, without any exception; not only the more to impress the king's mind with it, but she has respect to the precise words of the decree, ch. iii. 13. as she has also to the 10,000 talents of silver Haman offered to pay the king for the grant of it, when she says, *we are sold*, or delivered to be destroyed: *but if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue;* should never have asked for deliverance from bondage, but have patiently submitted to it, however unreasonable, unjust, and afflictive it would have been; because it might have been borne, and there might be hope of deliverance from it at one time or another; though it is said, slaves with the Persians were never made free[g]; but that being the case would not have been so great a loss to the king, who would have reaped some advantage by their servitude; whereas, by the death of them, he must sustain a loss which the enemy was not equal to, and which he could not compensate with all his riches; which, according to Ben Melech, is the sense of the next clause: *although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage;* or, *for the enemy cannot, &c.* the 10,000 talents offered by him, and all the riches that he has, are not an equivalent to the loss the king would sustain by the death of such a multitude of people, from whom he received so large a tribute; but this the enemy regarded not; and so Jarchi interprets it, the enemy took no care of, or was concerned about the king's damage; but there is another sense, which Aben Ezra mentions, and is followed by some learned men, who take the word for *enemy* to signify *distress, trouble,* and *anguish,* as in Psal. iv. 1. and cxix. 143. and read the words, *for this distress would not be reckoned the king's damage*[h], or loss; though it would have been a distress to the Jews to have been sold for slaves, yet the loss to the king would not be so great as their death, since he would receive benefit by their service.

Ver. 5. *Then the King Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, &c.*] The words in the original text lie thus, *and the King Ahasuerus said, and he said to Esther the queen;* which doubling of the word does not signify, as Jarchi suggests, that before he spoke to her by a messenger, or middle person, but, now he knew she was of a royal family, he spoke to her himself; but it is expressive of the ruffle of his mind, and the wrath and fury he was in, that he said it again and again, with a stern countenance and great vehemence of speech: *who is he? and where is he?* who is the man? and where does he live? *that durst presume in his heart to do so;* that has boldness, impudence, and courage enough to perpetrate so vile an action: or *that has filled his heart*[i]; the devil no doubt filled his heart to do it, see Acts v. 3. but the king had either forgot the decree he had granted, and the countenance he had given him to execute it; or, if he remembered it, he was now enraged that he should be drawn in to such an action by him; and perhaps till now was ignorant of Esther's descent, and knew not that she would be involved in the decree.

Ver. 6. *And Esther said, the adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman, &c.*] Who was not only an enemy to her and her people, but an adversary to the king, by advising and persuading him to that which was to the loss of his revenues, as well as of his reputation; also, she pointed at him, and gave him his just character; her charge of wickedness upon him, as it was true, it was honourably made to his face before the king, of which, if he could, he had the opportunity of exculpating himself: *then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen:* gave visible signs of his confusion, consternation, and trouble of mind, by the fall of his countenance, his pale looks, his trembling limbs, and quivering lips, being struck dumb, and not able to speak one word for himself.

Ver. 7. *And the king, arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath,* went *into the palace-garden, &c.*] Not being able to bear the sight of Haman, who had done such an injury both to himself and to the queen; as also that his wrath might subside, and he become more composed and sedate, and be able coolly to deliberate what was fitting to be done in the present case: *and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen;* hoping that her tender heart might be wrought upon to shew mercy to him, and be prevailed on to entreat the king to spare his life; and this request he made in the most submissive manner: *for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king;* he perceived it both by the king's countenance, by the rage he went out in, and by the threatening words which he very probably uttered as he went out.

Ver. 8. *Then the king returned out of the palace-garden into the place of the banquet of wine, &c.*] Being a little cooler, and more composed in his mind, see ch. i. 5. *and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther* was; not the bed she lay on to sleep in the night, (for it cannot be thought that it was a bedchamber in which the banquet was,) but on the bed or couch on which she sat or reclined at the banquet, as was the custom in the eastern countries; now, *by*, or *near* this, as the word may be rendered, Haman fell down, even at the feet of the queen, begging for mercy; and some think he might embrace her feet or knees, as was the custom of the Greeks and Romans as they were sup-

[f] Hist. Sacr. l. 2.

[g] Alex. ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 3. c. 20.

[h] הצר adversitas, Drusius, De Dieu; angustia, Cocc. Lexic. in rad. שוח

[i] אשר מלאו לבו qui replevit cor suum, Drusius; implevit, De Dieu.

plicating[k]; and so it seems to have been with the Jews, see 2 Kings iv. 27. and being in this posture, it might appear the more indecent, and give the king an opportunity to say as follows: *then said the king, will he force the queen also before me in the house?* that is, ravish her; not that he really thought so; it was not a time nor place for such an action; nor can it be thought that Haman, in such terror and confusion he was in, could be so disposed; and besides there were others present, as the next clause shews: but this he said, putting the worst construction on his actions, and plainly declaring his opinion of him, that he thought him a man capable of committing the vilest of crimes, and that his supplications were not to be regarded: *as the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face*: the servants present, as a man unworthy to see the light; and they took what the king said to amount to a sentence of condemnation, and that it was his will he should die; and they covered his face, as condemned malefactors used to be; which was a custom among the Greeks and Romans, of which many instances may be given[l]; though Aben Ezra says it was the custom of the kings of Persia, that their servants covered the face of him the king was angry with, that he might not see his face any more, which was well known in the Persian writings.

Ver. 9. *And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king,* &c.] One of the seven chamberlains, see ch. i. 10. his name, with Josephus[y], is Sabouchadas. *Behold also, the gallows 50 cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman.* This man, perhaps, had seen it there, when he went with others to fetch Haman to the banquet, ch. vi. 14. The sin of Haman is aggravated by preparing a gallows for a man before he was accused to the king, or condemned, or had a grant for his execution, and for a man that had well deserved of the king for discovering a conspiracy against him, and whom now the king had delighted to honour: *then the king said, hang him thereon*: immediately, being ready prepared, the king's word was enough, being a sovereign and tyrannical prince.

Ver. 10. *So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai,* &c.] Not within his house, ver. 9. but more probably in his court-yard, in the sight of his family and friends; or, it may be, the gallows was taken from thence, and set up without the city, where he was hanged: for so it is said in the additions of the book of Esther, ch. xvi. 18. that he was hanged without the gates of Shushan; see Psal. vii. 15, 16. *then was the king's wrath pacified*: having inflicted punishment on such a wicked counsellor of his, and the contriver of such mischief.

C H A P. VIII.

THIS chapter relates the gifts Ahasuerus gave to Esther and Mordecai, ver. 1, 2. the suit Esther made to him to reverse the letters for the destruction of the Jews, ver. 3—6. which, though it could not be formally granted, was in effect done by letters sent to the Jews, giving them power to rise in their own defence, and slay their enemies, ver. 7—14. the consequence of which, and the advancement of Mordecai, were matter of great joy to the Jews, ver. 15, 16, 17.

Ver. 1. *On that day did the King Ahasuerus give the house of Haman, the Jews' enemy, unto Esther the queen,* &c.] That, and all the goods in it, and estate belonging to it; which being confiscated to the king, he gave to Esther, who would have been the sufferer, had his scheme taken place; so the Targum adds, " and " the men of his house, and all his treasures, and all his " riches:" *and Mordecai came before the king*: was introduced into his presence, became one of his privy counsellors, one of those that saw the king's face, and sat first in the kingdom, ch. i. 14. *for Esther had told what he was unto her*: what relation he stood in to her; her uncle, according to the Vulgate Latin version, and so Aben Ezra and Josephus, but wrongly, for she was his uncle's daughter; so that they were brother's children, or own cousins, see ch. ii. 7.

Ver. 2. *And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai,* &c.] Which, with the Persians, was a token of the strongest affection and strictest friendship[z]; the Targum calls it his signatory ring, that with which he signed laws, edicts, letters, patents, &c. and so hereby made him keeper of the seals: *and Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman*; appointed him her steward of the estate of Haman, the king had given her.

Ver. 3. *And Esther spake yet again before the king,* &c.] Went into his presence, without being called for as before, with a new petition: *and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears*; the more to work upon his affections, and move him to grant her request; which she might be the more encouraged to hope for, through the success she already had: *to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews*: to revoke, abolish, and make void a mischievous scheme Haman had devised against the Jews, to root out the whole nation of them in the Persian empire.

Ver. 4. *Then the king held out the golden sceptre towards Esther,* &c.] As a token that she had not incurred his displeasure by coming into his presence without leave, and that she was admitted to speak and make her request; see ch. v. 2, 3. *so Esther arose and stood before the king*: she rose from the ground on which she lay prostrate, and stood upon her feet, in an humble manner, to make her speech, and present her petition to the king.

Ver. 5. *And said, if it please the king, and if I have*

[k] Genibusque suos, &c. Claudian. de Raptu Proserpin. l. 1. ver. 50. Barthius in ib. Vid. Homer. Iliad. 21. l. 75. Plin. l. 1. Ep. 18.
[l] Caput obnubito, &c. Cicero. Orat. 16. pro Rabirio, Liv. Hist. l. 1. p. 15. Curt. Hist. l. 6. c. 11. Vid. Solerium de Pileo, sect. 2. p. 20. & Lipsii not. in lib. 1. c. 1. de Cruce, p. 203, 204.
[y] Antiqu. l. 11. c. 6. sect. 11.
[z] Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 25. & l. 2. c. 19.

found favour in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, &c.] This heap of phrases, which signify much the same thing, are used to work upon the king's affections, and to shew how submissive she was to his will: *let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces.* She wisely takes no notice of any concern the king had in them, but suggests as that she looked upon them as forged by Haman, who put the king's name and seal to them, without his knowledge and consent.

Ver. 6. *For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people?* &c.] I cannot bear it; it will break my heart; I shall die to see all my people massacred throughout the realm; the thought of it is shocking and shuddering; to see it, intolerable: *or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?* the same thing in different words, and somewhat more express and explanative. She explains the evil coming upon her people of the utter destruction of them, not barely an oppression, but an extermination of them; and she makes use of a word expressive of their relation to her, as more endearing, being her kindred; she and they being, as it were, of the same family, and with whom she could not but sympathize in distress.

Ver. 7. *Then the King Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew*, &c.] Who was present at the same time, either at the desire of Esther, or by virtue of his office, being now one of those that saw the king's face, ver. 1. *behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman:* see the note on ver. 1. *and him they have hanged upon the gallows;* which he had prepared for Mordecai, ch. vii. 10. *because he laid his hand upon the Jews;* intended to do so, and had prepared for it, and wrote letters, ordering their destruction on such a day. Now as the king had shewn favour to Esther and Mordecai, and had punished Haman for contriving mischief against them and the Jews, which was publicly known, the people would be fearful of doing any thing against them, lest they should incur the king's displeasure, and therefore might make themselves easy about this matter; but, however, to give them all the satisfaction he could, he directs them to do as follows.

Ver. 8. *Write ye also for the Jews as it liketh you*, &c.] Whatever may be thought fit and proper for their safety and security: *in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring;* as the former letters were: *for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse;* which is a reason both for the writing and sealing of the present letters in this manner, and why the former could not be reversed; nor does it appear that they were, but that, in virtue of them, the people had power to rise and kill the Jews on the day appointed, if they durst, or were so disposed; and these empowered the Jews to rise in their own defence, and kill all that made any attempts upon them, for which they had the royal authority; and these letters coming after the other, though they did not formally reverse them, which might not be done, yet rendered them ineffectual.

Ver. 9. *Then were the king's scribes called at that time*, &c.] As they were to write the former letter, ch. iii. 12. *in the third month, that is the month Sivan, on the 23d day thereof;* which answers to part of May, and part of June. This was two months and ten days after the writing of the former letters; so long the Jews had been in distress by reason of them, and was a just rebuke upon them for not returning to their own land when they might, as well as for other sins: *and it was written (according to all that Mordecai commanded) to the Jews.* Mordecai dictated to the scribes, and ordered what they should write; and which were sent to the Jews in the first place, partly to ease them of their present distress, and partly that they might prepare against that time for their defence, for which they had sufficient time, it being now more than nine months to it: *and to the lieutenants, and the deputies, and the rulers of the provinces, which are from India unto Ethiopia, 127 provinces.* The letters were directed to the same magistrates in the several provinces as the former, giving orders to them, that, notwithstanding them, they were to suffer the Jews to defend themselves, and not punish them for what should be done by them in self-defence; see ch. i. 1. and ii. 12. *unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language;* some provinces spoke the Persian language, and used the character of it, others Chaldee, others Syriac, &c. and wrote in the usual characters, as the Jews did in Hebrew, and in the characters of that language; and now these letters were written in the language and character of the people of the several provinces they were sent to, that they might be easily read and understood.

Ver. 10. *And he wrote in the King Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring*, &c.] Which gave the letters authority, and made them irreversible, and for this Mordecai had the king's order, ver. 8. *and sent letters by post;* by runners or couriers: *on horseback;* that rode on horses that were racers, that ran swiftly: *and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries;* which were all different creatures, and swift ones, according to our version, especially the latter; see Jer. ii. 23. which were a kind of camels, but swifter, and would go more than 100 miles a day [a]; and, as Diodorus Siculus says [b], not less than 1,500 furlongs: though it may be only one sort are meant, namely, *mules*, for the next word, *ahashteranim*, in the Persian language signifies *mules* [c], and so Aben Ezra interprets it, and likewise Kimchi and Ben Melech; and the last words may be rendered *sons of mares*, so David de Pomis; that is, such mules as are gendered by he-asses and mares: and so the same writer observes, that the word in the Arabic language signifies *mares;* and such mules that come from them he says are stronger than those that come from she-asses; so that the whole may be rendered to this sense, *riders on mules*, (which in the Persian language are called *ahashteranim*,)

[a] Isidor. Origin. l. 12. c. 1. Vid. Strabo Geograph. l. 15. p. 498.
[b] Bibliothec. l. 19. p. 682.

[c] Castell. Dictionar. Persic. col. 29. Hettinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 5. p. 75.

namely, such as are *sons of mares*; and which according to Ælianus [d] and Pliny [e] are the swiftest; though the Persians had camels swifter than are common elsewhere, called *rewatrie*, the *goer*, which trot as fast as an horse can gallop [f].

Ver. 11. *Wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together*, &c.] In some part of the city they should choose, and remain in a body, being sufficiently armed: *and to stand for their life*; to defend themselves, and fight for their life, should any attack them, or attempt to take it away; in such case they might act offensively, so as to *destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them*: every army of them, or as many as should join in a body to attack them, any mighty or powerful mob; and not men only, but both *little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey*: the same words are used, and the same power is given them as were to their enemies, ch. iii. 13. not that they made use of it to the utmost extremity, it is certain they did not in one point, in taking the spoil, ch. ix. 10, 15, 16. and, since they spared that, it is highly probable they spared women and children.

Ver. 12. *Upon one day, in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, namely, upon the 13th day of the 12th month, which is the month Adar.*] The day appointed and fixed in the former letters for the destruction of the Jews, ch. iii. 13.

Ver. 13. *The copy of the writing, for a commandment to be given in every province, was published to all people*, &c.] A copy of the letters sent to the governors of provinces; the sum and substance of them was published by an herald, or fixed in public places, that all might know the contents thereof; and take care not to assault the Jews, as it would be to their peril: *and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies*; Abendana thinks this is to be restrained to those that were of the seed of Amalek, who were their principal enemies; but no doubt it includes all that should rise up against them.

Ver. 14. *So the posts that rode upon mules and camels went out*, &c.] Or on the mules, which in the Persian language were called *ahashteranim*; see ver. 10. *being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment*; who gave them a special order to make what haste they could, that the Jews might have time to prepare for their defence, and their enemies be the more intimidated: *and the decree was given at Shushan the palace*; the king's counsellors agreeing to it, and perhaps signing it, as they did the former; see ch. iii. 15.

Ver. 15. *And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king*, &c.] And walked or rode about in the city to shew himself to his friends: *in royal apparel of blue and white*; such as the Persian kings wore, and were not allowed to any other, as Xenophon writes [g]: *and with a great crown of gold*; a coronet, such as princes and nobles wear; the latter Targum calls it a great golden chain, and such the eastern kings used to give to their favourites; see Dan. v. 29. *and with a garment of fine linen and purple*: this must be an inner garment, since it is distinct from the royal robe before mentioned; though as the word signifies a wrap, or roll, it may design a turban, which was a roll of linen wrapped about the head; and such was the Persian diadem, according to Curtius [h], which was of a purple colour, mixed with white; and so the Septuagint version is, *and a diadem of fine linen, of a purple colour*; and if so, the crown of gold was not worn on his head, nor is it likely it should be allowed, but was carried before him, see the note on ch. vi. 8. *and the city of Shushan rejoiced, and was glad*; not only the Jews in it, but the native inhabitants of it, that had any sense of humanity, expressed their joy at the sight of Mordecai thus arrayed; that so good a man was advanced at court, and so bad a man as Haman was displaced and put to death; see Prov. xxix. 2.

Ver. 16. *And the Jews had light*, &c.] Prosperity, as opposed to the darkness of adversity in which they had been, see Isa. viii. 22. and ix. 1, 2. or lightsomeness and cheerfulness of spirit, as explained by the two next words: *and gladness and joy*; at the good news of their deliverance, so unexpected by them; thus light is explained by gladness, Psal. xcvii. 11. *and honour*: among men; from their neighbours, who before were held in contempt, as a people doomed to destruction.

Ver. 17. *And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came*, &c.] As they did to every province in the realm, and to every city in the province, where there were any Jews: *the Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day*; they expressed their joy on this occasion by keeping a festival, which in their language is called a good day; and such an one is annually kept by them unto this day, on account of their deliverance; of which see ch. ix. 27, 28. *and many of the people of the land became Jews*; or were proselyted, as both the Targums and Jarchi interpret it; they embraced the Jewish religion, and submitted to the rites and ceremonies of it; were circumcised, as in the Septuagint version, and so were proselytes of righteousness; and indeed no other could they be, dwelling in their own land; many of them very probably were serious in it, observing the wonderful manner in which the Jews were delivered; wherein manifestly appeared to them the providence of God, the hand of the Supreme Being, and from hence concluded their God must be the true God, and they his favourite people, and their religion rightest; though others might only do it to gain the favour of Esther and Mordecai, who had now such great power and influence at court: *for the fear of the Jews fell upon them*; lest they should be slain by them, in virtue of this new edict.

[d] De Animal. l. 16. c. 9.
[e] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 44.
[f] Universal History, vol. 5. p. 28.
[g] Cyropædia, l. 8. c. 23.
[h] Hist. l. 3. c. 3. & l. 6. c. 6. Vid. Selerium de Pileo, sect. 9.

CHAP. IX.

In this chapter we have an account of the Jews gathering together, on the day fixed for their destruction, to defend themselves, which they did in all the provinces, and smote their enemies; ver. 1—5. In Shushan the palace they slew the ten sons of Haman and 500 men on that day, ver. 6—11. and at the request of the queen they were allowed the next day to hang up his sons, when they slew 300 men more, ver. 12—15. in the provinces they slew 75,000, and those in one day only, and the following days they kept as a festival, but they in Shushan kept the two days following, ver. 16—19. and which two days were established by Esther and Mordecai as festivals, to be observed as such in future ages, by the name of the days of Purim, ver. 20—32.

Ver. 1. *Now in the 12th month, that* is *the month Adar, on the 13th day of the same,* &c.] Of which see ch. iii. 13. *when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution:* even both his commandments and decrees, the one empowering the enemies of the Jews on that day to destroy them, and the other empowering the Jews to act both defensively and offensively against their enemies: *in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them:* by virtue of the first decree of the king; and notwithstanding the second, they might hope to have it because of their superior numbers: *though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;* it proved the reverse, partly through the second decree in favour of the Jews, and partly through the fear of them that fell upon their enemies; because the court was on their side, and the officers everywhere, and especially their God filled them with courage, and their enemies with terror.

Ver. 2. *The Jews gathered themselves together in their cities, throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus,* &c.] Wherever they lived: *to lay hand on such as sought their hurt;* who not only threatened them what they would do on this day, but were risen up in arms in quest of them: *and no man could withstand them, for the fear of them fell upon all people;* when they understood that Haman was hanged, and Mordecai the Jew advanced, and that the queen herself was a Jew, and that the Jews had the royal grant to act both defensively and offensively; and no doubt but the panic was of God.

Ver. 3. *And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, blessed the Jews,* &c.] Countenanced them and encouraged them, and gave them all assistance in their power; extolled them, as the word signifies, lifted them up, and spoke well of them, or praised them, as the Targum: *because the fear of Mordecai was upon them:* he being now chief minister, they might fear, if they took part with the enemies of the Jews against them, they might be turned out of their places.

Ver. 4. *For Mordecai was great in the king's house,* &c.] Not only over Esther's affairs, but was one of the king's counsellors, and was the chief minister of state: *and his fame went out throughout all the provinces;* what a favourite he was of the king, as well as a relation of the queen, and how wise and just his administrations were: *for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater;* was more and more in the king's favour, and had offices of honour and trust heaped upon him, and increased both in wealth and power.

Ver. 5. *Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction,* &c.] Some with swords, and others with clubs, and staves; as the Targum; and such-like slaughtering weapons of destruction: *and did what they would unto those that hated them;* being then entirely at their will, and under their power.

Ver. 6. *And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed 500 men.*] Not in the royal palace, where it cannot be thought the Jews had so many enemies, or such a bloody slaughter of them should be made there; but in the city, where the palace was: and this may seem somewhat wonderful, that there should so many rise there against the Jews, so near the court, now altogether in the interest of the Jews; but these were men no doubt of Haman's faction, and enraged at his disgrace and death, and headed by his ten sons, who took the advantage of the decree to avenge his death; the Targum says, these were princes of the house of Amalek.

Ver. 7, 8, 9, 10. *And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha, and Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha, and Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha, the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, slew they,* &c.] Along with the 500 men, at the head of which they were: *but on the spoil laid they not their hands;* though they were allowed by the edict to do it, ch. viii. 11. but this they did not, that it might appear that they did not take away their lives from a covetous desire of their estates, but purely in self-defence; and they might do this, the more to ingratiate themselves to the king, to whom the goods and estates of those men would be confiscated.

Ver. 11. *On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace was brought before the king.*] Either by order of the king, that he might know how many enemies the Jews had in the city, and how many of his subjects had been slain; or officiously by others, with an intention to irritate the king against the Jews.

Ver. 12. *And the king said unto Esther the queen,* &c.] After the account had been brought in to him: *the Jews have slain and destroyed 500 men in Shushan the palace;* the Targum adds, of the seed of Amalek: *and the ten sons of Haman:* which very probably were all he had; though the Targum, in ver. 14, makes mention of 70 sons that Zeresh his wife fled with: *what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces?* that could not be said; but it might be concluded, that if so many were slain in Shushan, the number must be great in all the provinces: *now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further? and it shall be done;* if this was not sufficient and

satisfactory, whatever else she should ask for should be granted.

Ver. 13. *Then said Esther, if it please the king*, &c.] For she was all submission to his will: *let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan*; for no further did she desire the grant to be extended: *to do to-morrow also according to this day's decree*; one Targum makes the request only that they might keep the morrow as a festival, but the other, more rightly, to do according to the decree of this day; which was, to slay as many of their enemies as rose up against them; and whereas many might flee and hide themselves, who were implacable enemies of the Jews, Esther moves for a grant that the decree might be continued for the next day, that these might be found out and slain; in which she sought the glory of divine justice, in their righteous destruction, and the peace of the people of God, and not private revenge, or to indulge malice: *and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows*: on which their father was; this was deferred, though they were already slain, for their greater reproach, and for a terror to others not to injure the people of God; and it was usual with the Persians to hang persons on a gallows, or fix them to a cross, after they were dead; as Polycrates was by Oroites [k], and Bagapates by Parysatis [l].

Ver. 14. *And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan*, &c.] That the Jews might have leave to seek out and slay the rest of their enemies in Shushan, on the 14th day, in like manner as they had on the 13th: *and they hanged Haman's ten sons*; on the same gallows very probably their father was hanged; the Targum gives us the distance between each person hanged thereon.

Ver. 15. *For the Jews that were in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar*, &c.] As they had on the 13th: *and slew 300 men at Shushan*; the Targum adds, of the family of Amalek: but there is no reason to confine it to them; it respects all such as were the enemies of the Jews, and rose up against them; so that the whole number slain in Shushan were 800 persons, besides the sons of Haman: *but on the prey they laid not their hand*; see the note on ver. 10.

Ver. 16. *But the other Jews that were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together*, &c.] In a body, in their respective provinces and cities: *and stood for their lives*; defended themselves against those that attacked them: *and had rest from their enemies*; that self-same day; all being destroyed by them, and none daring to appear against them: *and slew of their foes 75,000 men*: that is, in all the provinces put together: *but they laid not their hands on the prey*; see the note, ver. 10.

Ver. 17. *On the 13th day of the month Adar*, &c.] This belongs to the preceding verse; and the meaning is, that on this day the Jews gathered together and slew so many thousand of their enemies as before related: *and on the 14th day of the same rested they, and made it a feast of gladness*: rejoicing that they were delivered out of the hand of their enemies, who hoped and expected on that day to have made an utter end of them; according to the Jewish canons [l], mourning and fasting on this day were forbidden, but feasting and gladness were to be multiplied.

Ver. 18. *But the Jews that were at Shushan assembled together on the 13th day thereof, and on the 14th day thereof*, &c.] Of the month Adar; that is, they gathered together to defend themselves, and destroy their enemies, on both these days, having the decree renewed for the 14th they had for the 13th: *and on the 15th day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness*; as the Jews in the provinces did on the 14th.

Ver. 19. *Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the 14th day of the month Adar* a day of *gladness and feasting*, &c.] Jarchi observes that those in the villages, who are they that don't dwell in walled towns, observed the 14th, and they in towns surrounded with walls the 15th, as Shushan; and this circumvallation, he says, must be what was from the days of Joshua; according to the Jewish canons, every place that was walled from the days of Joshua the son of Nun, whether in the land of Israel or out of it, though not now walled, they read (*i. e.* the book of Esther) on the 15th of Adar, and this is called a walled town; but a place which was not walled in the days of Joshua, though now walled, they read in the 14th, and this is called a city; but the city Shushan, though it was not walled in the days of Joshua, they read on the 15th, because in it was done a miracle [m]; and each of these was kept as a day of public rejoicing for their great deliverance and freedom from their enemies: *and a good day*; as the Jews usually call the several days of the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles: *and of sending portions one to another*: expressive of mutual joy, and congratulating one another upon the happiness they shared in; see Rev. xi. 10. and particularly this may respect sending gifts to the poor, who had not that to rejoice and make merry with others had; see Neh. viii. 10. though these seem to be distinct from them, ver. 22.

Ver. 20. *And Mordecai wrote these things*, &c.] The transactions of those two days, and the causes of them, as well as the following letter; some conclude from hence that he was the penman of the book; and so he might be, but it does not necessarily follow from hence: *and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the King Ahasuerus*, both *nigh and far*; such as were near the city Shushan, and those that were at the greatest distance from it; these were more especially the things he wrote.

Ver. 21. *To stablish this among them*, &c.] That it might be a settled thing, and annually observed in all future generations, what they had now done: *that they should keep the 14th day of the month Adar, and the 15th day of the same, yearly*; as the former had been observed by the Jews in the provinces, and both by those in Shushan, ver. 17, 18, 19. as festivals in commemoration of their great deliverance; hence the 14th of Adar is called the day of Mordecai, being established by him; 2 Maccab. xv. 37.

Ver. 22. *As the days wherein the Jews rested from*

[k] Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 125.
[l] Ctesias in Persicis, c. 58.

[l] Lebush, c. 697. Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. c. 697.
[m] Maimon. Hilchot. Megillah, c. 1. sect. 4. 5. T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 2. 2.

their enemies, &c.] Having slain all those that rose up against them, and assaulted them: *and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning unto a good day*: for in this month Adar, on the 13th day of it, they expected to have been all destroyed, which had occasioned great sorrow and mourning in them; but beyond their expectation, in the same month, and on the self-same day of the month, they had deliverance and freedom from their enemies; which was matter of joy, and made this day a good day to them: *that they should make them days of feasting and joy*: keep both the 14th and 15th days of the month as festivals, eating and drinking, and making all tokens of joy and gladness, though not in the Bacchanalian way in which they now observe them; for they say [n], a man is bound at the feast of Purim to exhilarate or inebriate himself until he does not know the difference between 'cursed be Haman' and 'blessed be Mordecai:' *and of sending portions one to another*; and these now consist of eatables and drinkables; and according to the Jewish canons [o], a man must send two gifts to his friend, at least; and they that multiply them are most commendable; and those are sent by men to men, and by women to women, and not on the contrary: *and gifts to the poor*; alms-money, as the Targum, to purchase food and drink with, nor may they use it to any other purpose; though some say they may do what they will with it [p]; and a man must not give less than two gifts to the poor; these are called the monies of Purim [q].

Ver. 23. *And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them.*] They engaged to keep these two days as festivals annually, as they had at this time done; not in a religious but in a civil way, not as parts of religious worship, and as additions to and innovations of the law, but by way of commemoration of a civil benefit which they had received; and yet we find in after-times that this was scrupled by some as an innovation; for we are told [r] that there were 85 elders, and more than 30 of them prophets, who were distressed about this matter, fearing it was an innovation.

Ver. 24. *Because Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them*, &c.] Had formed a design to exterminate them from the whole Persian empire in one day: *and had cast Pur, (that is, the lot,) to consume them, and to destroy them*: had cast lots to find out what would be the most lucky day in the year for him to do it on, and the most unlucky and unfortunate to the Jews; and, according to the lot, the 13th of Adar was pitched upon; this and the following verse give the reasons for observing the above two days as festivals.

Ver. 25. *But when* Esther *came before the king*, &c.] To request of him her life, and the life of her people: *he commanded by letters, that his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head*: that whereas his wicked scheme was to destroy all the Jews, the king, by his second letter, gave orders that the Jews should have liberty to defend themselves, and destroy their enemies which rose up against them; and the friends and party of Haman were entirely cut off: *and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows*; which he had prepared for Mordecai; not that they were ordered to be hanged together, nor were they; Haman was hanged before on the 23d day of the month, but his sons not till the 14th day of the 12th month; see ch. vii. 10. and viii. 9. and ix. 13, 14.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore they called these days Purim, after the name of Pur*, &c.] The lot; because of the lots cast by Haman; see ch. iii. 1. *therefore for all the words of this letter*: in obedience to what Mordecai wrote in his letter to the Jews, and because of the things contained in it: *and* of that *which they had seen concerning this matter*; with their own eyes, in the several provinces where their enemies rose up to assault them, but were destroyed by them: *and what had come unto them*: by report; as the fall of Haman, and advancement of Mordecai, and the favours shewn to Esther and her people; all this belongs to the following verse, containing the reasons of the Jews' appointment and engagement to observe the days of Purim.

Ver. 27. *The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their seed, and upon all such that joined themselves unto them*, &c.] Who became proselytes to their religion; that is, they appointed the above two days as festivals, and engaged for themselves, for their children, and all proselytes, to observe them as such; and one of their canons [s] runs thus, "all are obliged to read the "Megillah (the book of Esther, which they always "read on those days), priests, Levites, Nethinim, "Israelites, men, women, and proselytes, and servants "made free, and they train up little ones to read it:" *so as it should not fail*; of being observed, so as no man should transgress it, or pass it over: *that they should keep these two days*; the 14th and 15th of the month Adar or February: *according to their writing*; in this book, the book of Esther, which was to be read, as Aben Ezra; written in the Hebrew character, as the Targum; that is, in the Assyrian character, as Jarchi; the square character, as they call it: *and according to their* appointed *time every year*; whether simple or intercalated, as Aben Ezra observes: in an intercalary year the Jews have two Adars, and, though they keep the feast of Purim on the 14th of the first Adar, yet not with so much mirth, and call it the lesser Purim; but in the 2d Adar they observe it with all its ceremonies [t]; so, in their canon, they don't keep Purim but in Adar that is next to Nisan or March, that redemption might be near redemption; the redemption of Mordecai near the redemption of Moses [u].

Ver. 28. *And that these days should be remembered, and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province, and every city*, &c.] And accordingly these days are commemorated by them now, and by all their families, and all in their families capable of it; and these words, *every province*, and *every city*, are used, as Aben Ezra observes, lest a man should think he was

[n] T. Bab. Megillah, fol. 7. 2. Lebush, par. 1. c. 695. sect. 2. Schulchan Aruch, par. 1. c. 695. sect. 2.
[o] Lebush & Schulchan, ib. sect. 4.
[p] Ib. c. 694. sect. 1. 2.
[q] Ib. sect. 2. 3.

[r] T. Hieros. Megillah. fol. 70. 4.
[s] Lebush & Schulchan, ib. c. 689. sect. 1.
[t] Vid. Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 29. p. 563.
[u] Lebush, par. 1. c. 6, 7. sect. 1.

not bound to keep this feast where there were no Jews; for, let him be where he may, he is obliged to keep it: *and that these days of Purim should not fail among the Jews;* or the observance of them be neglected and cease: *nor the memorial of them perish from their seed;* neither the memorial of them, nor of the reason of keeping them; wherefore on those days they read the whole book of Esther, fairly written on a roll of parchment, and are careful that none omit the reading of it; rather, they say [w], the reading and learning the law should be omitted, and all commands and service, than the reading this volume, that so all might be acquainted with this wonderful deliverance, and keep it in mind.

Ver. 29. *Then Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority,* &c.] Strongly pressing the observance of this festival; before, Mordecai only recommended it, but now the queen gave a sanction to it, and laid her obligation on the Jews to observe it; perhaps some of the Jews were backward to it, or neglected to observe it, and therefore Esther and Mordecai joined in a letter to them, to press them to it; the Jewish chronologer [x] says, this was written the year following; the former Targum is, they wrote this whole volume, and the strength of the miracle, or set the miraculous deliverance in the strongest light, with this view, *to confirm this second letter of Purim;* that it might have its weight and influence upon them, to engage them to keep it, as the latter Targum adds; that when it was an intercalary year, they might not read the Megillah (or book of Esther) in the first Adar, but in the second Adar.

Ver. 30. *And he sent letters unto all the Jews,* &c.] That is, Mordecai did, signed in the queen's name, and his own: *to the* 127 *provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus;* among which was Judea, that was become a province, first of the Chaldean, now of the Persian empire, see Ezra v. 8. to whom also these letters were sent, directing and ordering the Jews there to observe these days, who were also concerned in the deliverance wrought: with *words of peace and truth;* exhorting them to live in peace with one another, and their neighbours, and to constancy in the true religion; or wishing them all peace and prosperity in the most loving and sincere manner.

Ver. 31. *To confirm these days of Purim in their times appointed, &c.*] The 14th and 15th of Adar: *according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them;* in the letters written and signed by them both: *and as they had decreed for themselves, and for their seed;* see ver. 27. *the matters of their fastings and their cry;* in commemoration of their deliverance from those distresses and calamities which occasioned fastings and prayers during the time of them; and to this sense is the former Targum; though it is certain the Jews observe the 13th day, the day before the two days, as a fast, and which they call the fast of Esther [y], and have prayers on the festival-days peculiar to them; but the sense Aben Ezra gives seems best, that as the Jews had decreed to keep the fasts, mentioned in Zech. vii. 5. so they now decreed to rejoice in the days of Purim.

Ver. 32. *And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim,* &c.] As a festival to be observed by the Jews in future generations: *and it was written in the book;* either in this book of Esther; or in the public acts and chronicles of the kings of Persia; or in a book by itself, now lost, as Aben Ezra thinks, as many others are we read of in Scripture, as the books of the chronicles of the kings of Israel and Judah, &c.

CHAP. X.

THIS chapter is very short, and just makes mention of a tribute Ahasuerus laid on his realm, ver. 1. refers to the Persian chronicles, both for the greatness of him, and of Mordecai, and is closed with the character of the latter, ver. 3.

Ver. 1. *And the King Ahasuerus laid a tribute on the land, and upon the isles of the sea.*] Which include all his dominions, both on the continent, and on the sea, the Ægean sea; though Aben Ezra thinks it regards such as were not under his government, but stood in fear of him, of whom he demanded tribute. If Ahasuerus was Xerxes, perhaps his exchequer might be drained by his wars with the Grecians, which put him upon this; though some understand this of his renewing the taxes and tribute, which he remitted upon his marriage with Esther, ch. ii. 18.

Ver. 2. *And all the acts of his power, and of his might,* &c.] As Xerxes was a very mighty and powerful prince: *and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him;* the history of that, and which tended not a little to the greatness, dignity and prosperity of the king himself, and his whole kingdom: are *they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia?* to which the reader is referred by the writer of this book, the which were in being in his times, but now lost: had they been preserved, they might have been of great use to lead into the history of the Medes and Persians, which for want of them is very dark and intricate; the writer of this book having nothing further to do with it, than as it related to the affairs of the Jews.

Ver. 3. *For Mordecai the Jew was next unto Ahasuerus,* &c.] The second man in the kingdom, the principal of the counsellors, and prime minister of state: *and great among the Jews;* highly respected by them, in great honour and esteem with them, for which there was great reason: *and accepted of the multitude of his brethren;* or of many, of most, of the greatest part of them; for, let a man be ever so deserving, there are some that will envy his greatness, cavil at every thing done by him, and speak evil of him without any just reason: *seeking the wealth of his*

[w] Lebush & Schulchan, ib. c. 687. sect. 2.
[x] Seder Olam Rabba, c. 29. p. 87.
[y] Lebush & Schulchan, ut supra, c. 686. sect. 1.

people: their good, their welfare and happiness, temporal and spiritual: *and speaking peace to all his seed*: not only to his family, but to all the Jews who were of the same seed with him, the seed of Abraham; either speaking to them in an humble and condescending manner, being very humane, affable, and courteous; or speaking *for* them to the king, asking of him for them what might conduce to their peace, prosperity, and happiness. No mention is made in this history of the death and burial either of Mordecai or Esther; but the author of Cippi Hebraici says [a], that Mordecai was buried in the city of Shushan, and that all the Jews in those parts assemble at his grave on the day of Purim, and sing songs, playing on tabrets and pipes, rejoicing that there was a miracle wrought; and the same writer says [b], they do the like at that time at the grave of Esther, half a mile from Tzephat, read this book that bears her name, eat, drink, and rejoice. Benjamin of Tudela says [c], they were both buried before a synagogue, at a place called Hamdan.

J O B.

THIS book, in the Hebrew copies, generally goes by this name, from Job, who is however the subject, if not the writer of it. In the Vulgate Latin version it is called *the Book of Job*; in the Syriac version, the Writing of Job; and in the Arabic, the Writing or Book of Job the Just. In some Hebrew Bibles it stands between the Book of Proverbs and the Song of Solomon; but, according to the Talmudists [a], it should stand between the Psalms of David and the Proverbs of Solomon. Some have made a question of it, whether there ever was such a man as Job, and suppose this book not to be a real history, or to contain matters of fact, but to be written under fictitious names, and to be parabolical, and that it is designed to set forth an example of patience in suffering affliction; and some of the Jewish writers [b] affirm, that Job never was in being, and that this book is a parable, apologue, or fable; and to this Maimonides [c] himself inclines; but this opinion is justly rejected by Aben Ezra, Peritsol, and others; for that there was such a man is as certain as that there were such men as Noah and Daniel, with whom he is mentioned by the Prophet Ezekiel, ch. xiv. 14. and the testimony of the Apostle James is full to this purpose, who speaks of him as a person well known, and not to be doubted of; of whom, and of whose patience, the Jews he writes to had heard much, Jam. 5. 11. besides, the names of the countries where he and his friends lived, the account given of his family, and of his substance, both before and after his afflictions, shew it to be a real history. Learned men are not agreed about the signification of his name; according to Jerom [d], it signifies a magician, taking it to be the same with אוב, *ob*; and some Jewish writers [e] place him with Balaam and Jethro, as the counsellors of Pharaoh against the Israelites, for which he was afflicted: the same ancient fathers render the word grieving and howling; others, as Spanheim [f], derive it from אב, to *love* or *desire*, and so it signifies desire or delight, and is the same with Desiderius or Erasmus; hence Job is called by Suidas [g] τριπόθητος, exceeding desirable; but Hillerus [h], deriving it from the same root, makes it to signify just the reverse, *without desire*; or not desirable; and supposes it to be a compound of אוב, *desire*, and אי, *not*; but the generality of writers derive it from איב, to be at enmity, and so it signifies one that is exposed to the hatred and enmity of men, or one that is a hater and enemy of wicked men; or, as Schmidt [i] interprets it, a man zealous for God, and shewing hatred to wickedness and wicked men on his account. Who Job was, it is not easy to say; not the same with Jobab, of the race of Esau, as some, Gen. xxxvi. 33. Aristeas [k] says he was a son of Esau himself, by his wife Bessara, and was first called Jobam; nor the same with Job a son of Issachar, Gen. xlvi. 13. nor was he a descendant of Abraham by Keturah; but rather sprung from Uz, the first-born of Nahor, brother of Abraham, Gen. xxii. 21. who gave name to the country where Job lived, as Buz his brother did to that of which Elihu was, and as Chesed, another brother of Uz, did to the Chasdim or Chaldeans, who were both near to Job. It is also not agreed in what time Job lived; Maimonides [l] says, of their writers some place him in the times of the patriarchs, some in the times of Moses, others in the times of David, and others say that he was of the wise men of Babylon; and some add, that he was of them that came out of the captivity there, and had a school at Tiberias, as say the Talmudists [m], who give very different accounts of him: some say he was in the times of the judges; others in the times of the queen of Sheba; and others in the times

[a] P. 70. Ed. Hottinger.
[b] Ib. p. 64.
[c] Itinerar. p. 96.
[a] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2.
[b] Ibid. fol. 15. 1.
[c] Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 22.
[d] Prooem. in Job, Quaest. Heb. in Lib. Paralipom. fol. 82.
[e] T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 11. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 1.

[f] Hist. Job, p. 61.
[g] In voce Ἰώβ.
[h] Onomastic. Sacr. p. 293, 453.
[i] Comment. in Job, l. 1. p. 6.
[k] Apud Euseb. Praepar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 25. p. 430.
[l] Ut supra.
[m] T. Hieros. Sotah, fol. 20. 3, 4. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 2.

of Ahasuerus; but the more general opinion is, and indeed the more probable, that he was born when the Israelites went down into Egypt, and that he was dead when they came from thence[n]: in short, they place him almost in all the ages from Abraham to the Babylonish captivity, and after it; and even Luther[o] was of opinion that he lived in the times of Solomon, for which there is no more reason than for the rest: it seems most probable that he lived before Moses[p], at least before the giving of the law to him, since no mention is made of it in this book, nor any reference to it; whereas there is to things more ancient, as the general deluge, the burning of Sodom, &c. the law concerning sacrifices only to be offered by priests was not as yet given; for Job offered sacrifices as being the head of his family, and so did his three friends, ch. i. 5. and xlii. 8. The length of his life best agrees with the times before Moses, for in his time the age of man was reduced to 70 years; whereas Job must live 200 years or more, since he lived 140 after his restoration: add to this, that this book seems to have been written before any idolatry was in the world but the worship of the sun and moon, ch. xxxi. 25, 26. and before there were any writings divinely inspired, since there is no appeal to any in the whole controversy between Job and his friends; but the appeal is made to men of years and wisdom, and to traditions of former times, ch. v. 1. and viii. 8, 9, 10. and xv. 18. and xxi. 29. According to Dr. Owen[q], Job lived 350 years after the dispersion at Babel, about A. M. 2100. It is also greatly controverted who was the writer of this book; some ascribe the writing of it to Isaiah the prophet; others to Solomon, as Luther[r]; others to one of the prophets who was an Idumæan; but most to Moses, so the Jews[s] say, that he wrote his own book, the section of Balaam, and Job. Some think that he wrote it when in Midian, for the comfort and encouragement of the Hebrews afflicted in Egypt at that time, and who might hope to be delivered out of their afflictions, as this good man was delivered out of his; and this, it is supposed, accounts for the use of many Arabic words in it; Midian being in Arabia, where Moses, having lived some years, had mixed their language with his own. Some are of opinion that he met with this book when in those parts, which he found either in the Arabic or Syriac language, and translated it into Hebrew[t] for the use of the Israelites; and others think it was written by Job's friends, and particularly by Elihu, which is concluded from ch. xxxii. 15, 16. but it is most probable that it was written by Job himself, or at least compiled from his diary or *adversaria* kept by him, or from those of his friends, or from both, and that it was written in the language it is now in: but be it written by whom it may, there is no doubt to be made of the divine authority of it; as appears from the sublimity of the style, the subject-matter of it, its agreement with other parts of the sacred writings, and particularly from a quotation of a passage out of ch. v. 13. by the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 19. see also ch. vi. 17. compared with Heb. xii. 5. The design of it is not only in general to assert and explain the doctrine of Providence, as Maimonides observes; but in particular to shew, that, though good men are afflicted, yet sooner or later they are delivered out of their afflictions; and that it becomes them to bear them patiently, and not murmur at them; nor complain of God on account of them, whose ways and works are unsearchable, and who gives no account of his matters to men, but is sovereign, wise, and just, in all he does; and whatsoever is done by him issues in the good of his people, as well as in his own glory, as the event shews. This book may be considered either as an history of the life of Job, in which an account is given of him in his prosperity; of his afflictions, and how they came upon him; of a visit paid him by his friends, and of the discourses that past between him and them, and of his restoration to greater affluence than he enjoyed before: or as a drama or dialogue consisting of divers parts, and in which various speakers are introduced, as God, Satan, Job, his wife, and friends; or as a dispute, in which Job's three friends are the opponents, himself the respondent, Elihu the moderator, and God the umpire, who settled and determined the point in question. It contains many useful things in it concerning the Divine Being, and the perfections of his nature, his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and sovereignty; concerning the works of creation and providence; concerning original sin, and the corruption of mankind; concerning redemption by Christ, and good works to be done by men; and concerning the resurrection of the dead, and eternal life. Some think Job was a type of Christ in his afflictions and sufferings; in his patience under them, and deliverance out of them; in his exaltation to an high pitch of happiness and prosperity; and in his intercession for his friends. He is in many things worthy of imitation, though in others to be blamed, and not followed; and, on the whole, this book of his may be read with great pleasure and profit.

CHAP. I.

IN this chapter, Job, the subject of the whole book, is described by his native country, by his name, by his religious character, and by his family and his substance, ver. 1—3. a particular relation is given of his

[n] T. Hieros. Sotah, fol. 20. 2, 4. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 2. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 57. fol. 50. 4. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 3. p. 9. Juchasin, fol. 9. 2. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 7. 1.
[o] Mensal. Colloqu. c. 32. p. 261.
[p] Origen. contr. Cels. l. 6. p. 305.
[q] Theologoumen. l. 3. c. 4. p. 192.
[r] Ut supra, c. 31. p. 359.
[s] T. Hieros. Sotah, fol. 20. 4. T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 14. 2. & 15. 1. Jarchi in Job, 31. 35.
[t] Vid. Origen. in Job, fol. 1. & Dickinson. Physic. vet. & vera, c. 19. sect. 27. p. 303.

children feasting together, and of Job's conduct during that time, ver. 4, 5. of a discourse which passed between God and Satan concerning him, the issue of which was that Satan obtained leave of God to afflict Job in his outward affairs, ver. 6—12. then follows an account of his several losses, of his oxen, sheep, camels, asses, and servants, by the Sabeans, Chaldeans, and fire from heaven, and of his sons and daughters by the fall of the house in which they were through a violent wind, ver. 13—19. and the chapter is concluded with the agreeable behaviour of Job in the midst of all this, ver. 20—22.

Ver. 1. *There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job*, &c.] Of the signification of his name, see the argument of the book. The place where he dwelt had its name not from Uz, a descendant of Shem, Gen. x. 23. but from Uz, a son of Nahor, brother to Abraham, Gen. xxii. 21. unless it can be thought to be so called from Uz, of the children of Seir, in the land of Edom; since we read of the land of Uz along with Edom, or rather of Edom as in the land of Uz, or on the borders of it, Lam. iv. 21. the Targum calls it the land of Armenia, but rather it is Arabia; and very probably it was one of the Arabias Job lived in, either Petræa or Deserta, probably the latter; of which Uz or Ausitis, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin version read it, was a part; the same with the Æsitæ of Ptolemy [u]; and it is said to be near the land of Canaan [w], for in Arabia Felix the Sabeans lived; and certain it is that this country was near to the Sabeans and Chaldeans, and to the land of Edom, from whence Eliphaz the Temanite came: and as this very probably was a wicked and an idolatrous place, it was an instance of the distinguishing grace of God, to call Job by his grace in the land of Uz, as it was to call Abraham in Ur of the Chaldeans; and though it might be distressing and afflicting to the good man to live in such a country, as it was to Lot to live in Sodom, yet it was an honour to him, or rather it was to the glory of the grace of God that he was religious here, and continued to be so, see Rev. ii. 13. and gives an early proof of what the Apostle Peter observed, that *God is no respecter of persons, but, in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him*; that is, through Christ, Acts x. 34, 35. Job, as he is described by his name and country, so by his sex, a *man*; and this is not so much to distinguish his sex, nor to express the reality of his existence as a man, but to denote his greatness; he was a very considerable, and indeed an extraordinary man; he was a man not only of wealth and riches, but of great power and authority, so the mean and great man are distinguished in Isa. ii. 9. see the account he gives of himself in ch. xxix. 7—10. by which it appears he was in great honour and esteem with men of all ranks and degrees, as well as he was a man of great grace, as follows: *and the man was perfect*: in the same sense as Noah, Abraham, and Jacob were; not with respect to sanctification, unless as considered in Christ, who is made sanctification to his people; or with regard to the truth, sincerity, and genuineness of it; or in a comparative sense, in comparison of what he once was, and others are; but not so as to be free from sin, neither from the being of it, which no man is clear of in this life, nor from the actings of it in thought, word, and deed, see ch. ix. 20, 30, 31. or so as to be perfect in grace; for though all grace is seminally implanted at once in regeneration, it opens and increases gradually; there is a perfection of parts, but not of degrees; there is the whole new man, but that is not arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; there are all and every grace, but not one perfect, not knowledge, nor faith, nor hope, nor love, nor patience, nor any other; but then, as to justification, every good man is perfect; Christ has completely redeemed his people from all their sins; he has perfectly fulfilled the law in their room and stead; he has fully expiated all their transgressions, he has procured the full remission of them, and brought in a righteousness which justifies them from them all; so that they are free from the guilt of sin, and condemnation by it, and are in the sight of God unblamable, irreprovable, without fault, all fair and perfectly comely; and this was Job's case: *and upright*: to whom was shewn the uprightness of Christ, or to whom the righteousness of Christ was revealed from faith to faith, and which was put upon him, and he walked in by faith, see ch. xxxiii. 23. moreover, Job was upright in heart, a right spirit was renewed in him; and though he was not of the nation of Israel, yet he was, in a spiritual sense, an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile, the truth of grace and the root of the matter being in him, ch. xix. 28. and he was upright in his walk and conversation before God, and also before men; upright in all his dealings and concerns with them, in every relation he stood, in every office and character he bore: *and one that feared God*; not as the devils, who believe and tremble; nor as carnal men, when the judgments of God are in the earth, hide themselves in fear of him; nor as hypocrites, whose fear or devotion is only outward, and is taught by the precept of men; but as children affectionately reverence their parents: Job feared God with a filial and godly fear, which sprung from the grace of God, and was encouraged and increased by his goodness to him, and through a sense of it; it was attended with faith and confidence of interest in him, with an holy boldness and spiritual joy, and true humility; and comprehended the whole of religious worship, both public and private, internal and external: *and eschewed evil*, or *departed from it* [x]; and that with hatred and loathing of it, and indignation at it, which the fear of God engages unto, Prov. viii. 13. and xvi. 6. he hated it as every good man does, as being contrary to the nature and will of God, abominable in itself, and bad in its effects and consequences; and he departed from it, not only from the grosser acts of it, but abstained from all appearance of it, and studiously shunned and avoided every thing that led unto it; so far was he from indulging to a sinful course of life and conversation, which is inconsistent with the grace and fear of God.

[u] Geograph. l. 5. c. 19.
[w] Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 75. 2.

[x] סר ἀπεχόμενος, Sept. recedens a malo, V. L. Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, &c.

Ver. 2. *And there were born unto him,* &c.] By his wife, in lawful wedlock, who was now living, and after mentioned: *seven sons and three daughters;* next to his religious character, his graces, and spiritual blessings, and as the chief of his outward mercies and enjoyments, his children are mentioned; and which are indeed blessings from the Lord, and such as good men, and those that fear the Lord, are sometimes blessed with, see Psal. cxxvii. 3, 4, 5. and cxxviii. 3, 4. and to have a numerous offspring was always esteemed a very great favour and blessing, and as such was reckoned by Job; who, having so many sons, might hope to have his name perpetuated by them, as well as his substance shared among them; and having so many daughters, he might please himself with the thought of marrying them into families, which would strengthen his friendship and alliance with them; just the same number of sons and daughters had Bacchæus, the third king of Corinth [y].

Ver. 3. *His substance also was* 7,000 *sheep,* &c.] For which he must have a large pasturage to feed them on, as well as these would produce much wool for clothing, and flesh for food; this part of his substance or possessions is mentioned first, as being the largest, and most useful and profitable: *and* 3,000 *camels;* creatures fit to carry burdens, and travel with, and were greatly valued on that account, especially in the deserts of Arabia, near to which Job lived; and that not only because they were strong for this purpose, but because they could endure much thirst and want of water for a long time; see the note on Lev. xi. 4. it seems by this that Job carried on a commerce, and traded in distant parts, whither he sent the produce of his lands and cattle, and trafficked with them: these camels might not only be he, but she camels also, according to the Septuagint version, which might be kept for breeding, and for their milk: Aristotle observes [z], some of the inhabitants of the upper Asia used to have camels, to the number of 3,000, the exact number here mentioned; and by the number of these creatures the Arabians estimated their riches and possessions [a]; and so sheep are by the Greeks called μηλα, as it is thought, from the Arabic word مال *mala,* to be rich [b]; the riches of other people, and of particular persons, as of Geryon, Atlas, and Polyphemus, are represented as chiefly consisting of their flocks, and also of their herds [c], as follows: *and* 500 *yoke of oxen;* to plough his land with, of which he must have a large quantity to employ such a number in, see 1 Kings xix. 19. *and* 500 *she-asses;* which must be chiefly for their milk; and no doubt but he had a considerable number of he-asses also, though not mentioned, which, as well as the others, were used to ride on, and also to plough with, in those countries; it may be rendered only asses as by some, and so may include both: Aristæus, Philo, and Polyhistor [d] give the same account of Job's substance in the several articles as here: *and a very great household:* this must be understood of his servants only, since his children are before taken notice of; and the same phrase is rendered *great store of servants,* Gen. xxvi. 14. and in the margin, *husbandry* or tillage, large fields and farms; and the sense comes to much the same, whether it is taken the one way or the other; if great store of servants, he must have large farms and many fields to employ them in; and if a large husbandry, and much ground for tillage, he must have many servants to manure and cultivate them: now these several articles are mentioned, because, in those times and countries, as has been observed, the substance of men chiefly lay in them, and according to them they were reckoned more or less rich; not but that they had gold and silver also, as Abraham had, Gen. xiii. 1. and so had Job, ch. xxxi. 24. but these were the principal things: *so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east;* that lived in Arabia, Chaldea, and other eastern countries; that is, he was a man of the greatest wealth and riches, and of the greatest power and authority, and was had in the greatest honour and esteem: now these temporal blessings are observed, to shew that grace and earthly riches are compatible, that they may, and sometimes do, meet in the same person; as also to point at the goodness of God, in bestowing such blessings on this good man, thereby fulfilling the promise made to godliness and godly men, which respects this life, and that which is to come; and they are mentioned chiefly for the sake of the loss of these things after related, whereby the greatness of his loss and of his afflictions would be the more easily perceived, and his patience in bearing them appear the more illustrious; for by how much the greater was his substance, by so much the greater were his losses and trials, and the more remarkable his patience under them.

Ver. 4. *And his sons went and feasted in* their *houses, every one his day,* &c.] It appears by this that Job's sons were grown up to men's estate, that they were from him, and were for themselves, and carried on a separate business on their own accounts, and had houses of their own, and, perhaps, were married; and being at some distance from each other, they met by appointment at certain times in their own houses, and had friendly and family entertainments in turn; for such were their feasts, not designed for intemperance, luxury, and wantonness, for then they would not have been encouraged, nor even connived at, by Job; but to cherish love and affection, and maintain harmony and unity among themselves, which must be very pleasing to their parent; for a pleasant thing it is for any, and especially for parents, to behold brethren dwelling together in unity, Psal. cxxxiii. 1. besides, these feasts were kept, not in public houses, much less in houses of ill fame, but in their own houses, among themselves, at certain seasons, which they took in turn; and these were either at their time of sheep-shearing, which was a time of feasting, 1 Sam. xxv. 2, 36. or at the weaning of a child, Gen. xxi. 8. or rather on each of their birth-days, which in those early times were ob-

[y] Heraclides de Politiis ad calcem Ælian. Var. Hist. p. 439.
[z] Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 50.
[a] Leo African. Descript. Africæ, l. 9. p. 745.
[b] Hinckelmann. Præfat. ad Alkoran.

[c] Vid. Homer. Odyss. 14. ver. 100, &c. Virgil. Æneid. l. 7. ver. 537. Justin e Trogo, l. 44. c. 4. Theocrit. Idyll. 11. ver. 34. Ovid. Metamorph. l. 4. Fab. 17. & l. 13. Fab. 8.
[d] Apud Euseb. Evangel. Præpar. l. 9. c. 25. p. 430.

served, especially those of persons of figure, Gen. xl. 20. and the rather, as Job's birth-day is called *his* day, as here, Job. iii. 1. *and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them:* not to make a feast in their turn, but to partake of their entertainment: which, as is commonly observed, shewed humanity, kindness, tenderness, and affection in them to their sisters, to invite them to take part with them in their innocent and social recreations, and modesty in their sisters not to thrust themselves into their company, or go without an invitation; these very probably were with Job, and went to the feasts with his leave, being very likely unmarried, or otherwise their husbands would have been invited also.

Ver. 5. *And it was so, when the days of* their *feasting were gone about,* &c.] When they had been at each other's houses in turn; when the rotation was ended: something like this is practised by the Chinese, who have their co-fraternities, which they call *the brotherhood of the month*: this consists of thirty, according to the number of days therein, and in a circle they go every day to eat at one another's house by turns; if one man has not convenience to receive the fraternity in his own house, he may provide it at another man's, and there are many public houses very well furnished for this purpose*: Job's sons probably began at the elder brother's house, and so went on according to their age, and ended with the younger brother; so when they had gone through the circuit, as the word † signifies, and the revolution was over, and they had done feasting for that season, or that year: *that Job sent and sanctified them*: not that he did or could make them holy, by imparting grace, or infusing holiness into them: at most he could only pray for their sanctification, and give them rules, precepts, and instructions about holiness, and exhortations to it; but here it signifies, that being at some distance from them, he sent messengers or letters to them, to sanctify and prepare themselves for the sacrifices he was about to offer for them; either by some rites and ceremonies, as by washing themselves, and abstinence from their wives, which were sometimes used as preparatory to divine service, Gen. xxxv. 2, 3. Exod. xix. 10, 11, 14, 15. or by fasting and prayer; or, perhaps, no more is intended by it than an invitation of them to come and attend the solemn sacrifice which he, as the head of the family, would offer for them; so, to sanctify people, is sometimes to invite, to call and gather them to holy service, see Joel ii. 15, 16. and so the Targum renders it, "Job sent and invited them:" *and rose up early in the morning*: of the last of the days of feasting; he took the first opportunity, and that as early as he could; which shews the eagerness of his spirit for the glory of God, and the good of his children, losing no time for his devotion to God, and regard for his family; this being also the fittest time for religious worship and service, see Psal. v. 3. and was used for sacrifice, Exod. xxix. 39. *and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all*: either of his ten children, or only his seven sons, since they only are next mentioned, and were the masters of the feast: this was before the law of the priesthood was in being, which restrained the offering of sacrifice to those in the office of priests, when, before, every head of a family had a right unto it; and this custom of offering sacrifice was before the law of Moses, it was of divine institution, and in use from the time of the fall of man, Gen. iii. 21. and iv. 3, 4. and viii. 20. and was by tradition handed down from one to another, and so Job had it; and which was typical of the sacrifice of Christ, to be offered up in the fulness of time for the expiation of sin; and Job, no doubt, by faith in Christ, offered up those burnt-offerings for his sons, and one for each of them, thereby signifying, that every one stood in need of the whole sacrifice of Christ for the atonement of sin, as every sinner does: *for Job said, it may be that my sons have sinned*: not merely as in common, or daily sins of infirmity; for Job so full well knew the corruption of human nature, that a day could not pass without sin in thought, word, or deed; but some more notorious or scandalous sin; that, in the midst of their feasting and mirth, they had used some filthy, or frothy, and unsavoury and unbecoming language; had dropped some impure words, or impious jests, or done some actions which would reflect dishonour on God and true religion, and bring an odium on themselves and families: now Job was not certain of this, he had had no instruction or intelligence of it; he only surmised and conjectured it might be so; he was fearful and jealous lest it should: this shews his care and concern, as for the glory of God, so for the spiritual welfare of his children, though they were grown up and gone from him, and is to be considered in favour of his sons; for by this it is evident they were not addicted to any sin, or did not live a vicious course of life; but that they were religious and godly persons; or otherwise Job would have had no doubt in his mind about their conduct and behaviour: the particular sin he feared they might have been guilty of follows: *and cursed God in their hearts*; not in the grossest sense of the expression, so as to deny the being of God, and wish there was none, and conceive blasphemy in their hearts, and utter it with their lips; but whereas to bless God is to think and speak well of him, and ascribe that to him which is his due; so to curse him is to think and speak irreverently of him, and not to attribute to him what belongs unto him; and thus Job might fear that his sons, amidst their feasting, might boast of their plenty, and of the increase of their substance, and attribute it to their own diligence and industry, and not to the providence of God, of which he feared they might speak slightingly and unbecomingly, as persons in such circumstances sometimes do, see Deut. xxxii. 15. Prov. xxx. 9. Mr. Broughton renders it, *and little blessed God in their hearts*: not blessing him as they should was interpretatively cursing him: the Hebrew word used properly and primarily signifies to *bless* ‡, and then the meaning is, either that his sons had sinned, but took no notice of it, nor were humbled for it, but blessed God, being prosperous and successful, as if they had never sinned

* Semedo's History of China, par. 1. c. 13.

† הקיפו cum circuissent, vel circulum fecissent, Vatablus; circulum absolverent, Bolducius.

‡ ברכו אלהים benedixerint Deo, V. L. Piscator.

at all, see Zech. xi. 1. Sanctius adds the negative particle *not*, as if the meaning was, that they sinned, and did not bless God for their mercies as they should, Deut. viii. 10. but this is too daring and venturous to make such an addition; though this is favoured by the Targum, as in some copies, which paraphrases it, "and have not prayed in the name of the Lord in their "hearts:" and because the word is used at parting, and taking a farewell of friends, Cocceius thinks it may be so used here, and the sense to be, that they sinned, and took their leave of God, and departed from him; but rather, as the word *Elohim* is used of strange gods, of false deities, Exod. xviii. 11. Job's fears might be, lest his sons should have been guilty of any idolatrous action, at least of blessing the gods of the Gentiles in their hearts, since feasting sometimes leads to idolatry, Exod. xxxii. 6. but the first sense seems best, with which the Septuagint version agrees, "it may be "my sons in their mind have thought evil things "against the Lord:" *thus did Job continually*: or *all those days*[h]; that is, after every such circuit and rotation of feasting, or after every feast-day kept by them, he offered sacrifices for them; or every year[i], as some interpret the phrase, the feasts, and so the sacrifices, being annual; all this is observed, partly further to describe the piety of Job, his affection for his family, and concern for their spiritual good, and the glory of God, and partly as a leading step to an after-event, ver. 18, 19.

Ver. 6. *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord*, &c.] This is generally understood of the angels, as in ch. xxxviii. 7. who may be thought to be so called, because of their creation by the father of spirits, and their likeness to God in holiness, knowledge, and wisdom, and being affectionate and obedient to him; as also on account of the grace of election, and confirmation in Christ bestowed upon them, as well as because, in their embassies and messages to men, they represent God, and so may be called gods, and children of the Most High, for a like reason the civil magistrates are, Psal. lxxxii. 6. to which may be added, their constituting with the saints the family of God in heaven and earth: these, as they stand before God, and at his right hand and left, as the host of heaven, in which posture Micaiah saw them in vision, 1 Kings xxii. 19. so they may be said to go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth into the several parts of all the world, to do the will and work of God assigned them, Zech. vi. 5—8. and then, having done their work, return again, and present themselves before the Lord, to give an account of what they have done, and to receive fresh orders from him, being ready to do his pleasure in every thing he shall command them, which is what is here supposed; though some think these were only the company or band of angels which were set as a guard about Job, his person, family, and substance, who now appeared before the Lord, to give an account of him, his affairs, and circumstances, as required of them: *and Satan came also among them*; which word signifies an *adversary*, as in 1 Kings xi. 14. but does not design here a man-adversary, as there, or one that envied Job's prosperity, as Saadiah Gaon thinks, but an evil spirit, the old serpent, the devil, as in Rev. xii. 9. who is an implacable and bitter enemy to men, especially to Christ and his people; and so has this name from his hatred of them, and opposition to them: Origen[k] observes, that this word, translated into the Greek language, is ἀντικείμενος, an *adversary*; but R. Levi[l] derives it from שטה, to *decline* or *turn aside*; and so Suidas says[m], Satan, in the Hebrew language, is an apostate; and Theodoret[n] mentions both, that it signifies either an adversary or an apostate; the first derivation is best: knowing the end of the above meeting, that it was with respect to Job, and therefore he came with an intent to contradict what they should say of him, and to accuse him before God; he came among them as one of them, transforming himself into an angel of light, as he sometimes does; or he came, being sent for, and obliged to come to give an account of himself, and of what he had been doing in the world, in order to be reproved and punished: but though the stream of interpreters run this way, I cannot say I am satisfied with it; for, setting aside the passages in this book in question, angels are nowhere called *the sons of God*; for besides, this being denied of them in the sense that Christ is, they are represented as servants, yea, as servants to the sons of God, ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation; they call themselves the fellow-servants of the saints, and of their brethren, but do not say that they are sons of the same family, or fellow-heirs, or their brethren, Heb. i. 5, 14. Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 9. moreover, they always stand in the presence of God, and behold his face, be they where they will, Matt. xviii. 10. Luke i. 19. nor is there any particular day assigned them for the service of God; for though they are under the moral law, so far as it is suitable to their nature, yet not under the ceremonial law, to which the observance of days belonged; and besides, they have no rest night nor day, but continually serve God, and glorify him, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty: and if this presentation of themselves to God is supposed to be in heaven, as where else should it be? it is not possible that Satan could come among them; he is fallen from heaven, being cast down from thence, nor can he, nor ever will he, be able to find a place any more there, see Luke x. 18. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Rev. xii. 8, 9. it seems better therefore to understand this of the people of God, of professors of religion, who, earlier than the times of Job, were distinguished from the men of the world by this character, *the sons of God*, Gen. vi. 2. such that were truly godly being so by adopting grace, and which was made manifest by their regeneration by the spirit of God, and by their faith in Christ, and all were so by profession: now these assembled themselves together, to present themselves, their bodies and souls, before the Lord, which was but their reasonable service; as to pray unto him, and praise him, to offer sacrifice, and perform every

[h] כל הימים cunctis diebus, Pagninus, Montanus; singulis diebus illis, Junius & Tremellius; omnibus diebus illis, Piscator, Cocceius.
[i] Singulis annis, Schmidt, Schultens; see 1 Sam. xx. 7.
[k] Contr. Cels. l. 6.
[l] In loc.
[m] In voce Σατανᾶς.
[n] In 2 Reg. Quæst. 37.

religious exercise enjoined in those times; the apostle uses the like phrase of the saints' social worship, Rom. xii. 1. now for this there was a *day*; though I very much question whether any sabbath, or much less a seventh-day sabbath, was as yet instituted; but inasmuch as men agreed together to call on the name of the Lord, or to worship him in a social way, Gen. iv. 26. as it was necessary that a place should be appointed to meet at, so a time fixed by consent and agreement; even as now, the seventh-day-sabbath being abrogated, Christians agree to meet on the first day of the week, called the Lord's day, in imitation of the apostles of Christ: and on one of these days thus fixed and agreed on was the above meeting, at which Satan came among them, as he frequently does in the assembly of the saints, to do what mischief he can; by snatching away the word from inattentive hearers, and by directing the eye to such objects, and putting such things into the mind, as divert from the service of God; or by suggesting to the saints themselves, that what is attended to does not belong to them, with many other things of the like kind: the Targum interprets this day of the day of judgment, at the beginning of the year, and the sons of God of angels, as do other Jewish writers.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said unto Satan, whence comest thou?* &c.] This question is put, not as ignorant of the place from whence he came; for the omniscient God knows all persons and things, men and angels, and these good and bad, where they are, from whence they come, and what they do, see Gen. iii. 9. and iv. 9. but it is put either as being angry with him, and resenting his coming among the sons of God, and chiding him for it, as having no proper business there, like the question in Matt. xxii. 12. or rather in order to lead on to another, and to bring out from him what he intended to have expressed by him, of what he had seen and taken notice of in the place from whence he came, and particularly concerning Job: how God and spirits converse together we are not able to say; but no doubt there is a way in which God talks with spirits, even with evil ones, as well as good ones, and in which they speak to him; and so this does not at all affect the reality of this narrative: *then Satan answered the Lord and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it*; this he said as swaggering and boasting, as if he was indeed the God of the whole world, the Prince and King of it, and had and exercised a sovereign dominion over it, and as such had been making a tour through it, and taking a survey of it, see Matt. iv. 8. and as if he was at full liberty to go where he pleased, and was under no control, when he was in chains of darkness, and could go nowhere, nor do any thing, without divine permission; could not touch Job, nor his substance, nor, as in the days of Christ, so much as enter into a herd of swine without leave: likewise this may denote the disquietude and restlessness of this evil spirit, who could not abide long in a place, but moving to and fro, seeking rest, but finding none, Matt. xii. 43. as also his diligence and indefatigableness in doing and seeking to do mischief, going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, taking all opportunities of doing injury, sowing his tares while men are asleep and off their guard, 1 Pet. v. 8. Matt. xiii. 25. and so the first word here used signifies a diligent search, and is rendered by some, and particularly by Mr. Broughton, *from searching about the earth*[o], *and from walking in it*; and so the Targum, "from going about in the earth, "to search the works of the children of men, and from "walking in it;" and it points at the place of Satan's abode, the earth, with the circumambient air, Eph. ii. 2. and the extent of his influence, which reaches not to heaven, and to the saints there, out of which he is cast, and can never re-enter, but to the earth only, and men on it; and here no place is free from him; he and his angels are roving about everywhere, city and country; public and private places, men's own houses, or the house of God, are not exempt from them; and therefore all here need to watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation, Matt. xxvi. 41. Schultens interprets the word of Satan going through the earth with great force and violence, whipping and scourging miserable mortals.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job,* &c.] Or, *hast thou put thine heart on my servant*[p]; not in a way of love and affection to him, to do him any good or service, there being an original and implacable enmity in this old serpent to the seed of the woman; but rather his heart was set upon him in a way of desire to have him in his hands, to do him all the mischief he could, as the desire of his heart was toward Peter, Luke xxii. 31. but the sense of the question is, since thou sayest thou hast been walking up and down in the earth, hast thou not taken notice of Job, and cast an eye upon him, and wished in thine heart to have him in thine hands to do him hurt? I know that thou hast; hast thou not contrived in thine heart how to attack him, tempt him, and draw him from my service, and into sins and snares, in order to reproach and accuse him? thou hast, but all in vain; and so it is a sarcasm upon Satan, as well as an expression of indignation at him for such an attempt upon him, and as anticipating his accusation of Job; for it is as if he should further say, I know he is in thine eye, and upon thine heart, now thou art come with a full intent to accuse and charge him; so Jarchi, "*lest thou set thine heart,* &c. so as "to have a good will to accuse him;" he had, but the Lord prevents him, by giving a high character of him, in these and the following words: here he calls him *my servant*; not a servant of men, living according to the lusts and will of men, and their customs and forms of worship, superstition, and idolatry; nor a servant of sin and the lusts of the flesh; nor of Satan, who boasted of the whole earth being his; but the Lord's servant, not only by creation, but by special choice, by redemption, by efficacious grace, and the voluntary surrender of himself to the Lord under the influence of it; and by his cheerful and constant obedience he answered this character; and the Lord here claims his property in him, acknowledges him as his

[o] So Bambam and Ben Melech.

[p] השמת לבך על עבדי numquid posuisti cor tuum super servum meum, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Schmidt.

servant, calls him by name, and gives an high and honourable account of him: *that there is none like him in the earth;* or *in the land;* in the land of Uz, so Obadiah Sephorno; whatever there were in other countries, there were none in this, being in general idolaters; or in the land of the people of the Heathen nations, as the Targum; or rather in the whole earth, where Satan had been walking: and, very probably, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were now dead; Job being, as it should seem, between them and the times of Moses; and though there might be many godly persons then living, who were like to him in quality, being partakers of the same divine nature, having the same image of God upon them, and the same graces in them, and a similar experience of divine things, yet not upon an equality with him; he exceeded them all in grace and holiness; and particularly, none came up to him for his patience in suffering affliction, though this was often tried; as Moses excelled others in meekness, and Solomon in wisdom; Job was an eminent saint and servant of the Lord, a father in his family, a pillar in his house, like Saul among the people, taller in grace and the exercise of it; and this is a reason why he could not but be taken notice of by Satan, who has his eye more especially on the most eminent saints, and envies them, and strikes at them: and so the words are by some rendered, *for* there is *none like him*[s]; or rather they may be rendered, *but* there is *none like him*[t]: and so are opposed to the accusations and charges Satan was come with against him: *a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?* see the note on ver. 1. here the character there given is confirmed by the Lord in the express words of it.

Ver. 9. *Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, doth Job fear God for nought?*] Satan does not deny any part of Job's character, nor directly charge him with any one sin; which shews what a holy man Job was, how exact in his life and conversation, that the devil could not allege any one thing against him; nor does he deny that he feared the Lord; nay, he owns it, only suggests there was a private reason for it; and this he dares not affirm, only puts it by way of question, giving an innuendo, which is a wretched way of slander many of his children have learnt from him: he insinuates that Job's fear of God, and serving him, was not *for nought*, or *freely*[u], it was not out of love to him, or with any regard to his will, or his honour and glory, but from selfish principles, with mercenary views, and for worldly ends and purposes: indeed no man fears and serves the Lord for nought and in vain, he is well paid for it; and godliness has a great gain along with it, the Lord bestoweth every thing, both in a temporal and spiritual way, on them that fear him; so that eventually, and in the issue, they are great gainers by it; and they may lawfully look to these things, in order to encourage them in the service and worship of God, even as Moses had respect to the recompence of reward; when they don't make these, but the will and glory of God, the sole and chief cause and end thereof: but the intimation of Satan is, that Job's fear was merely outward and hypocritical, nor cordial, hearty, and disinterested, but was entirely for his own sake, and for what he got by it; and this he said as if he knew better than God himself, the searcher of hearts, who had before given such an honourable character of him. Sephorno observes, that he supposes that his fear was not a fear of the greatness of God, a reverence of his divine Majesty, but a fear of punishment; or what we call a servile fear, and not a filial one.

Ver. 10. *Hast not thou made an hedge about him,* &c.] A fence, a wall of protection all around him? he had; he encompassed him about with his love as with a shield, a hedge which could not be broken down by men or devils; he surrounded him with his almighty power, that none could hurt him; he guarded him by his providence, he caused his angels to encamp about him; yea, he himself was a wall of fire around him; the Targum interprets it the word of God: so thick was the hedge, so strong the fence, that Satan could not find the least gap to get in at, to do him any injury to his body or mind, without the divine permission; which he envied and was vexed at, and maliciously suggests that this was the motive of Job's fear of the Lord; and indeed it was an obligation upon him to fear him, but not the sole cause of it: *and about his house;* not the house in which he dwelt; though Satan could have gladly pulled down that about his ears, as well as that in which his children were; but it designs his family, who were also by Providence protected in their persons and estates, and preserved from the temptations of Satan, at least from being overcome by them, and even at the times of their feasting before mentioned; this fence was about his servants also, so that Satan could not come at and hurt any one that belonged to him, which was a great grief and vexation of mind to him: *and about all that he hath on every side?* his sheep, his camels, his oxen, and his asses; for otherwise these would not have escaped the malice and fury of this evil spirit they afterwards felt; but as these were the gifts of the providence of God to Job, they were guarded by his power, that Satan could not hurt them without leave: *thou hast blessed the work of his hands;* not only what he himself personally wrought with his own hands, but was done by his servants through his direction, and by his order; the culture of his fields, the feeding and keeping of his flocks and herds; all succeeded well; whatever he did, or was concerned in, prospered: *and his substance is increased in the land;* or *broke out*[v]; like a breach of waters; see 2 Sam. v. 20; exceeded all bounds; his riches broke forth on the right hand and on the left, and flowed in, so that there were scarce any limits to be set to them; he abounded in them; his sheep brought forth thousands; his oxen, camels, and asses, stood well, and were strong to labour; and his wealth poured in upon him in great plenty; all which was an eye-sore to Satan, and therefore would insinuate that this was the sole spring and source of Job's religion, devotion, and obedience.

Ver. 11. *But put forth thine hand now,* &c.] With-

[s] כי nam, Piscator.

[t] Atqui, Schmidt.

[u] חנם gratis, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt, Schultens.

[v] פרץ erupit, Montanus, Piscator; eruperit, Junius & Tremellius; prorupit, Schultens.

draw thine hand of providence, power, and protection, with which thou hast covered and screened him; and, instead of that, *send* [u] forth thine afflicting hand, not barely in a way of chastisement and correction, but in wrath and vengeance, consuming and destroying all he had; and this he desires might be done *now*, immediately, without delay, whilst Job was in the midst of his prosperity: for Satan was in haste to have mischief done to him, being an object of his great hatred and enmity: some, instead of *now*, render it, *I pray thee* [w], as being an entreaty of Satan, and an importunate one, and which he was eagerly desirous of obtaining; well-knowing that no hurt could be done to Job without leave from God, or his doing it himself: the Vulgate Latin version is, *put forth thine hand a little*, as if its being exerted but a little, or a small touch of it, would be sufficient to discover Job's hypocrisy; but Satan doubtless knew Job better than this suggests, and that such was his integrity, that a small trial would not affect him; and besides, he immediately adds: *and touch all that he hath*: which was not a slight touch, but an heavy one, reaching to all his family and substance, and to his person too, and the health of it at least; as appears by the proviso or saving clause put in by the Lord afterwards, when he gave leave to smite him: *and he will curse thee to thy face*; or, *if he does not curse thee to thy face* [x]; then let it be so and so with me, worse than it now is; let me have my full damnation; for the words are an imprecation of the devil, wishing the worst of evils to himself, if Job, in such circumstances, did not *curse* God to his *face*; that is, not only openly and publicly, but impudently; signifying that he would fly in his face, like a man passionate, furious, and enraged, and like those wicked persons, hungry and hardly bestead, that would fret and curse their king and their God, Isa. viii. 21. or like those men, who, under their pains and sores, blasphemed him that had power over them, Rev. xvi. 10. or like those carnal professors, whose words were stout against God, Mal. iii. 13, 19. in such-like passionate expressions Satan insinuates Job would break out against God, murmuring at and complaining of his providence, arraigning his wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, in his dealings with him: or, *if he does not bless thee to thy face* [y], as it may be rendered; that is, either he *will bid thee farewell* [z], and apostatize from thee, see the note on ver. 5. as sometimes nominal professors do, when affliction and tribulation come upon them, they are offended, and drop their profession, Matt. xiii. 21. or, as others, *if he hath not blessed thee to thy face* [a]; then let it be thus with me, that is, it will be then a clear case, that Job in times past had only blessed God to his face, or outwardly; he had only honoured him with his lips, but his heart was far from him, and his fear towards him taught by the precept of men, as is the character of hypocrites, Isa. xxix. 13. this Satan wickedly insinuates; one of the Targums is, "if he does not provoke thee to the face "of thy Word;" Ben Melech interprets על פניך *by thy life*, and takes it to be the form of an oath.

Ver. 12. *And the Lord said unto Satan, behold, all that he hath is in thy power*, &c.] This he said not as angry and displeased with Job, or as entertaining any ill opinion of him through the suggestions of Satan, nor as gratifying that evil spirit; but in order to convince and confound him, and to try the grace of Job, that he might shine the brighter; and it may be observed, that the Lord alone had the sovereign dispose of all that Job had, and that Satan could have no power over him or his, but what was given him: *only upon himself put not forth thine hand*; thus the Lord restrained Satan, who could do nothing without his leave, and limits and bounds the present affliction of his servant to his family and estate; reserving his person and the health of it for another temptation and trial: *so Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord*; the Targum adds, *with power*, authority, liberty of acting; not from his general presence, which is everywhere, from whence there is no going; nor from his gracious presence, in which he had not been; and much less his glorious presence in heaven, from whence he had, been cast long ago; but from the place where the sons and people of God worshipped, and where he granted his presence to them, and from conversing with God there: as soon as Satan had got leave, he at once went forth to execute what he had permission to do, glad at heart he had so far succeeded; and eager upon doing all the mischief he could to a man that was the butt of his malice, and the object of his envy and hatred; the sad effects and consequences of which follow.

Ver. 13. *And there was a day*, &c.] Which according to the Targum was the first day of the week, but this is not certain, nor material; nor can it be said whether it was the day following that, Satan had leave to do what he would with Job's substance, nor how long this was after that; for though Satan was no doubt eager upon it, and in haste to do mischief; yet besides its requiring some time to get the Sabeans and Chaldeans to march out of their own country into Job's, so he would contrive and fix upon the most proper time to answer his ends and purposes, which was *when his (Job's) sons and daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house*; it should rather be rendered, *in the house of their brother, the first-born*: that is, of Job; for בכור relates not to brethren, but to parents, as Gussetius observes [b]: this was either the beginning of a new turn, or rotation of their feasting with each other, which might begin with the elder brother; or this was his birth-day; see ver. 4, 5. and this was the day Satan pitched upon to bring all the following calamities and distresses upon Job; partly that they might fall with the greater weight upon him, and more sensibly affect him, coming upon him whilst his family was feasting; and whilst he was pleasing himself with the thoughts of having brought up his children to men's and women's estate, and of the affluent circumstances they were in; and of the unity, harmony, and love that subsisted amongst them, of which their present feasting to-

[u] שלח mitte, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt.
[w] נא quæso, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Bolducius.
[x] אם לא si non, Schultens.
[y] Nisi in faciem tuam benedicet tibi, Piscator, Schmidt.
[z] Si non in faciem tuam valere te jusserit sit, Schultens.
[a] Si non super facies tuas benedixerit tibi, Montanus.
[b] Ebr. Comment. p. 127.

gether was a proof; and partly that these afflictions might the more look like the judgments of God upon him, just as the men of the old world were eating and drinking when the flood came and destroyed them all, Luke xvii. 27. and for the same reasons these were all brought upon him in one day, to crush him the more; and that it might be thought the hand of God was in it, in a way of wrath and vengeance, and so irritate him to curse him to his face, which was what Satan aimed at; see Isa. xlvii. 8, 9. Rev. xviii. 7, 8.

Ver. 14. *And there came a messenger unto Job, &c.*] Not a messenger of Satan, as Jarchi, or one of his angels, or evil spirits; though this is a sense which is embraced not only by some Jewish Rabbins, but by several of the ancient Christian writers, as Sanctius on the place observes; and such they suppose the other messengers after mentioned were; but both this and they were servants of Job, who escaped the calamity that came upon the rest of their fellow-servants: *and said, the oxen were ploughing*; the 500 yoke of oxen Job had, ver. 3. which were all out in the fields, and employed in ploughing them; and to plough with such was usual in those times and countries, as it now is in some places; see 1 Kings xix. 19. *and the asses feeding beside them*; beside the oxen, where they were ploughing, in pasture-ground, adjoining to the arable land; and beside the servants that were ploughing with the oxen: *at their hands* [b]; as it may be literally rendered, just by them, under their eye and care; or *in their places* [c]; where they should be, and where they used to feed [d]; these were the 500 asses, male and female, reckoned among Job's substance, ver. 3. which were brought hither to feed, and some for the servants to ride on; this ploughed land being at some distance from Job's house; and others to carry the seed that was was to be sown here: now the situation and employment of these creatures are particularly mentioned, to shew that they were in their proper places, and at their proper work; and that what befell them was not owing to the want of care of them, or to the indolence and negligence of the servants.

Ver. 15. *And the Sabeans fell upon them, &c.*] Or, *Sheba fell* [e]; that is, as Aben Ezra and Simeon Bar Tzemach supply it, an host of the Sabeans, or a company of them; these were not the descendants of that Sheba that sprung from Ham, Gen. x. 7. nor of him that came from Shem, ver. 28. but from Sheba, the son of Jokshan, a son of Abraham by Keturah, who with the rest of her sons were sent into the east-country, the country of Job; and these Sabeans, who descended from the same, were his near neighbours, Gen. xxv. 3, 6. they were the inhabitants of one of the Arabias, it is generally said Arabia Felix; but that is not likely, since it was a very plentiful country, the inhabitants of which had no need to rob and plunder others; and besides was at a great distance from the place of Job's habitation, and lay to the south, and not the east; though Strabo [f] indeed says, that the Sabeans inhabited Arabia Felix, and made excursions into Syria, which agrees with these Sabeans: but rather Arabia Deserta, as Spanheim [g] has abundantly proved, a barren place; hence we read of Sabeans *from the wilderness*, Ezek. xxiii. 42. the inhabitants of which lived upon the plunder of others; and these being naturally given to spoil and rapine, were fit persons for Satan to work upon, as he does in the children of disobedience; into whose hearts he put it to make such a descent on Job's fields, and carry off his cattle, as they did; they fell upon his oxen and asses at once and unawares, in a body, in an hostile and furious manner: *and took them away*; as a booty; they did not kill them, but drove them off the ground, and led them into their own country for their use and service: *yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword*; who were ploughing with the oxen, and looking after the asses, and who might make an opposition, though in vain; this was an addition to Job's affliction, that not only his cattle were carried off, but his servants were slain, who were born in his house, or bought with his money: *and I only am escaped alone to tell thee*; this single servant was preserved, either by the special providence of God, in kindness to Job, that he might know of a certainty, and exactly, and what had befallen him, and how it came to pass, which men are naturally desirous of; or else, as it is generally thought, through the malice and cunning of Satan, that the tidings might the sooner be brought to him, and more readily be believed by him, and strike him with the greater surprise, a servant of his own running with it, whom he knew, and could believe; and he appearing with the utmost concern of mind, and horror in his countenance.

Ver. 16. *While he was yet speaking, there came also another, &c.*] Another messenger, one of Job's servants, from another part of his fields where his sheep were grazing, and was one of those that kept them; he came with another piece of bad news, even before the other had finished his whole account; and the same is observed of all the other messengers that follow: so Satan ordered it, that all Job's afflictions should come upon him at once, and the news of them be brought him as thick and as fast as they could, to surprise him the more into some rash expressions against God; that he might have no intermission, no breathing-time; no time for prayer to God to support him under the affliction, and sanctify it unto him; no time for meditation upon, or recollection of, past experiences of divine goodness, or of promises that might have been useful to him; but they came one upon the back of another, to hurry him into some indecent carriage and behaviour towards God, being considered by him as his judgments upon him: *and said, the fire of God is fallen from heaven*; which the servant thought, or Satan put it into his mind to say, that it came immediately from God, like that which destroyed Nadab and Abihu and the murmurers in the camp of Israel, Lev. x. 2. Numb. xi. 1. or, as it is commonly thought, is so called, because a most vehement one, as a vehement flame is called the flame of the Lord, Cant. viii. 6. this being such a fire as was never known, since the

[b] על ידיהם ad manus eorum, Mercerus.
[c] Suis locis, Vatablus, Schmidt; so Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Bar Tzemach.
[d] More solito, Schultens.
[e] ותפל שבא et delapsa est Seba, Montanus, Bolducius; et irruit Sheba, Schmidt, Cocceius.
[f] Geograph. l. 16. p. 536.
[g] Histor. Jobi, c. 3. sect. 12. p. 44, &c.

fire that came down from heaven and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain. I am inclined to think it was a prodigious flash or flashes of lightning; for as thunder is the voice of God, so lightning, which accompanies it, may be called the fire of God; and this agrees with the phraseology of the passage; it comes from heaven, or the air, and falls upon the earth, and strikes creatures and things in it; and which, as it is the effect of natural causes, Satan might be permitted to join them together and effect it; and this was done, and the news of it expressed in such language as to make Job believe that God was against him, and become his enemy, and that the artillery of heaven was employed to his hurt, and to the ruin of his substance: *and hath burnt up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them;* as the fire or lightning which came down from heaven and consumed the captains, and their fifties, in Elijah's time, 2 Kings i. 10, 12. and such-like effects of lightning are often to be observed, both with respect to men and cattle; these were the 7,000 sheep Job was possessed of, ver. 3. and which were all destroyed at once, with the servants that kept them, excepting one; creatures very increasing, and very useful both for food and clothing, and also used for sacrifice; and it is thought that Satan's end in the destruction of these was, that Job might conclude from hence that his sacrifices were not acceptable to God, and therefore it was in vain to serve him; which he hoped by this means to bring him to express in a passionate manner to God: *and I only am escaped alone to tell thee;* see the note on ver. 15.

Ver. 17. *While he was yet speaking, there came also another,* &c.] Another messenger from another part of Job's possessions, where his camels were, and this before the last messenger had told his story out: *and said, the Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away;* these were the 3,000 camels, as in ver. 3. and perhaps they were in three separate companies and places, 1,000 in each, and therefore the Chaldeans divided themselves into three bands; or *appointed three heads*[f], as it may be rendered; there were three bodies of them under so many leaders and commanders, and this was done, that they might the more easily take them; and they *diffused* or *spread themselves*[g], as the word signifies, upon or about the camels; they surrounded them on all sides, or otherwise, these being swift creatures, would have run away from them: these Chaldeans or Chasdim were the descendants of Chesed, a son of Nahor, who was brother to Abraham, Gen. xxii. 20, 22. who settled in the east-country, not far from Job: and this agrees with the character that Xenophon[h] gives of the Chaldeans, at least some of them, in after-times; that they lived upon robbing and plundering others, having no knowledge of agriculture, but got their bread by force of arms; and such as these Satan could easily instigate to come and carry off Job's camels: *yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee;* see the note on ver. 15.

Ver. 18. *While he was yet speaking, there came another,* &c.] A servant of one of Job's sons, who was in waiting at the feast before mentioned, and here again repeated: *and said, thy sons and thy daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house;* see the note on ver. 13.

Ver. 19. *And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness,* &c.] Most probably from the wilderness of Arabia, winds from such places being generally very strong, Jer. iv. 11, 12. as this was, and is called a *great* one, a very strong and blustering one; and being so, and because of the effects of it, and being an uncommon and extraordinary one, as what follows shews, a *behold* is prefixed to the account, exciting attention and wonder: *and smote the four corners of the house;* which shews it to be an unusual wind, it blowing from all parts and on all sides; and was either a whirlwind, which whirled about this house; or Satan, with his posse of devils with him, took the advantage of the sweep of it, as it came by this house, and with all their force and strength, might and main, whirled it about it; otherwise Satan has no power to raise winds, and allay them at pleasure; God only creates them, holds them in his fists, and brings them out of his treasures; and this wind blowing from the desert, the devil and his angels took the opportunity, and with such violence whirled it about the house that it fell, as follows: *and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead;* not upon Job's sons only, but upon his daughters also, the word used takes in both; and Mr. Broughton renders it, *and it fell upon the young folk;* this was the sorest affliction of all, and which Satan reserved to the last, that if the others did not succeed to his wish, this might; and a very trying, grievous one it was, to lose all his children at once in such a manner, and at such a time; his children, which were parts of himself, whom he had taken so much care of in their education, who had been as olive-plants about his table, and now brought up to men's and women's estates, comfortably settled in the world, and living in great peace and harmony among themselves, and not one of them left to comfort him under his other afflictions; and these taken away not by any distemper of body, which would have prepared him for the stroke, but by a violent death; and which had the appearance of the hand and judgment, wrath and vengeance, of God; and whilst they were feasting together in mirth and gaiety, however innocent, and not in a serious frame of spirit, or having any serious turn upon their minds for death and eternity, of which they had no thought; had they been in the house of God attending religious worship, or though in their own houses, yet either in their closets praying, or else conversing about spiritual things, with one another, it would have greatly taken off of the affliction; but to be snatched into eternity at once, and in this manner, must be cutting to Job; though there is no reason to think that this was for any sin of theirs, or through any displeasure of God to them, but was permitted purely on Job's account, for the trial of his faith, patience, sincerity, and integrity; and

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[f] שמו שלשה ראשים posuerunt tria capita, Montanus, Bolducius, Schmidt; duces, Pagninus, Vatablus.

[g] ויפשטו & diffuderunt se, Mercerus, Schmidt effuderunt se, Coccejus

[h] Cyropædia, l. 3. c. 11.

here, as in the former instances, only one servant was spared to bring the sad tidings: *and I only am escaped alone to tell thee;* so that all the servants in the house, excepting this, perished in the ruins of it, as well as Job's sons and daughters, see the note on ver. 15. It is a notion of some Jewish writers, as Simeon bar Tzemach observes, that these several messengers, as soon as they had delivered their message, died, and so all that Job had was delivered into the hands of Satan, and nothing left; but this seems contrary to ch. xix. 16. It may be observed that Aristeas, an Heathen writer, as quoted by Alexander Polyhistor [i], another Heathen writer, gives an account of these several calamities of Job, just in the same order in which they are here. It may be observed from all this, that no character ever so great and high can secure persons from afflictions, even grievous ones; Job had an high and honourable character given and confirmed by God himself, yet so sorely afflicted; and let men be the beloved of God, his chosen and precious, his covenant people, the redeemed of the Lamb, righteous and godly persons, the sons and heirs of God, yet neither nor all of these exempt them from afflictions; and those that befall them are many, frequent, and continued, and come from different quarters, from men good and bad, and from devils, and all by the permission and according to the will of God. And this shews us the uncertainty of all outward enjoyments, gold, silver, cattle, houses, lands, children, friends and relations, all perishing, and sometimes suddenly taken away: and it may be observed, among all Job's losses, he did not lose any thing of a spiritual nature, not one spiritual blessing; though he lost all his outward mercies, yet not the God of his mercies; not his covenant-interest in him, nor his share in his love, favour, and acceptance, which all still continued; he did not lose his interest in a living Redeemer; his children were all dead, but his Redeemer lived, and he knew it; he did not lose the principle of grace in him, the root of the matter was still with him; nor any one particular grace, not his faith and confidence in God, nor his hope of eternal life, nor his love and affection to God, and desire after him; nor his patience and humility; nor his integrity, faithfulness, and honesty, which he retained and held fast; nor any of his spiritual riches, which are durable; he had riches in heaven, where thieves cannot break through and steal, a better and a more enduring substance there, an inheritance incorruptible, reserved in the heavens: his conduct under all this follows.

Ver. 20. *Then Job arose,* &c.] Either from table, being at dinner, as some think, in his own house; it being the time that his children were feasting in their eldest brother's house; or from the business in which he was employed, which he left off on hearing this news; or from his seat, or chair of state, in which he sat; or rather the phrase only signifies, that he at once, with strength of body, and vigour of mind, which were not lost, as often they are in such cases, went about the following things with great composure and sedateness. It is indeed generally observed, that there is an emphasis to be put on the word *then,* which may be as well rendered *and,* as if Job sat and heard very sedately, without any perturbation of mind, the loss of his substance; but when tidings were brought him of the death of his children, *then* he arose, as being greatly moved and distressed; but it should be observed till now there was no stop or intermission in the messengers, but before one had done speaking, another came and began to tell his story, and so there was no opportunity, as well as not the occasion, of arising and doing what follows; and which he did, not through the violence of his passion, or excess of grief, but as common and ordinary things, which were used to be done in that country for the loss of relations, and in token of mourning for them: *and rent his mantle;* or *cloak* [k], as Mr. Broughton; but whether this was an outward garment, as each of these seem to be, if the same with ours, or an interior one, as some think, it is not very material to know; both were rent by Ezra upon a mournful occasion, Ezra ix. 3. and it was usual to rend garments for deceased relations, or when they were thought to be so, see Gen. xxxvii. 29, 34. though some think that this was on the account of the blasphemous thoughts the devil now suggested into his mind, being solicitous to gain his point, and work upon him to curse God; upon which he rent his garment to shew his resentment and indignation at the thought of it, as the Jews used to rend their garments at hearing of blasphemy; but the first sense is best: *and shaved his beard;* either he himself, or his servant by his orders; and which was done among the eastern nations as a sign of mourning, see Isa. xv. 2. Jer. xvi. 6. and xlviii. 37. and among the Greeks, as appears from Homer [l]; nor was this contrary to the law in Deut. xiv. 1. where another baldness, not of the head, but between the eyes, is forbidden for the dead; besides this was before that law was in being, and, had it been, Job was not bound by it, being not of the Israelitish nation: some, as Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and other Jewish writers, interpret this of his plucking or tearing off the hair of his head; but this neither agrees with the sense of the word here used, which has the signification of shearing or mowing, rather than of tearing or plucking, nor with the firmness and composure of Job's mind, who betrayed not any effeminacy or weakness; and though he shewed a natural affection for the loss of his substance, and children, as a man, and did not affect a stoical apathy, and brutal insensibility, yet did not give any extraordinary vent to his passion: he behaved both like a man, and a religious man; he mourned for his dead, but not to excess; he sorrowed not as those without hope, and used the common tokens of it, and rites attending it; which shews that mourning for deceased relations, if done in moderation, is not unlawful, nor complying with the rites and customs of a country, in such cases, provided they are not sinful in themselves, nor contrary to the revealed and declared will of God: *and fell down upon the ground;* in veneration of God, of his holiness and jus-

[i] Apud. Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 25. p. 431.

[k] מעלו את pallium suum, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schulteus; tunicam suam, Munster, Coccerius, Schmidt, Jo. Henric. Michaelis.

[l] Κείρασθαι τε κομην, &c. Odyss. 4. ver. 198. & Odyss. 24. ver. 46.

tice, and as sensible of his awful hand upon him, and as being humbled under it, and patiently submitting to it; he did not stand up, and curse God to his face, as Satan said he would, but fell upon his face to the ground: he did not curse his King and his God, and look upwards, see Isa. viii. 21. but prostrated himself to the earth in great humility before him; besides, this may be considered as a prayer-gesture, since it follows: *and worshipped*: that is, God, for who else should he worship? he worshipped him internally in the exercise of faith, hope, love, humility, patience, &c. and he worshipped him externally by praising him, and praying to him, expressing himself as in the next verse: afflictions, when sanctified, humble good men, cause them to lie low in the dust, and bring them near to God, to the throne of his grace, and instead of arraigning his providence, and finding fault with his dealings, they adore his majesty, and celebrate his perfections.

Ver. 21. *And said, naked came I out of my mother's womb*, &c.] Either literally, where he was conceived and lay, and from whence he came into the world, though he afterwards wishes he never had, or had died as soon as he did, ch. iii. 10—12. and so it is expressive of his birth, and the circumstance of it; or figuratively, his mother earth, from whence the first man sprang, and so all his posterity with him, being as he of the earth, earthly, see Eccl. xii. 7. which sense is mentioned by Jarchi and Aben Ezra; but the first sense seems best: the nakedness referred to is not of the mind or soul, being destitute of righteousness and holiness, with which the following clause will by no means agree, but nakedness of body; and therefore as soon as a child is born, one of the first things done to it is to wrap it in clothes provided for it, see Ezek. xvi. 4. Luke ii. 7. and also a being without the things of this life; the apostle's words are a proper comment on these, and explain them, and perhaps these are referred to by him, *we brought nothing into this world*, 1 Tim. vi. 7. this shews the necessity of the early care of Providence over us, and what reason we have to be thankful for unknown mercies at the time of birth, and in the state of infancy, Psal. xxii. 9. and lxxi. 6. and what obligations children lie under to parents, and what benefits they receive from them at their first entrance into the world, and which they should religiously requite when through old age they stand in need of their assistance, 1 Tim. v. 4. and this may also serve to abate the pride of man, who will have no reason to boast of his riches, nor of his fine clothes, when he considers his original nakedness; and more especially the use of it may be, and which seems to be the use Job made of it, to make the mind easy under the greatest losses. Job considered he did not bring his substance, his servants, and his children into the world with him; and now they were taken from him, he was but as he was when he came into the world, and not at all the worse: he knew how to be abased, and to abound, and in both was content: *and naked shall I return thither*; not into his mother's womb in a literal sense, which was impossible, John iii. 4. but to the earth, and to the dust of it, Gen. iii. 19. Eccl. xii. 7. pointing to it with his finger, on which he now lay; meaning that he should go to the place appointed for him, the grave, the house of all living, ch. xxx. 23. and so the Targum here has it, " to the house of the grave," where he should lie unseen, as in his mother's womb, till the resurrection-morn; which would be a kind of a regeneration of him, when he should be delivered up from thence, and enjoy a state of happiness and glory: he should descend into the grave as naked as he was born, respecting not so much the nakedness of his body, as being stripped of all worldly enjoyments, see Eccl. v. 15. and he says this in his present view of things; he thought once he should have died in his nest, ch. xxix. 18. in the midst of all his prosperity, and left a large substance to his children; but now all was taken away, and for the present had no hope or expectation of a restoration, as afterwards was; but whereas he was now naked and bare of all, he expected he should continue and die so: or this is said with respect to the common case of men, who it is certain cannot carry any thing out of the world with them, either riches or honour, but must leave all behind them, 1 Tim. vi. 7. Psal. xlix. 16, 17. which may serve to loosen the minds of men from worldly things, not to set their eyes and hearts upon them, nor to put their trust and confidence in them; and good men may part with them, especially at death, with pleasure, since they will have no further use of them, and will have a better and a more enduring substance in their stead: *the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away*; all outward enjoyments, all the good things of this world, are the Lord's, and at his dispose; the earth, and the fulness of it; kingdoms, nations, countries, houses and lands, the beasts of the field, and cattle on a thousand hills; the gold and silver, and all the riches of the earth: and these are the gifts of his providence to the sons of men; nor have they any thing but in a way of giving and receiving; and even what they enjoy, through diligence and industry, is owing to the blessing of God; and who gives not in such sort as that he loses his property in what is given; this he still retains, these are talents which he puts into the hands of men to use for themselves and others, and for which they are accountable to him; and they are but stewards, with whom he will hereafter reckon, and therefore has a right to take away when he pleases; and both Job ascribes to God, not only the giving, but the taking away: he does not attribute his losses to second causes, to the Sabeans and Chaldeans, to the fire from heaven, and the wind from the desert, but to God, whose sovereign will and overruling hand were in all; these were but the instruments of Satan, and he had no power but what was given from God; and therefore to the counsel of his will, who suffered it, Job refers it, and for that reason sits down satisfied and quiet. This is all to be understood of temporal things only; for of spiritual things it cannot be said that God gives and takes away; such gifts are without repentance, and are irreversible, Rom. xi. 29. the Targum is, " the Word of the Lord hath given, and " the Word of the Lord and the house of his judg- " ment hath taken away;" the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions add, " as it pleased the Lord, so it is " done:" *blessed be the name of the Lord*; for all his blessings and mercies; for all the gifts of nature and providence that had been bestowed, which could not

be claimed, and of which he knew himself unworthy: and for the continuance of them so long with him; goodness and mercy had followed him all the days of his life hitherto, and still he had mercies to bless God for; his wife was still with him, he had some servants left, his own life was spared; he continued as yet in health of body, and therefore could sing of mercy as well as judgment; nor is there any state on earth a man can be in, but there is something to bless God for; wherefore the apostle's exhortation will always hold good, *in every thing give thanks*: 1 Thess. v. 18. besides the *name*, the nature, the perfections, of God are always the same, and therefore always to be celebrated, and blessing, honour, and glory, are to be ascribed to him continually, in every state and condition of life; wherefore the Arabic version adds, *from henceforth, and for ever*: which agrees with Psal. lxxii. 19. and thus Job, instead of cursing God, blesses him, and proves the devil to be a liar, as he was from the beginning; and shews his superiority over him through the power of divine grace; this evil one could not touch him, he was overcome by him, and his designs defeated.

Ver. 22. *In all this Job sinned not*, &c.] Not that he was without sin, he was conscious to himself of it, and owns it, ch. ix. 20, 30, 31. but in all the above things he did or said he sinned not; not in his rending his garments, in shaving his head, and laying himself prostrate on the ground, which were done as common usages in such cases, and not through excess of passion; nor in any thing that dropped from his lips, which were ill-becoming the character he bore as a religious man; and though he might be guilty of some failings and imperfections, as the best of men are, even in doing the best of things, yet he sinned not that sin the devil said he would, that is, curse God to his face; there was nothing of this, nor like it, but the reverse of it in all he said and did: *nor charged God foolishly*; or *gave not folly to* him[m]; did not ascribe it to him, did not arraign his wisdom, nor charge him with folly; though there might be some things he could not account for, or see into the reasons of them, he knew the Lord could; he considered that he was a God of knowledge, the only and all-wise God, and did all things after the counsel of his will, and to answer the best ends and purposes, and therefore he submitted all to his wisdom: nor did he himself speak foolishly of him, arraigning his justice and holiness, as if he had done wrong to him; he knew there was no unrighteousness in God, nor in any of his ways and works, and that he had a right to do what he would with his own, to give and take it away at his pleasure: he spoke nothing that was *unsavoury*[n], as the word signifies; nothing contrary to right reason and true religion; nothing unsuitable unto, or unbecoming him as a man, as a religious man, as in connexion with God, a servant of his, and one that feared him. The Arabic version is, *nor blasphemed God*; and the Targum, "neither did he set in order "words of blasphemy before God;" he did not curse God, as Satan said he would, neither in heart and thought, nor in words; this is a testimony of him given by the Lord himself, the searcher of hearts, and who only could give such a testimony of him; and which, as Cocceius observes, is a proof of the divine authority of this book.

CHAP. II.

THIS chapter gives an account of a second trial of Job's constancy and integrity, the time and occasion of it, ver. 1—3. the motion made for it by Satan, which being granted, he smote him from head to foot with sore boils, which he endured very patiently, ver. 4—8. during which sad affliction he is urged by his wife to give up his integrity, which he bravely resisted, ver. 9, 10. and the chapter is concluded with an account of a visit of three of Job's friends, and of their conduct and behaviour towards him, ver. 11—13.

Ver. 1. *Again, there was a day, when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord*, &c.] When good men, professors of religion, met together by agreement to worship the Lord; the Targum calls them companies of angels, interpreting the words of them, and of their standing before the Lord, as most interpreters do; how long this time of their meeting was from the former cannot be said, probably but a few days, a week or fortnight at most; the Targum says, it was on the day of the great judgment, and which, as in ch. i. 6. was at the beginning of the year; so that according to this, and other Jewish writers, there was a whole year between this and the former meeting, and so between the first and second trial of Job; but this is not likely, since Satan would never give him so much breathing-time; nor can it be thought that Job's friends should stay so long before they paid him a visit, which was not till after this day: *and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord*: being either obliged to it upon a summons to appear before God, and give an account of what he had been doing on the earth, and especially to Job; or rather he came willingly, seeking an opportunity to continue his charge against Job, and to accuse him afresh, and get his commission enlarged to do him more mischief, which he could not do without a fresh grant.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord said unto Satan, whence camest thou?* &c.] The same question is put to him, and the same answer is returned by him as in ch. i. 7. see the notes there.

Ver. 3. *And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like*

[m] ולא נתן תפלה καὶ οὐκ ἔδωκεν ἀφροσύνην, Sept. nec attribuit insulsitatem, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius.

[n] תפלה insulsum, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Bolducius.

him, &c.] The same with this is also before put unto Satan, and the same character given of Job, which is here continued and confirmed, with an addition to it; for Job was no loser, but a gainer in his character by his afflictions and trials: *and still he holdeth fast his integrity*. The first man Adam was made upright, but by sinning he lost his integrity, and since the fall there is none in man naturally; it is only to be found in regenerate and renewed persons, who have right spirits renewed in them; by which principle of grace wrought in them they become upright in heart, and walk uprightly. The word used signifies *perfection*[s], which Job had not in himself, but in Christ; though it may denote the truth and sincerity of his grace, and the uprightness of his walk, and the simplicity of his conversation, the bias of his mind, and the tenour of his conduct and behaviour towards God and men; this principle he retained, this frame and disposition of soul continued with him, and he acted up to it in all things; he held fast his faith and confidence in the Lord his God, and he professed his cordial love and sincere affection for God, and his filial fear and reverence of him; and this he did still, notwithstanding all the assaults and temptations of Satan, and all the sore afflictions and trials he met with; an instance this of persevering grace, and of the truth of what Job after expresses, ch. xvii. 9. and this he did, even says the Lord to Satan, *although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause*; not that Satan could work upon God as he does upon men, both good and bad, especially the latter; nor could he so work upon him as to cause him to change his mind and will, who is unchangeable in his nature and purposes; but the sense is, he made a motion to him, he proposed it, requested and entreated, and did not barely propose it, but urged it with importunity, was very solicitous to have it done; and he prevailed and succeeded according to God's own determinate counsel and will, though only in part; for he moved him to *destroy him*, himself, his body, if not his soul; for this roaring lion seeks to devour men, even the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock; or *to swallow him up*[t], as the word signifies; that he might be delivered to him, who would make but one morsel of him, swallow him up alive, as a lion any creature, or any other beast of prey. Mr. Broughton renders it, *to undo him*; and we say of a man, when he has lost his substance, that he is undone; and in this sense Job was destroyed or undone, for he had lost his all: and this motion was made *without cause*, there was no just reason for it; what Satan suggested, and the calumny he cast upon Job, was not supported by him, he could give no proof nor evidence of it; and it was in the issue and event *in vain*, as the word[u] may be rendered; for he did not appear, notwithstanding all that was done to him, to be the man Satan said he was, nor to do the things, or say the words, Satan said he would.

Ver. 4. *And Satan answered the Lord, and said*, &c.] Satan would not as yet own that Job was the man the Lord had described; but still would suggest, that he was a selfish and mercenary man, and that what had been done to him was not a sufficient trial of his integrity; the thing had not been pushed far and close enough to discover him; he had lost indeed his substance, and most of his servants, and all his children, but still he had not only his own life, but his health and ease; and so long as he enjoyed these he would serve God, though only for the sake of them: and therefore, says he, as it is usually and proverbially said, *skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life*: the Targum is, "member for member;" which the Jewish commentators, many of them, explain thus, that if a man's head or his eyes are in danger, he will lift up his hand or his arm, and expose that in order to save the other; but the word is generally used of the skin, and so it may in this sense; and mean the skin of his hand, as a shield for the skin of his head or eye, as Gussetius observes[w]: some understand it of the skins of others for his own skin, which he will part with, that he may keep that; nay, he'll give all that he is possessed of for the preservation of his life, so dear is that unto him; meaning either the skins of beasts, in whom the principal substance of men consisted in those times and countries, and whose skins slain for food, and in sacrifice, might be of worth and value, and used in traffic; or, as others think, money cut out of leather made of skins is meant, which a man would part with, even all such money he had in the world, and even his *suppellex*, or all the goods of his house, for to save his life: or the sense is, that Job would not only give the skins of his beasts, even of all that he had, for his own skin, but the skins of his servants, nay, of his own children, provided he could but keep his own skin; and hereby Satan suggests, that Job did not regard the loss of his cattle, nor of his servants, nor even of his children, so long as he had his own life and health; and thus represents him as a lover of himself, and as cruel and hard-hearted, and without natural affections to his children; the contrary to which is very manifest from ch. i. 5. or rather this designs his own skin, and may be rendered, *skin upon skin*, or *skin even unto skin*, or *skin within skin*[x]; for man has two skins, an inward and an outward one, called the *cutis* and *cuticula*, *derma* and *epidermis*; the latter is of a whitish colour, and is properly the covering of the skin, is very thin, and void of sensation[y], which may be raised up by a blister, and taken off without pain; but the other is reddish, and very sensible of pain, and cannot be taken off without putting a man to the most exquisite misery; and yet a man will part with both his skins, and if he had ever so many, or be willing to be put to the greatest torment, rather than part with his life: and to this one point all the above senses, and others given by interpreters, tend, namely, to observe how precious the life of man is to him; and if this was all that Satan meant, it is very true; but he seems to insinuate something more, and that is, that any man, and so Job, though reckoned a good man, would not only part with all the skins he had, and all the substance he was possessed of, to save his life, but

[s] תמתו τὴν τελειότητα, Polychronius in Drusius; perfectionem suam, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus.
[t] לבלעו ad deglutiendum eum, Montanus; ad illum absorbendum, Schultens; ut absorberem eum, Michaelis.

[u] חנם frustra, Sept. frustra, V. L. Junius & Tremellius.
[w] Ebr. Comment. p. 582.
[x] עור בעד עור cutim super cute, Schultens.
[y] Vid. Bartholin. Anatomia Reform. l. 1. c. 1. & 2.

he would part with his God, and his religion, and the profession of it, for the sake of it, which is false; for there is something more valuable than life to good men; they reckon the loving-kindness of God better than life, and would sooner lose their lives than risk the danger of losing their interest in it; and are willing to part with their lives for the sake of God and true religion, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, and for his cause and interest, as many have done.

Ver. 5. *But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh*, &c.] That is, his body, which consisted of flesh and bones; these are the constituent parts of the body, and which distinguish it from spirit, Luke xxiv. 39. this is the motion made by Satan for a second trial of Job's integrity; he moves that God would take off his hand of providence over him, which secured his health unto him, and stretch his hand of power upon him, and fill his flesh with diseases, and his bones with rottenness; or break them, and touch him to the quick, to the marrow, which gives exquisite pain; or by his bone may be meant him himself[v]: *and he will curse thee to thy face*; he will fly in thy face, arraign thy providence, and call in question thy wisdom, justice, truth, and faithfulness: or he'll *bless thee*[w], and take his farewell of thee[x], and have nothing more to do with thee or religion; if he does not do this, for something is to be understood, the words being an imprecation, let me be in a worse condition than I am at present; let me not have the liberty of ranging about in the earth, to do the mischief I delight in; let me bound, and cast into the bottomless pit before my time, or be thrown into the lake burning with fire and brimstone, where I know I must be for ever.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said unto Satan, behold, he is in thine hand*, &c.] Well may a *behold* be prefixed to this, it being matter of wonder and astonishment that a saint and servant of God should be permitted to be in the hand of Satan; which yet must not be so understood; as if he was off of, and no more upon the heart of God; or as if he was out of the hands of God, and out of the hands of Christ; or as if he was become Satan's property, and a child of his; for neither of these can be true of a good man: nothing can separate him from the love of God; not Satan and all his principalities and powers: nor can men or devils pluck them out of his hands, nor out of the hands of his son; nor can those who are the children of God be any more the servants of sin, or the vassals of Satan; or in other words, nor can any of them be a child of God one day, and a child of the devil the next, which is the divinity of some men: nor is the sense of this passage, that Satan had leave to do with Job as he pleased, for then he would have utterly destroyed him; but the power granted him was a limited one, as follows: *but save his life*: or *soul*[y]; which some understand of his rational soul, that which remains after death, and which, Maimonides[z] observes, Satan has no power over; and according to some the meaning is, don't disturb his mind to distraction, so as to deprive him of his senses, and of the exercise of his rational powers, which through the influence of Satan men have sometimes lost; see Mark v. 4, 5. this is barred against in the permission granted; for otherwise it would not have been a proper trial of Job's integrity; for, should he have been deprived of his reason, and uttered ever such bad things, it would have been no proof of his insincerity; as may be observed in good men in a delirium, they will utter bad words, and do or attempt to do bad things, which is not to be ascribed to their want of grace, but to their want of reason: but rather *life* is meant; not Job's spiritual life, for that was in no danger of being lost; all the devils in hell can't deprive a truly good man of his spiritual life; grace in him is a well of living water, springing up to eternal life; he can never die the second death; his life is hid with Christ in God, and is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord his God, who so is out of the reach of Satan; but corporeal life, which the devil by permission may take away, and is said to have the power of death, which by leave he exercised over men, but here he is restrained from it: Job's life must be spared, that it might fully appear he got the victory over Satan, and stood in his integrity; and that he might still glorify God in a course of afflictions he was yet to endure, in the exercise of his faith, hope, love, patience, humility, submission, and resignation of his will to God; and besides, his appointed time was not come, he had many more days, months, and years, the number of which were with God, to live in the world, as he accordingly did.

Ver. 7. *So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord*, &c.] With leave and licence, with power and authority, as the Targum; having got his commission enlarged, on a fresh grant, to do more mischief to Job, he departed directly and immediately, being eager to put in execution what he had a permission to do; see the note on ch. i. 12. *and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown*: with hot and burning ulcers, such as were inflicted on the Egyptians in the plague of the boils and blains, called the botch of Egypt, see Exod. ix. 10, 11. Deut. xxviii. 27. it is in the original text *with a bad boil*, or *the worst*[a]; it was as it were but one boil; they stood so thick and close together, that they were as one, reaching from head to foot, and spreading all over his body, so that there was no part free; he was full of sores; as Lazarus, and to him may be applied what is said in a figurative sense of the Jews, Isa. i. 6. and this boil or boils were of the worst sort, and most hot and angry, and gave the most exquisite pain, and what Job was *smitten* with at once; they did not rise up in pimples and pustules at the first, and gradually gathered and came to an head, but he was at once covered with burning ulcers at their height, and with running sores; this was done by Satan, through divine permission; who, when he has leave, can inflict diseases on the bodies of men, as he did in the days of Christ on earth, see Matt. xvii. 15, 18. Luke xiii. 16. some Jewish writers, as R. Simeon, say, that the devil heated the air, and thereby caused an

[v] So Gussetius and Genevenses, in ib. p. 630.
[w] ברכך benedicet tibi, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.
[x] Te valere jubebit, Schultens.
[y] את נפשו animam ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.
[z] Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 22. p. 398.
[a] בשחין רע ulcere malo, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Schmidt; maligno, Cocceius, Michaelis; pessimo, Junius & Tremellius, Schultens.

inflammation in Job's blood, which broke out in boils; but then this would have affected others besides him: many are the conjectures of learned men[b] about this disease of Job's, some taking it to be the leprosy[c], others the scurvy, others an erysipelas, &c. Bolducius reckons up no less than fourteen diseases that are attributed to him, collected from his own words, ch. vii. 5. and xvi. 13, 15, 16. and xix. 20. and xxx. 16, 17, 18, 19. a late learned writer[d] thinks it was the small-pox.

Ver. 8. *And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal*, &c.] His mouth was shut, his lips were silent, not one murmuring and repining word came from him, amidst all this anguish and misery he must be in; much less any thing that looked like cursing God and blaspheming him, as some are said to do, because of their pains and their sores, Rev. xvi. 11. but Job bore his with the utmost patience; he took a piece of a broken pot, which perhaps lay in the ashes among which he sat, and scraped himself with it; either as some think to allay the itching, or rather to remove the purulent matter that ran from his boils; which he used instead of linen rags to wipe them with, having no chirurgeon to come near him, to mollify his ulcers with ointment, to supple them with oil, and lay healing plasters upon them; there were none to do any of these things for him; his maids and his servants, and even his wife, stood at some distance from him; the smell of him might be so nauseous, that it was intolerable, he was obliged to do what was done himself, which is here mentioned; though it seems something strange and unnatural, considering his case; Schmidt thinks that this scraping was done by him as a rite and ceremony used by mourners in those times and countries, and which Job would not omit though his body was full of sores: *and he sat down among the ashes*: which was often done in cases of mourning and humiliation, see Jonah iii. 6. Matt. xi. 21. and which Job did to humble himself under the mighty hand of God upon him; whether these ashes were without or within doors is not certain; some think they were without, and that he had no house to dwell in, nor bed to lie on, nor couch to sit upon, and therefore was obliged to do as he did; but the contrary is evident from ch. vii. 13. and xix. 15. others say, that his disease being the leprosy, he was obliged to sit alone and without; but it is not certain that that was his disease; and besides, the law concerning lepers did not as yet exist; and had it, it would not have been binding on Job, who was not of the Israelitish nation: the vulgar notion that Job sat upon a dunghill without the city has no other foundation than the Septuagint version of this passage, which is a wrong one; for his sitting in ashes, there might be a reason in nature, and it might be chosen on account of his disease; for ashes are a drier, and an abstersive of ulcers, and Galen[f] says they are used in fresh wounds to stop the course of the blood.

Ver. 9. *Then said his wife to him*, &c.] The Jews[g], who affect to know every thing, say, that Job's wife was Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, as the Targum, but this is not very likely; however, we may observe that polygamy had not obtained in these early times; Job had but one wife, and very probably she is the same that after all this bore him ten children more; since we never read of her death, nor of his having any other wife, and might be a good woman for any thing that appears to the contrary; and Job himself seems to intimate the same, though she was in the dark about this providence, and under a sore temptation on that account; and therefore says to her husband, *dost thou still retain thine integrity?* not as blaming him for insisting and leaning on his integrity, and justifying, and not humbling himself before God, when he should rather confess his sins and prepare for death; for this is contrary to the sense of the phrase used, ver. 3. where Job is applauded by the Lord himself for holding fast his integrity; nor will Job's answer comport with this sense of her words; nor did she speak as wondering that he should still retain it amongst so many sore temptations and afflictions; though indeed persevering grace is a marvellous thing; but then he would never have blamed her for such an expression: nor said she this as upbraiding and reproaching him for his religion and continuance in it, and mocking at him, and despising him on that account, as Michal did David; but as suggesting to him there was nothing in religion, and advising him to throw up the profession of it; for he might easily see, by his own case and circumstances, that God had no more regard to good men than to bad men, and therefore it was in vain to serve him; the temptation she laboured under was the same with that good man's, Asaph, Psal. lxxiii. 11—14. *curse God, and die*; which is usually interpreted, curse God and then destroy thyself; or utter some such blasphemous words, as will either provoke him to destroy thee, or will make thee liable to be taken notice of by the civil magistrate and put to death for it; or do this in revenge for his hand upon thee, and then die; or, though thou diest; but these are all too harsh and wicked to be said by one that had been trained up in a religious manner, and had been so many years the consort of so holy and good a man; the words may be rendered, *bless God and die*[h]; and may be understood either sarcastically, go on blessing God till thou diest; if thou hast not had enough of it, take thy fill of it, and see what will be the issue of it; nothing but death; wilt thou still continue *blessing God and dying?* so some[i] render the words, referring to what he had said in ch. i. 21. or else really and sincerely, as advising him to humble himself before God, confess his sins, and *pray*[k] unto him that he would take him out of this world, and free him from all his pains and sorrow; or rather the sense is, *bless God*: take thy farewell of him[l]; bid adieu to him and all religion, and so die; for there is no good to be hoped for on the score of that, here or hereafter; or

[b] Vid Reiskii Dissert. de Morbo Jobi, in Thesaur. Dissert. Philolog. par. 1. p. 556.
[c] Origen contr. Cels. l. 6. p. 205. So Michaelis in Lowth. Prælect. de Sacr. Poes. Heb. p. 152, 201, 202.
[d] Delaney's Life of King David, vol. 2. p. 147.
[f] De Simpl. Med. ad Paternian. apud Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 661.

[g] T. Hieros. Sotah, fol. 20. 3.
[h] ברך אלהים benedic Deo, Montanus, Piscator, Schmidt, Michaelis.
[i] Benedicendo & moriendo, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Broughton.
[k] Supplica Deo, Tigurine version; so some in Munster.
[l] Valere jubeas numen & morere, Schultens; valedic Deo, so some in Mercer.

at least not in this life: and so it amounts to much the same as before; and this sense is confirmed by Job's answer, which follows.

Ver. 10. *But he said unto her, thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh*, &c.] The wicked and profane women of that age; he does not say she was one of them, but spake like them; which intimates that she was a good woman, and had always been thought to be so; but now spake not like herself, and one of her profession, but like carnal persons: Sanctius thinks Job refers to the Idumean women, who, like other Heathens, when their god did not please them, or they could not obtain of them what they desired, would reproach them, and cast them away from them, throw them into the fire, or into the water, as the Persians are said to do; and so Job's wife, because of the present afflictive providence, was for casting off God and all religion; in this she spake and acted like those wicked people after observed, ch. xxi. 14, 15. and like those carnal professors among the Jews in later times, Mal. iii. 14. this was talking foolishly, and Job's wife spake after this foolish manner, which he resented: *what?* this he said as being angry with her, and having indignation at what she said; and therefore, in this quick, short, and abrupt manner, reproves her for her folly: *shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?* as all good things temporal and spiritual, the blessings of Providence; and all natural, though not moral evil things, even all afflictions which seem, or are thought to be evil, come from the mouth of God, and are according to his purpose, counsel, and will; so they are all dispensed by the hand of God, and should be kindly, cheerfully, readily, and willingly received, the one as well as the other; see Lam. iii. 38. Jam. i. 17. Amos. iii. 6. Job suggests that he and his wife had received many good things from the Lord, many temporal good things, as appears from ch. i. 2, 3. they had their beings in him, and from him; they had been preserved in them by him; they had had an habitation to dwell in, and still had; God had given them food and raiment, wherewith it became them to be content; they had had a comfortable family of children until this time, and much health of body, Job till now, and his wife still, for ought appears; of their former happy circumstances, see ch. xxix. and besides these outward mercies, they had received God as their covenant-God, their portion, shield, and exceeding great reward; they had received Christ as their living Redeemer; they had received the Spirit, and his grace, the root of the matter was in them; they had received justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace, and a right unto and meetness for eternal life, which all good men receive of God; and therefore such must expect to receive evil things, or to partake of afflictions, since God has appointed these for them, and has told them of them, that they shall befall them; and beside they are for their profit and advantage; and the consideration of the good things that have been received, and are now enjoyed, as well as what they have reason to believe they shall enjoy in heaven to all eternity, should make them ready and willing to bear evil things quietly and patiently; see Heb. xi. 26. Luke xvi. 26. so Achilles in Homer[m] represents Jove as having two vessels full of gifts, one of good things, the other of evil, and sometimes he takes and gives the one, and sometimes the other: *in all this did not Job sin with his lips*; not in what he said to his wife, it was all right and good; nor under the whole of his affliction hitherto, he had not uttered one impatient, murmuring, and repining word at the hand of God; the tongue, though an unruly member, and under such providences apt to speak unadvisedly, was bridled and restrained by Job from uttering any thing indecent and unbecoming: the Targum, and many of the Jewish writers, observe that he sinned in his heart, but not with his lips; but this is not to be concluded from what is here said; though it is possible there might be some risings of corruptions in his heart, which, by the grace of God that prevailed in him, were kept under and restrained from breaking out.

Ver. 11. *Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him*, &c.] Of the loss of his substance, servants, and children, and of his own health; the news of which soon spread in the adjacent countries, Job being a person of great note, and his calamity so very extraordinary and uncommon: who these three friends were is after observed; they living at some distance from him, held a correspondence with him, and he with them, being good men; and now act the friendly part in paying him a visit under such circumstances; Prov. xvii. 17. *they came every one from his own place*: from the country, city, town, or habitations where they lived; whether they walked or rode is not said, their names are as follow: *Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite*: the first of these, Eliphaz, was either from Teman, a city in Edom, on the borders of Arabia Deserta, as the Targum; or a descendant of Teman, a grandson of Esau; not Eliphaz the son of Esau, Gen. xxxvi. 11. as the Targum on that place says; for he was the father of Teman, from whom this Eliphaz sprang: the second, Bildad, was a descendant from Shuah, a son of Abraham, by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 2. whose posterity with geographers are called Sauchites, Sauchæans, Sacceans, and settled in Arabia Deserta, from whence Bildad came: the third, Zophar the Naamathite, who he was, and why so called, is not certain; there is nothing but conjectures concerning him; it is most probable that he lived in Arabia Deserta, or on the borders of it, near to Job's country and that of his other two friends[n]; there was a Naamath in the land of Uz, which was Job's country according to Fretelius[o]: the Septuagint version calls Eliphaz the king of the Temanites, and Bildad the tyrannus, or governor, of the Sauchæns, and Zophar king of the Minæans[p]: *for they had made an appointment together*; upon hearing of Job's trouble, they got together, and fixed upon a time and place to meet together and proceed on in their journey to Job's house: *to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him*; the first word signifies to

[m] Iliad 24. ver. 527—530.
[n] Vid. Spanhem. Hist. Jobi, c. 11. sect. 2. &c.
[o] Apud Adrichom. Theatrum. T. S. p. 91.

[p] So Aristeas, Philo and Polyhistor apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 25. p. 431.

move to him[q], not as Sephorno explains it, to go with him from place to place, that he might not lay hands on himself; but rather, as the Latin interpreter of the Targum, to move their heads at him; as persons, to shew their concern for, and sympathy with, the afflicted, shake their heads at them: the meaning is, that they came to condole his misfortunes, and to speak a word of comfort to him under them; and no doubt but they came with a real and sincere intent to do this, though they proved miserable comforters of him; ch. xvi. 2.

Ver. 12. *And when they lifted up their eyes afar off*, &c.] Either when at some distance from Job's house, and he being without in the open air, as some think; or as they entered his house, he being at the further part of the room, or in another further on, which they could see into: *and knew him not*, at first sight; until they came nearer to him, his garments being rent, and his head shaved, and his body covered all over with boils; so that he was so deformed and disfigured that they could not know him at first, and could scarcely believe him to be the same person: *they lifted up their voice and wept*: they wept and cried aloud, being greatly affected with the sight of him, and their hearts sympathizing with him under his afflictions, being his cordial friends, and of that disposition, to weep with those that weep: *and they rent every one his mantle*; or *cloak*; in token of mourning, as Job had done before, ch. i. 20. see the note thereon: *and sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven*; that is, they took up handfuls of dust from off the ground, and threw it up in the air over their heads, which fell upon them and covered them; which was another rite or ceremony used by mourners, as Jarchi observes, and shewed the vehemence of their affections and passions, and the confusion they were in at seeing their friend in such a miserable condition; see Josh. vii. 6. Ezek. xxvii. 30. Lam. ii. 10.

Ver. 13. *So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights*, &c.] Which was the usual time of mourning, Gen. l. 10. 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Ezek. iii. 15. not that they were in this posture all this time, without sleeping, eating, or drinking, and other necessaries of life; but they came and sat with him every day and night for seven days and nights running, and sat the far greater part of them with him, conforming themselves to him and sympathizing with him: *and none spake a word unto him*; concerning his affliction and the cause of it, and what they thought about it; partly through the loss they were at concerning it, hesitating in their minds, and having some suspicion of evil in Job; and partly through the grief of their own hearts, and the vehemence of their passions, but chiefly because of the case and circumstances Job was in, as follows: *for they saw that his grief was very great*; and they knew not well what comfort to administer, and were fearful lest they should add grief to grief; or they saw that his *grief increased exceedingly*[r]; his boils, during these seven days, grew sorer and sorer, and his pain became more intolerable, that there was no speaking to him until he was a little at ease, and more composed and capable of attending to what might be said; they waited a proper opportunity, and which they quickly had, by what Job said in the following chapter: this account is given of his three friends in this place, because the greater part of the book that follows is taken up in giving an account of a dispute which passed between him and them, occasioned by what he delivered in the next chapter.

CHAP. III.

In this chapter we have an account of Job's cursing the day of his birth, and the night of his conception; ver. 1—3. first the day, to which he wishes the most extreme darkness, ver. 4, 5. then the night, to which he wishes the same. and that it might be destitute of all joy, and be cursed by others as well as by himself, ver. 6—9. The reasons follow, because it did not prevent his coming into the world, and because he died not on it, ver. 10—12. which would, as he judged, have been an happiness to him; and this he illustrates by the still and quiet state of the dead, the company they are with, and their freedom from all trouble, oppression, and bondage, ver. 13—19. but however, since it was otherwise with him, he desires his life might not be prolonged, and expostulates about the continuance of it, ver. 20—23. and this by reason of his present troubles, which were many and great, and came upon him as he feared they would, and which had made him uneasy in his prosperity, ver. 24—26.

Ver. 1. *After this opened Job his mouth*, &c.] In order to speak, and began to speak of his troubles and afflictions, and the sense he had of them: for though this phrase may sometimes signify to speak aloud, clearly and distinctly, and with great freedom and boldness, yet here it seems to design no more than beginning to speak, or breaking silence after it had been long kept: he spake after his first trial and blessed the name of the Lord, and upon his second, and reproved his wife for her foolish speaking; but upon the visit of his three friends, and during the space of seven days, a profound silence was kept by him and them; and when he perceived that they chose not to speak to him, and perhaps his distemper also decreased, and his pain somewhat abated, he broke out into the following expressions: *and cursed his day*: he did not curse his God, as Satan said he would, and his wife advised him to: nor did he curse his fellow-creatures, or his friends, as wicked men in passion are apt to do, nor did he curse himself, as profane persons often do, when

[q] לנוד לו verbum נוד migrare, & sese movere significat, Mercerus, so Ben Melech.

[r] כי גדל הכאב מאד quod creverat dolor valde, Pagninus, Montanus; so Mercerus Schultens, Michaelis, and the Targum.

any evil befalls them; but he cursed his day; not the day on which his troubles came upon him, for there were more than one, and they were still continued, but the day of his birth, as appears from ver. 3. and so the Syriac and Arabic versions add here, *in which he was born;* and what is meant by cursing it may be learnt from his own words in the following verses, the substance of which is, that he wished either it had never been, or he had never been born; but since that was impossible, that it might be forgotten, and never observed or had in esteem, but be buried in oblivion and obscurity, and be branded with a black mark, as an unhappy day, for ever: the word * signifies, he made light of it, and spoke slightly and contemptibly of it; he disesteemed it, yea, detested it, and could not bear to think of it, and desired that it might be disrespected by God and men; so that there is no need of such questions, whether it is in the power of man to curse? and whether it is lawful to curse the creature? and whether a day is capable of a curse? The frame of mind in which Job was when he uttered these words is differently represented; some of the Jewish writers will have it that he denied the providence of God, and thought that all things depended upon the stars or planets which rule on the day a man is born, and therefore cursed his stars; whereas nothing is more evident than that Job ascribes all that befell him to the purpose and providence of God, ch. xxiii. 14. some say he was in the utmost despair, and had no hope of eternal life and salvation, but the contrary to this is clear from ch. xiii. 15, 16, 18. and xix. 25, 26, 27. and many think he had lost all patience, for which he was so famous; but if he had, he would not have been so highly spoken of as he is in Jam. v. 11. it is true indeed there may be a mixture of weakness with respect to the exercise of that grace at this time, and which may appear in some after-expressions of his; yet were it not for these and the like, as we could not have such an idea of his sorrows and afflictions, and of that quick sense and perception he had of them, so neither of his exceeding great patience in enduring them as he did; and, besides, what impatience he was guilty of was not only graciously forgiven, but he through the grace of God was enabled to conquer; and patience had its perfect work in him, and he persevered therein to the end; though after all he is not to be excused of weakness and infirmity, since he is blamed not only by Elihu, but by the Lord himself; yea, Job himself owned his sin and folly, and repented of it, ch. xl. 4, 5. and xlii. 6.

Ver. 2. *And Job spake, and said,* &c.] Or *answered and said*ᵗ, though not a word was spoken to him by his friends; he answered to his own calamity, and to their silence, as Schmidt observes; and this word is sometimes used when nothing goes before, to which the answer is, as many Jewish writers observe, as in Exod. xxxii. 27. Deut. xxvi. 5. and xxvii. 14. Jarchi interprets it, *he cried*, and so some others * render it: from henceforwards to ch. xlii. 6. this book is written in a poetical style, in Hebrew metre as is thought, which at present is pretty much unknown, even to the Jews themselves; some have been of opinion, that the following discourses between Job and his friends were not originally delivered in metre, but were put into this form by the penman or writer of the book; but of this we cannot be certain; in the Targum in the king of Spain's Bible it is, *and Job sung and said.*

Ver. 3. *Let the day perish wherein I was born,* &c.] Here begins Job's form of cursing his day, and which explains what is meant by it; and it may be understood either of the identical day of his birth, and then the sense is, that he wished that had never been, or, in other words, that he had never been born; and though these were impossible, and Job knew it, and therefore such wishes may seem to be in vain, yet Job had a design herein, which was to shew the greatness of his afflictions, and the sense he had of them: or else of his birth-day, as it returned year after year; and then his meaning is, let it not be kept and observed with any solemnity, with feasting and other expressions of joy, as the birth-days of great personages especially were, and his own very probably had been, since his children's were, ch. i. 4. but now he desires it might not be so for the future, but be entirely disregarded; he would have it perish out of his own memory, and out of the memory of others, and even be struck out of the calendar, and not be reckoned with the days of the month and year, ver. 6. both may be intended, both the very day on which he was born, and the yearly return of it: *and the night* in which *it was said, there is a man-child conceived:* that is, let that night perish also; he wishes it had not been, or he had not been conceived, or for the future be never mentioned, but eternally forgotten: Job goes back to his conception, as being the spring of his sorrows; for this he knew as well as David, that he was shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin, see ch. xiv. 4. but rather, since the particular night or time of conception is not ordinarily, easily, and exactly known by women themselves, and much less by men; and more especially it could not be told what sex it was, whether male or female that was conceived, and the tidings of it could not be brought by any; it seems better with Aben Ezra to render the word *, *there is a man-child brought forth*, which used to be an occasion of joy, John xvi. 21. and so the word is used to bear or bring forth, 1 Chron. iv. 17. see Jer. xx. 15. and, according to him, it was a doubt whether Job was born in the day or in the night; but be it which it will, if he was born in the day, he desires it might perish; and if in the night, he wishes the same to that; though the words may be rendered in a beautiful and elegant manner nearer the original, *and the night which said, a man-child is conceived* *; representing, by a prosopopœia, the night as a person conscious of the conception, as an eye-witness of it, and exulting at it, as Schultens observes.

* Opponitur verbum קלל verbo כבד; significat se pronunciasse diem inglorium, Codurcus.

ᵗ ויען et respondit, Paguinus, Montanus, Schmidt, Schultens, Michaelis.

* Clamavitque, Mercerus; tum proloquens, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

* הרה גבר in lucem editus est vir, Mercerus; creatus, progenitus, Drusius, so the Targum; conceptus & natus est vir, vel mas, Michaelis; so Ben Melech.

* והלילה אמר & nox quæ dixit, Mercerus, Gussetius, Schultens.

Ver. 4. *Let that day be darkness*, &c.] Not only dark, but darkness itself, extremely dark; and which is to be understood not figuratively of the darkness of affliction and calamity; this Job would not wish for, either for himself, who had enough of that, or for others; but literally of gross natural darkness, that was horrible and dreadful, as some[y] render it: this was the reverse of what God said at the creation, *let there be light*, and there was, and he called it day; but Job wishes his day might be darkness, as the night; either that it had been always dark, and never become day, or in its return be remarkably dark and gloomy: *let not God regard it from above*; that is, either God who is above, and on high, the High and Holy One, the Most High God, and who is higher than the highest, and so this is a descriptive character of him; or else this respects the place where he is, the highest heaven, where is his throne, and from whence he looks and takes notice of the sons of men, and of all things done below: and this wish must be understood consistent with his omniscience, who sees and knows all persons and things, even what are done in the dark, and in the darkest days; for the darkness and the light are alike to him; and as consistent with his providence, which is continually exercised about persons and things on earth without any intermission, even on every day in the year; and was it to cease one day, hour, or moment, all would be dissolved, and be thrown into the utmost confusion and disorder: but Job means the smiles of his providence, which he wishes might be restrained on this day; that he would not cause his sun in the heavens to shine out upon it, nor send down gentle and refreshing showers of rain on it; in which sense he is said to care for and regard the land of Canaan, Deut. xi. 11, 12. where the same word is used as here; or the sense is, let it be so expunged from the days of the year, that when it is sought for, and if even it should be by God himself, let it not be found; or let him not *seek*[z] after it, to do any good upon it: *neither let the light shine upon it*; the light of the sun, or the morning-light, as the Targum, much less the light at noon-day; even not the diurnal light, as Schmidt interprets it, in any part of the day: light is God's creature, and very delightful and desirable; the best things, and the most comfortable enjoyments, whether temporal, spiritual, or eternal, are expressed by it; and, on the other hand, a state of darkness is the most uncomfortable, and therefore the worst and most dismal things and states are signified by it.

Ver. 5. *Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it*, &c.] Let there be such darkness on it as on persons when dying, or in the state of the dead; hence the sorest afflictions, and the state of man in unregeneracy, are compared unto it, Psal. xxiii. 4. Isa. ix. 2. let there be nothing but foul weather, dirt, and darkness in it, which may make it very uncomfortable and undesirable; some render the word, *let darkness and* the *shadow of death redeem it*[a], *challenge* and claim it as their own, and let light have no share or property in it: *let a cloud dwell upon it*; as on Mount Sinai when the law was given; a thick dark cloud, even an assemblage of clouds, so thick and close together, that they seem but one cloud which cover the whole heavens, and obscure them, and hinder the light of the sun from shining on the earth; and this is wished to abide not for an hour or two, but to continue all the day: *let the blackness of the day terrify it*; let it be frightful to itself; or rather, let the blackness be such, or the darkness of it such gross darkness, like that as was felt by the Egyptians; that the inhabitants of the earth may be terrified with it, as Moses and the Israelites were at Mount Sinai, at the blackness, tempest, thunders, and lightnings, there seen and heard: as some understand this of black vapours exhaled by the sun, with which the heavens might be filled, so others of sultry weather and scorching heat, which is intolerable: others render the words, *let them terrify it as the bitternesses of the day*[b]; either with bitter cursings on it, or through bitter calamities in it; or, *as those* who have *a bitter*[b] *day*, as in the margin of our Bibles, and in others.

Ver. 6. As for *that night*, &c.] The night of conception; Job imprecated evils on the day he was born, now on the night he was conceived in, the returns of it: *let darkness seize upon it*; let it not only be deprived of the light of the moon and stars, but let an horrible darkness seize upon it, that it may be an uncommon and a terrible one: *let it not be joined unto the days of the year*; the solar year, and make one of them; or, *let it not be one among them*[c], let it come into no account, and when it is sought for, let it not appear, but be found wanting; or *let it not joy* or *rejoice among the days of the year*[d], as Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and others interpret it, or be a joyful one, or any thing joyful done or enjoyed in it: *let it not come into the number of the months*; meaning not the intercalated months, as Sephorno, nor the feasts of the new moon, as others, but let it not serve to make up a month, which consists of so many days and nights, according to the course of the moon; the sense both of this and the former clause is, let it be struck out of the calendar.

Ver. 7. *Lo, let that night be solitary*, &c.] Let there be no company for journeys, or doing any business; no meetings of friends, neighbours, or relations on it, for refreshment, pleasure, and recreation, after the business of the day is over, as is frequently done; let there be no associations of this kind, or any other: in the night it was usual to have feasts on various accounts, and especially on account of marriage; but now let there be none, let there be as profound a silence as if all creatures, men and beasts, were dead, and removed from off the face of the earth, and nothing to be heard and seen on it: or, *let it be barren* or *de-*

[y] חשך horrens Caligo, Schultens.

[z] אל ידרשהו ne requirat, Montanus, &c.

[a] יגאלהו vindicassent, Junius & Tremellius; vendicent, Cocceius; vindicent, Schultens.

[b] כמרירי יום tanquam amaritudines diei, Schmidt, Michaelis; velut amarulenta diei, Schultens; so the Targum.

[b] Velut amari diei, Mercerus; tanquam amari diei, Montanus.

[c] אל יחד non sit una inter dies, Pagninus; ne adunetur in diebus, Montanus.

[d] Ne fuisset gavisa, Junius & Tremellius; ne gaudeat, Vatablus, Beza, Mercerus, Piscator, Drusius, Broughton, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens, Michaelis.

solate[e], so R. Simeon bar Tzemach interprets it, and refers to Isa. xlix. 21. that is, let no children be born in it, and so no occasion for any joy on that account, as follows; let it be as barren as a flint[f]: *let no joyful voice come therein*; which some even carry to the nocturnal singing of saints in private or in public assemblies, and to the songs of angels, those morning-stars in heaven; but it seems rather to design natural or civil joy, or singing on civil accounts; as on account of marriage, and particularly on account of the birth of a child, and especially his own birth, and even any expressions of joy on any account; and that there might not be so much as the crowing of a cock heard, as the Targum has it.

Ver. 8. *Let them curse it that curse the day*, &c.] Their own day, either their birth-day, or any day on which evil befalls them; and now such as are used to this, Job would have them, whilst they were cursing their own day, to throw some curses upon his; or that curse the day-light in general, as adulterers and murderers, who are said to rebel against the light, see ch. xxiv. 13, 17. and as some Ethiopians, who lived near Arabia, and so known to Job, who supposed there was no God, and used to curse the sun when it rose and set, as various writers relate[g], called by others[h] Atlantes; or it may design such persons who were hired at funerals, to mourn for the dead, and who, in their doleful ditties and dirges, used to curse the day on which the person was born whom they lamented; or it may be rather the day on which he died; hence it follows: *who are ready to raise up their mourning*: who were expert at the business, and who could raise up a howl, as the Irish now do, or make a lamentation for the dead when they pleased; such were the mourning women in Jer. ix. 17, 18. and those that were skilful of lamentation, Amos v. 16. some render the words, *who are ready to raise up Leviathan*[i], and interpret it either of the whale, which, when raised up by the fishermen, they are in danger of their vessels being overset, and their lives lost, and then they curse the day that ever they entered into such service, and exposed themselves to such danger; or of fish in general, and of fishermen cursing and swearing when they are unsuccessful: some understand this of astrologers, magicians, and enchanters, raising spirits, and particularly the devil, who they think is meant by Leviathan; but it seems best with a little alteration from Gussetius, and Schultens after him, to render the words thus, "let the cursers of the day fix a name "upon it; let those that are ready *to any thing, call* "*it* the raiser up of Leviathan;" that is, let such who either of themselves are used to curse days, or are employed by others to do it, brand this night with some mark of infamy; let them ascribe all dreadful calamities and dismal things unto it, as the source and spring of them; which may be signified by Leviathan, that being a creature most formidable and terrible, of which an account is given in the latter part of this book; but many Jewish writers[k] render it *mourning*, as we do.

Ver. 9. *Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark*, &c.] Either of the morning or evening twilight; both may be meant, rather the latter, because of the following clause; the sense is, let not these appear to adorn the heavens, and to relieve the darkness of the night, and make it more pleasant and delightful, as well as to be useful to travellers and sailors: *let it look for light, but have none*; that is, either for the light of the moon and stars, to shine in the night till day-break, or for the light of the sun at the time when it arises; but let it have neither; let the whole time, from sun-setting to sun-rising, from one twilight to another, be one continued gross and horrible darkness; here, by a strong and beautiful figure, looking is ascribed to the night: *neither let it see the dawning of the day*: or, *let it not see the eye-lids of the morning*[l], or what we call *peep of day*; here, in very elegant language, the dawn of morning-light is expressed, which is like the opening of an eye and its lids, quick and vibrating, when light is let in and perceived; or this may be interpreted of the sun, the eye of the morning and of light, and of its rays, which, when first darted, are like the opening of the eye-lids.

Ver. 10. *Because it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb*, &c.] Or *of my belly*[m], or *womb*: which Aben Ezra interprets of the navel, by which the infant receives its food and nourishment before it is born, and which, if closed, he must have died in embryo; but rather it is to be understood of his mother's womb, called his, because he was conceived and bore in it, and was brought forth from it; and the sense is, that he complains of the night, either that it did not close his mother's womb, and hinder the conception of him, as Gersom, Sephorno, Bar Tzemach, and others, and is the usual sense of the phrase of closing the womb, and which is commonly ascribed to God, Gen. xx. 17, 18. 1 Sam. i. 5, 6. which Job here attributes to the night, purposely avoiding to make mention of the name of God, that he might not seem to complain of him, or directly point at him; or else the blame laid on that night is, that it did not so shut up the doors of his mother's womb, that he might not have come out from thence into the world, wishing that had been his grave, and his mother always big with him, as Jarchi, and which sense is favoured by Jer. xx. 17. a wish cruel to his mother, as well as unnatural to himself: *nor hid sorrow from mine eyes*; which it would have done, had it done that which is complained of it did not; had it he could not have perceived it experimentally, endured the sorrows and afflictions he did from the Chaldeans and Sabeans, from Satan, his wife, and friends; and had never known the trouble of loss of substance,

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[e] גלמוד orba, Syr. desolata, Ar. vasta, Schmidt.

[f] Sterilis, Schultens; effoetus, apud Arab. in ib. See Hottinger. Smegma Orientale, l. 1. c. 7. p. 126.

[g] Diodor. Sic. l. 3. p. 148. Strabo, Geograph. l. 17. p. 565.

[h] Herodot. Melpomene, sive, l. 4. c. 184. Mela de Situ Orbis, l. 1. c. 8. Solin. Polyhistor, c. 44. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 8.

[i] לויתן Leviathanem, Schmidt, Michaelis. Mr. Broughton renders the words, "who hunt Leviathan."

[k] Vid. Aben Ezram & Gersom in loc. R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 1. 1. Aruch in voce לוית. So the word is used, T. Hieros. Moed Katon, fol. 80. 4.

[l] בעפעפי שחר palpebras auroræ, Montanus, Mercerus, &c.

[m] בטני ventris mei, Mercerus, Piscator, Schmidt, Schultens, Michaelis; uteri mei, Paguinus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius.

children, and health, and felt those pains of body and anguish of mind he did; these are the reasons of his cursing the day of his birth, and the night of his conception.

Ver. 11. *Why died I not from the womb?* &c.] That is, as soon as he came out of it; or rather, as soon as he was in it, or from the time that he was in it; or however, whilst he was in it, that so he might not have come alive out of it; which sense seems best to agree both with what goes before and follows after; for since his conception in the womb was not hindered, he wishes he had died in it; and so some versions render it to this sense[n]: why *did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?* since he died not in the womb, which was desirable to him, he wishes that the moment he came out of it he had expired, and is displeased because it was not so, see Jer. xx. 17. Hos. ix. 11. thus what is the special favour of Providence, to be taken out of the womb alive, and preserved, he wishes not to have enjoyed, see Psal. xxii. 9.

Ver. 12. *Why did the knees prevent me?* &c.] Not of the mother, as Jarchi, but of the midwife, who received him into her lap, and nourished and cherished him, washed him with water, salted, and swaddled him; or it may be of his father, with whom it was usual to take the child on his knees as soon as born, see Gen. l. 23. which custom obtained among the Greeks and Romans[o]; hence the goddess Levana[p] had her name, causing the father in this way to own his child; his concern is, that he did not fall to the ground as he came out of his mother's womb, and with that fall die; and that he was prevented from falling by the officious knees of the midwife; that he was not suffered to fall, and be left there, without having any of the usual things done to him for the comfort and preservation of life, which was sometimes the case, Ezek. xvi. 4. *or why the breasts that I should suck?* since a miscarrying womb was not given, and death did not seize him immediately upon birth, but all proper care was taken to prevent it, he asks, why was there milk in the breasts of his mother or nurse to suckle and nourish him? why were there not dry breasts, such as would afford no milk, that so he might have been starved? thus he wishes the kindest things in nature and Providence had been withheld from him.

Ver. 13. *For now should I have lien still, and been quiet,* &c.] Signifying, that if the above had been his case, if he had died as soon as born, or quickly after, then he would have been laid in the grave, where he would have lain as still as on a bed; for such is the grave to dead bodies as a bed is to those that lie down and sleep upon it; a place of ease and quiet, where there is freedom from all care and thought, from all trouble, anxiety, and distress; nay, more so than on a bed, where there is often tossing to and fro, and great disquietude, but none to the body in the grave, that is still and silent, where there is no uneasiness nor disturbance, see ch. xvii. 13. Isa. lvii. 2. *I should have slept;* soundly and quietly, which persons do not always upon their beds; sometimes they cannot sleep at all, and when they do, they are frequently distressed with uneasy thoughts, frightful dreams, and terrifying visions, ch. iv. 13, 14. and vii. 14. but death is a sound sleep until the resurrection-morn, which Job had knowledge of, and faith in, and so considered the state of the dead in this light; death is often in Scripture expressed by sleeping, Dan. xii. 2. John xi. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 18, 20, 51. which refers not to the soul, which in a separate state is active and vigorous, and always employed; but to the body, which, as in sleep, so in death, is deprived of the senses, and the exercise of them; on which account there is a great likeness between sleep and death, and out of which a man awakes brisk and cheerful, as the saints will at the time of their resurrection, which will be like an awaking out of sleep: *then had I been at rest;* from all toil and labour, from all diseases and pains of body, from all troubles of whatsoever kind, and particularly from those he now laboured under, see the note on ver. 17.

Ver. 14. *With the kings and counsellors of the earth,* &c.] From whom he might descend, he being a person of great distinction and figure; and so, had he died, he would have been buried in the sepulchres of his ancestors, and have lain in great pomp and state: or rather this he says, to observe that death spares none, that neither the power of kings, who have long hands, nor the wisdom of counsellors, who have long heads, can secure them from death; and that after death they are upon a level with others; and even he suggests, that children that die as soon as born, and have made no figure in the world, are equal to them: *which built desolate places for themselves;* either that rebuilt houses and cities that had lain in ruins, or built such in desolate places, where there had been none before, or formed colonies in places before uninhabited; and all this to get a name, and to perpetuate it to posterity: or rather sepulchral monuments are meant, such as the lofty pyramids of the Egyptians, and superb mausoleums of others; which, if not built in desolate places, yet are so themselves, being only the habitations of the dead, and so they are called the desolations of old, Ezek. xxvi. 20. and this is the sense of many interpreters[q]; if any man desires, says Vansleb[r], a prospect and description of such ancient burying-places, let him think on a boundless champaign, even, and covered with sand, where neither trees, nor grass, nor houses, nor any such thing, is to be seen.

Ver. 15. *Or with princes that had gold,* &c.] A large abundance of it whilst they lived, but now, being dead, were no longer in the possession of it, but on a level with those that had none; nor could their gold, whilst they had it, preserve them from death, and now, being dead, it was no longer theirs, nor of any use unto them; these princes, by this description of them, seem to be such who had not the dominion over any particular place or country, but their riches lay in gold and silver, as follows: *who filled their houses with silver;* had an abundance of it, either in

[n] מרחם ἐκ κοιλίας, Sept. in volva, V. L. aut, in utero, Beza, Mercerus, Cocceius, Junius, Michaelis; so R. Abraham Peritzol, and Simeon Bar Tzemach.

[o] Homer. Iliad. 9. Vid. Barthii Animadv. ad Claudian. in Nupt. Honor. ver. 341.

[p] Kipping. Antiqu. Roman. l. 1. c. 1. sect. 10.

[q] Pineda, Bolduccius, Patrick, Caryll, Schultens, and others.

[r] Relation of a Voyage to Egypt, p. 91.

their coffers, which they hoarded up, or in the furniture of their houses, which were much of it of silver; they had large quantities of silver plate, as well as of money; but these were of no profit in the hour of death, nor could they carry them with them; but in the grave, where they were, those were equal to them, of whom it might have been said, silver and gold they had none.

Ver. 16. *Or as an hidden untimely birth*, &c.] Or *hid, as one born out of time*, as Mr. Broughton reads it; the Septuagint use the same word as the apostle does, when he says the like of himself, 1 Cor. xv. 8. the word has the signification of *falling* [s], and designs an abortive, which is like to fruit that falls from the tree before it is ripe; and this may be said to be *hidden*, either in the belly, as the Targum, or however from the sight of man, it being not come to any proper shape, and much less perfection; now Job suggests, that if he had not lain with kings, counsellors, and princes, yet at least he should have been as an abortion, and that would have been as well to him: then *I had not been*: or should have been nothing, not reckoned any thing; should not have been numbered among beings, but accounted as a nonentity, and should have had no subsistence or standing in the world at all: *as infants which never saw light*; and if not like an untimely birth, which is not come to any perfection, yet should have been like infants, which, though their mothers have gone their full time with them, and they have all their limbs in perfection and proportion, yet are dead, or still-born, their eyes have never been opened to see any light; meaning not the light of the law, as the Targum, but the light of the sun, or the light of the world, see Eccl. vi. 3, 4, 5. infants used to be buried in the wells or caves of the mummies [t].

Ver. 17. *There the wicked cease* from *troubling*, &c.] At death, and in the grave; such who have been like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, have always been either devising or doing mischief whilst living, in the grave can do neither; there is no work nor device there; such who are never easy, and cannot sleep unless they do mischief, when dead have no power to do any, and are quite still and inactive; such who have been troublers of good men, as profane persons by their ungodly lives, false teachers by their pernicious doctrines and blasphemies, cruel persecutors by their hard speeches, bitter calumnies and reproaches, and severe usage; those, when they die themselves, cease from giving further trouble, or when the righteous die, they can disturb them no more; yea, a good man at death is not only no more troubled by wicked men, but no more by his own wicked heart, nor any more by that wicked one Satan; there and then all these cease from giving him any further molestation: *and there the weary be at rest*: wicked men, either who here tire and weary themselves with committing sin, to which they are slaves and drudges, and especially with persecuting and troubling the saints, shall rest from such acts of sin and wickedness, of which they will be no more capable; or else good men, who are weary of sin, and long to be rid of it, to whom it is a burden, and under which they groan, and are weary of the troubles and afflictions they meet with in the world; and what with one thing and another are weary of their lives, and desire to depart and be with Christ; these at death and in the grave are at rest, their bodies from toil and labour, and from all painful disorders and pressing afflictions, and from all the oppressions and vexations of wicked and ungodly men; their souls rest in the arms of Jesus, from sin and all consciousness of it, from the temptations of Satan, from all doubts and fears, and every spiritual enemy, by whom they can be no more annoyed: some render the words, *there rest the labours of strength* [u]: such toils are over that break the strength of men; or *the labours of violence* [w], which are imposed upon them through violence, by cruel and imperious men; but at death and in the grave will cease and be no more, even labour of all sorts; see Rev. xiv. 13.

Ver. 18. There *the prisoners rest together*, &c.] *Are at ease*, as Mr. Broughton renders the words; such who whilst they lived were in prison for debt, or were condemned to the gallies, to lead a miserable life; or such who suffered bonds and imprisonment for the sake of religion, at death their chains are knocked off, and they are as much at liberty, and enjoy as much ease, as the dead that never were prisoners; and not only rest together with those who were their fellow-prisoners, but with those who never were in prison, yea, with those who cast them into it; for there the prisoners and those that imprisoned them are upon a level, enjoying equal ease and liberty: *they hear not the voice of the oppressor*; or *exactor* [x]; neither of their creditors that demanded their debt of them, and threatened them with a prison, or that detained them in it; nor of the jail-keeper that gave them hard words as well as stripes; nor of cruel task-masters, who kept them to hard service in prison, and threatened them severely if they did not perform it, like the task-masters in Egypt, Exod. v. 11, 13. but, in the grave, the blustering, terrifying, voice of such, is not heard.

Ver. 19. *The small and great are there*, &c.] Both as to age, and with respect to bulk and strength of body, and also to estate and dignity; children and men, or those of low and high stature, or in a mean or more exalted state of life, as to riches and honour, these all come to the grave without any difference, and lie there without any distinction [y]; *little and great are there all one*; as Mr. Broughton renders the words, see Rev. xx. 12. *the servant is free from his master*: death dissolves all relations among men, and takes away the power that one has legally over another, as the husband over the wife, who at death is loosed from the law and power of her husband, Rom. vii. 2. and so parents over their children, and masters over their servants; there the master and the servant are together, without any superiority of the one to the

[s] נפל sicut abortivus qui ex utero excidit, aut in terram cadit, Michaelis.
[t] Vansleb, ut supra, p. 99.
[u] יגיעי כח labores roboris, Michaelis.
[w] Labores violentiae, Schmidt.
[x] נגש exactoris, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.
[y] Grandia cum parvis Orcus metit. Horat. Ep. l. 2. ep. 2. ver. 178.——Mixta senum ac juvenum densantur funera. Horat. Carmin. l. 1. Ode 28.

other: the consideration of all the above things made death and the state of the dead in the grave appear to Job much more preferable than life in his present circumstances; and therefore, since it had not seized on him sooner, and as soon as he before had wished it had, he desires it might not be long ere it came upon him, as in the following verses.

Ver. 20. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery*, &c.] That labours under various calamities and afflictions, as Job did, being stripped of his substance, deprived of his children, and now in great pain of body and distress of mind; who, since he died not so soon as he wished he had, expostulates why his life is protracted; for that is what he means by light, as appears from the following clause, even the light of the living, or the light of the world; which though sweet and pleasant to behold to a man in health, yet not to one in pain of body and anguish of mind, as he was, who chose rather to be in the dark and silent grave; this he represents as a gift, as indeed life is, and the gift of God: the words may be rendered, *wherefore does he give light*[*]? that is, God, as some[*] supply it, who is undoubtedly meant, though not mentioned, through reverence of him, and that he might not seem to quarrel with him; the principle of life is from him, and the continuance and protraction of it, and all the means and mercies by which it is supported; and Job asks the reasons, which he seems to be at a loss for, why it should be continued to a person in such uncomfortable circumstances as he was in; though these, with respect to a good man as he was, are plain and obvious: such are continued in the world under afflictions, both for their own good, and for the glory of God, that their graces may be tried, their sins purged away or prevented, and they made more partakers of divine holiness; and be weaned from this world, and fitted for another, and not be condemned with the world of the ungodly: *and life unto the bitter in soul*; whose lives are imbittered to them by afflictions, comparable to the waters of Marah, and to wormwood and gall, which occasion bitterness of spirit in them, and bitter complaints from them; see ch. xiii. 26. and xxiii. 16. and xxvii. 2.

Ver. 21. *Which long for death, but it* cometh *not*, &c.] Who earnestly desire, wistly look out, wish for, and expect it, and with open mouth gape for it, as a hungry man for his food, or as the fish for the bait, or the fishermen for the fish, as some[*] observe the word may signify; but it comes not to their wish and expectation, or so soon as they would have it; the reason is, because the fixed time for it is not come, otherwise it will certainly come at God's appointed time, and often in an hour not thought of; death is not desirable in itself, being a dissolution of nature, or as it is the sanction of the law, or the wages of sin, or a penal evil; and though it is and may be lawfully desired by good men, that they may be free from sin, and be in a better capacity to serve the Lord, and that they may be for ever with him; yet such desires should be expressed with submission to the divine will, and the appointed time should be patiently waited for, and should not be desired merely to be rid of present afflictions and troubles, which was the case of Job, and of those he here describes; see Rev. ix. 6. *and dig for it more than for hid treasures*; which are naturally hid in the earth, as gold and silver ore, with other metals and precious stones; or which are of choice concealed there from the plunder of others; the former seems rather to be meant, and in digging for which great pains, diligence, and industry, are used, see Prov. ii. 4, 5. and is expressive of the very great importunity and strong desire of men in distressed circumstances after death, seeking diligently and pressing importunately for it; the sin of suicide not being known, or very rare, in that early time, or however was shunned and abhorred even by those that were most weary of their lives: some render it, *who dig for it out of hid treasures*[*]; out of the bowels of the earth, and the lowest parts of it, could they but find it there: but the Targum, Jarchi, and others, understand it comparatively, as we do.

Ver. 22. *Which rejoice exceedingly*, &c.] Or, *which joy till they do skip again*, as Mr. Broughton renders it, and to the same purport others[*]; are so elated as to skip and dance for joy: *and are glad when they can find the grave*; which is to be understood either of those who dig in the earth for hid treasure, such as is laid there by men; when they strike and hit upon a grave where they expect to find a booty; it being usual in former times to put much riches into the sepulchres of great personages, as Sanctius on the place observes; so Hyrcanus, opening the sepulchre of David, found in it 3,000 talents of silver, as Josephus[*] relates: or rather this is said of the miserable and bitter in soul, who long for death, and seek after it; who, when they perceive any symptoms of its near approach, are exceedingly pleased, and rejoice at it, as when they observe the decays of nature, or any disorder and disease upon them which threaten with death; for this cannot be meant of the dead carrying to the grave, who are insensible of it, and of their being put into it.

Ver. 23. Why is light given *to a man whose way is hid*, &c.] Some of the Jewish writers connect this with the preceding verse, thus; *who rejoice and are glad when they find a grave for a man*, &c. but it should be observed that such are said to rejoice at finding a grave, not for others, but for themselves; the words stand in better connexion with ver. 20. from whence the supplement is taken in our version and others; and so it is a continuation or repetition of the expostulation, why light and life, or the light of the living, should be given to persons as before described, and here more largely; and Job himself is principally designed, as is generally thought, whose way, according to him, was hid from the Lord, neglected and not cared for by him, but overlooked and slighted, and no regard had to the injuries done him, as the church also complains, Isa. xl. 27. or from whom the way of the Lord was hid; his way in the present afflictive dispensations of Providence, the causes

[*] למה יתן quare dat, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens, Michaelis.
[*] So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator. Vid. Schultens in loc.
[*] ממטמונים e Thesauris, Cocceius; ex imis terræ latebris, Mercerus; ex locis absconditis, Schmidt.
[*] השמחים אלי גיל qui lætantur ad choream usque, Schultens, quasi ad tripudium, Michaelis.
[*] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 8. sect. 4. Ed. Hudson.

and reasons of which he could not understand; not being conscious of any notorious sin committed, indulged, and continued in, that should bring these troubles on him: or the good and right way was hid from him in which he should walk; he was at a loss to know which was that way, since by his afflictions he was ready to conclude that the way he had been walking in was not the right, and all his religion was in vain; and according to this sense he laboured under the same temptation as Asaph did, Psal. lxxiii. 13, 14. or his way of escape out of his present troubles was unknown to him; he saw no way open for him, but shut up on every side: or there was no way for others to come to him, at least they cared not for it; he who had used to have a large levee, some to have his counsel and advice, and to be instructed by him, others to ask relief of him, and many of the highest rank and figure to visit, caress, and compliment him; but now all had forsaken him, his brethren and acquaintance, and his kinsfolk and familiar friends kept at a distance from him, as if they knew not the way to him: *and whom God hath hedged in?* not with the hedge of his power, providence, and protection, as before; but with thorns and afflictions, and in such manner as he could not get out, or extricate himself; all avenues and ways of escape being blocked up, see Lam. iii. 7, 9. Hos. ii. 6. though, after all, the words may be considered as a concession, and as descriptive of a man the reverse of himself, and be supplied thus; *indeed light may be given to a man;* a mighty man, as the word[e] signifies, a man strong, hale, and robust; *whose way is hid, or covered*[f]; who is hid in the secret of God's presence, and in the pavilion of his power; who dwells in his secret place, and under the shadow of the Almighty, Psal. xxxi. 20. and xci. 1. who is under the shelter of his providence, preserved from diseases of body, and protected from the plunder and depredations of enemies, and enjoys great affluence and prosperity, as his three friends about him did, and whom he may point at: *and whom God hath hedged in:* as he had formerly set a hedge about him in his providence, though now he had plucked it up; see ch. i. 10.

Ver. 24. *For my sighing cometh before I eat,* &c.] Or, *before my bread,* or *food*[g]; before he sat down to eat, or had tasted of his food, there were nothing but sighing and sobbing, so that he had no appetite for his food, and could take no delight in it; and, whilst he was eating, his tears mingled with it, so that these were his meat and his drink continually, and he was fed with the bread and water of affliction; and therefore what were light and life to such a person, who could not have the pleasure of one comfortable meal? *and my roarings are poured out like the waters;* he not only wept privately and in secret, and cried more publicly both to God and in the presence of men, but such was the force and weight of his affliction, that he even roared out, and that like a lion; and his afflictions, which were the cause of these roarings, are compared to waters and the pouring of them out; for the noise these water-spouts made, and for the great abundance of them, and for their quick and frequent returns, and long continuance, one wave and billow rolling upon another.

Ver. 25. *For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me,* &c.] Some refer this to his fears about his children, lest they should sin and offend God, and bring down his judgments on them, and now what he feared was come to pass, ch. i. 5. others take in all his sorrows and troubles; which, through the changeableness of the world, and the uncertainty of all things in it, and the various providences of God, he feared would come upon him at one time or another; and this he mentions to justify his expostulation, why light and life should be continued to such a man, who, by reason of his fear and anxiety of mind, never had any pleasure in his greatest prosperity, destruction from the Almighty being a terror to him; ch. xxxi. 23. but I think it is not reasonable to suppose that a man of Job's faith in God, and trust in him, should indulge such fears to such a degree; nor indeed that he could ever entertain such a thought in him, nor even surmise that such shocking calamities and distresses should come upon him as did: but this is to be understood not of his former life, in prosperity, but of the beginning of his afflictions; when he heard of the loss of one part of his substance, he was immediately possessed with a fear of losing another; and when he heard of that, he feared the loss of a third, and even of all; then of his children, and next of his health: *and that which I was afraid of is come unto me;* which designs the same, in other words, or a new affliction; and particularly the ill opinion his friends had of him; he feared that through these uncommon afflictions he should be reckoned an ungodly man, an hypocrite; and as he feared, so it was; this he perceived by the silence of his friends, they not speaking one word of comfort to him; and by their looks at him, and the whole of their behaviour to him.

Ver. 26. *I was not in safety,* &c.] This cannot refer to the time of his prosperity; for he certainly then was in safety, God having set an hedge about him, so that none of his enemies, nor even Satan himself, could come at him to hurt him: *neither had I rest, neither was I quiet;* which also was not true of him before his afflictions, for he did then enjoy great peace, rest, and quietness; he lay in his nest at ease, and in great tranquillity; and thought and said he should die in such a state, see ch. xxix. 18, *&c.* nor is the sense of these expressions, that he did not take up his rest and satisfaction in outward things, and put his trust and confidence in his riches, and yet trouble came upon him; but this relates to the time of the beginning of his troubles and afflictions, from which time he was not in safety, nor had any rest and peace; there was no intermission of his sorrows; but as soon as one affliction was over, another came: *yet trouble came;* still one after another, there was no end of them; or, as Mr. Broughton renders it, *and now cometh a vexation;* a fresh one, a suspicion of hypocrisy; and upon this turns the whole controversy, managed and carried on between him and his friends in the following part of this book.

[e] לגבר emphatice ponitur sæpe, ut notetur præpollentia, Cocceii Lexic. in rad. גבר.
[f] נסתרה tecta, Coccelus; vele septa est, Schultens.

[g] לפני לחמי ante cibum meum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ante panem meum, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis.

CHAP. IV.

JOB'S sore afflictions, and his behaviour under them, laid the foundation of a dispute between him and his three friends, which begins in this chapter, and is carried on to the end of the 31st; when Elihu starts up as a moderator between them, and the controversy is at last decided by God himself. Eliphaz first enters the list with Job, ver. 1. introduces what he had to say in a preface, with some shew of tenderness, friendship, and respect, ver. 2. observes his former conduct in his prosperity, by instructing many, strengthening weak hands and feeble knees, and supporting stumbling and falling ones, ver. 3, 4. with what view all this is observed may be easily seen, since he immediately takes notice of his present behaviour, so different from the former, ver. 5. and insults his profession of faith and hope in God, and fear of him, ver. 6. and suggests that he was a bad man, and an hypocrite; and which he grounds upon this supposition, that no good man was ever destroyed by the Lord; for the truth of which he appeals to Job himself, ver. 7. and confirms it by his own experience and observation, ver. 8—11. and strengthens it by a vision he had in the night, in which the holiness and justice of God, and the mean and low condition of men, are declared, ver. 12—21. and therefore it was wrong in Job to insinuate any injustice in God or in his providence, and a piece of weakness and folly to contend with him.

Ver. 1. *Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said.*] When Job had done cursing his day, and had finished his doleful ditty on that subject, then Eliphaz took the opportunity of speaking, not being able to bear any longer with Job and his behaviour under his afflictions; Eliphaz was one of Job's three friends that came to visit him, ch. ii. 11. very probably he might be the senior man, or a man of the greatest authority and power; a most respectable person, had in great esteem and reverence among men, and by these his friends, and therefore takes upon him to speak first; or it may be it was agreed among themselves that he should begin the dispute with Job; and we find, that in the close of this controversy the Lord speaks to him by name, and to him only, ch. xlii. 7. he *answered*; not that Job directed his discourse to him, but he took occasion, from Job's afflictions and his passionate expressions, to say what he did; and he *said* not any thing by way of condolence or consolation, not pitying Job's case, nor comforting him in his afflicted cicumstances, as they required both; but reproaching him as a wicked and hypocritical man, not acting like himself formerly, or according to his profession and principles, but just the reverse: this was a new trial to Job, and some think the sorest of all; it was as a sword in his bones, which was very cutting to him; as oil cast into a fiery furnace in which he now was, which increased the force and fury of it; and as to vinegar an opened and bleeding wound, which makes it smart the more.

Ver. 2. If *we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?* &c.] Eliphaz speaks in the name of himself and his two friends, who had doubtless consulted together, and compared their sentiments of Job; which appearing to be the same, they formed a plan and scheme in which they should attack him, and the part which each should take, and the order in which they should proceed: these words are said, either as seemingly doubting whether they should speak or be silent; for they may be rendered, *shall we try*, or attempt, to drop or speak a *word to thee*; to enter into a conversation with thee? or, *shall we take up a discourse*, and carry it on with thee, *who art grieved* already? or art *weary* and heavy-laden, and bore down with the burden of affliction, with sorrows and troubles; or art *impatient*[h] under them; we fear, should we, that thou wilt be more grieved and burdened, and become more impatient; and therefore know not well what to do: or else, as supposing and taking it for granted that he would be grieved and burdened, and made more restless and uneasy, impatient and outrageous, yet they had determined to enter into a debate with him; for so the words are by some rendered, *should we speak a word unto thee*; or, *against thee*[i]; even should the least word be spoken against thee, *thou wilt be weary*[k], or burdened, or grieved, or take it ill: we know thou wilt; yet, nevertheless, we must not, we cannot, we will not forbear speaking: or else interrogatively, as our version and others, *wilt thou be grieved?* we desire thou wouldest not, nor take it ill from us, but all in good part; we mean no hurt, we design no ill, but thy good, and beg thou wilt hear us patiently: this shews how great a man Job had been, and in what reverence and respect he was had, that his friends bespeak him after this manner in his low estate; however, this was artifice in them, to introduce the discourse, and bring on the debate after this sort: *but who can withhold himself from speaking?* be it as it will; Eliphaz suggests, though Job was already and greatly burdened, and would be more so, and break out into greater impatience, yet there was a necessity of speaking, it could not be forborne; no man could refrain himself from speaking, nor ought in such a case, when the providence of God was reflected upon, and he was blasphemed and evil-spoken of, and charged with injustice, as was supposed; in such circumstances, no good, no faithful man, could or ought to keep silence; indeed, when the glory of God, the honour of the Redeemer, and the good of souls require it, and a man's own reputation with re-

[h] הנסה דבר אליך תלאה num suscipiemus verbum ad te, qui impatiens es? Schmidt; qui jam dum lassatus, Michaelis.

[i] Contra te, Piscator.

[k] Forsitan moleste accipies, V. L. fatisces, Schultens.

spect to his faithfulness lies at stake, silence should not be kept, let the consequence be as it may; but how far this was the case may be considered.

Ver. 3. *Behold, thou hast instructed many*, &c.] This is introduced with a *behold*, either as a note of admiration, that such a man, who had instructed others, should act the part he now does; or as a note of attention to Job himself, and all others that should hear and read this, to observe it, and well consider it, and make the proper use of it; or as a note of asseveration, affirming it to be true and certain, notorious and unquestionable, as no doubt it was: Job was the instructor, a great man, and yet condescended to teach and instruct men in the best things, as did also Abraham, David, Solomon, and others; and a good man, and so fit to teach good things, as every good man is, and who, according to his ability, the gift and measure of grace received should instruct others; and a man of great gift he was, both in things natural, civil, and religious; one that could speak well, and to the purpose, and so was apt and able to teach; and such should not disuse and hide their talents: the persons he instructed were not only his own family, his children and servants, as Abraham before him did; but others who attended him, and waited for his counsel and advice, his words and doctrine, as for the rain, and latter rain, and which dropped and distilled as such, see ch. xxix. 15, 21, 22, 23. and these were *many*: his many ignorant neighbours about him, or many professors of religion, as there might be, and it seems there were in this idolatrous country; and many afflicted ones among these, which is usually the case: Job had many scholars in his school, of different sorts, that attended on him; and these he instructed in the knowledge of the true God, his nature, perfections, and works; and of the living Redeemer, his person, office, grace, and righteousness; and of themselves, the impurity of their nature through original sin, he was acquainted with; their impotency and inability to purge themselves, to atone for sin, and to justify and make themselves acceptable to God; as well as he instructed them in the worship of God, and the manner of it, their duty to him and to one another, and to all their fellow-creatures: some render it, *thou hast corrected*, or *reproved many*[l]; he had taught the afflicted to be patient under their afflictions, and had reproved them for their impatience; and the design of Eliphaz is to upbraid him with it, as in Rom. ii. 21. thou that didst correct others for their unbecoming behaviour under afflictions, art thyself guilty of the same: *turpe est doctori, cum culpa redarguit ipsum*: *and thou hast strengthened the weak hands*; either such as hung down through want of food, by giving it to them, both corporeal and spiritual, which strengthens men's hearts, and so their hands; or through sluggishness, by exhorting and stirring them up to be active and diligent; or through fear of enemies, especially spiritual ones, as sin, Satan, and the world; by reason of whose numbers and strength good men are apt to be dispirited, and ready to cast away their spiritual armour, particularly the shield of faith and confidence in God, as faint-hearted soldiers in war, to which the allusion is: and these were strengthened by telling them that all their enemies were conquered, and they were more than conquerors over them; that the victory was certain, and their warfare accomplished, or would quickly be: or else, whose hands were weak through a sense of sin and danger, and being in expectation of the wrath and vengeance of God; and who were strengthened by observing to them that there was a Saviour appointed and expected, a living Redeemer, who would stand upon the earth in the latter day, and save them from their sins, and from wrath to come; see Isa. xxxv. 3, 4. or rather, such whose hearts and hands were weak through sore and heavy afflictions, whom Job strengthened by shewing them that their afflictions were of God; not by chance, but by appointment, and according to the sovereign will of God; that they were for their good, either temporal, spiritual, or eternal; and that they would not continue always, but have an end; and therefore should be patiently bore, see Heb. xii. 11, 12.

Ver. 4. *Thy words have upholden him that was falling*, &c.] Or *stumbling*[m]; that was stumbling at the providence of God in suffering good men to be afflicted, and wicked men to prosper; which has been the stumbling-block of God's people in all ages; see Psal. lxxiii. 2, 3. or that was stumbling and falling off from the true religion by reason of the revilings and reproaches of men, and their persecutions for it; which is sometimes the case, not only of nominal professors, Matt. xiii. 21. but of true believers, though they don't so stumble and fall as to perish: or else being under afflictions themselves, were ready to sink under them, their strength being small; now Job was helped to speak such words of comfort and advice to persons in any and every of these circumstances as to support them and preserve them from falling, and to enable them to keep their place and station among the people of God. The Targum interprets it of such as were falling into sin; the words of good men to stumbling and falling professors, whether into sin, or into affliction by it, are often very seasonable, and very useful, when attended with the power and spirit of God: *and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees*; that were tottering and trembling, and bending, and not able to bear up under the weight of sin, which lay as an heavy burden, too heavy to bear; or of afflictions very grievous and intolerable; to such persons Job had often spoken words that had been useful to alleviate their troubles, and support them under them. It may be observed, that the cases and circumstances of good men in early times were much the same as they are now; that there is no temptation or affliction that befalls the saints but what has been common; and that Job was a man of great gifts, grace, and experience, and had the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to every weary soul, in whatsoever condition they were: and all this, so very laudable in him, is not observed to his commendation, but to his reproach; to shew that he was not a man of real virtue, that he contradicted himself, and did not act according to his profession and

[l] יסרת, corripuisti, Mercerus, Michaelis; castigasti, Codurcus, Drusius, Schmidt, Schultens.

[m] כושל offendentem, Cocceius; impingentem, Drusius, Schmidt, Schultens, Michaelis.

principles, and the doctrines he taught others, and was an hypocrite at heart; though no such conclusion follows, supposing he had not acted up altogether to his principles and former conduct; for it is a difficult thing for any good man to act entirely according to them, or to behave the same in prosperity as in adversity, or to take that advice themselves in affliction, and follow it, they have given to others, and yet not be chargeable with hyprocisy. It would have been much better in Eliphaz and his friends to have made another use of Job's former conduct and behaviour, namely, to have imitated it, and endeavoured to have comforted, strengthened, and upheld him in his present distressed circumstances; instead of that, he insults him, as follows.

Ver. 5. *But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest, &c.*] The affliction and evil that he feared, ch. iii. 25. or rather the same trials and afflictions were come upon him as had been on those whom he had instructed and reproved, and whose hands and hearts he had strengthened and comforted; and yet now thou thyself *faintest*, or *art weary*[a], or art bore down and sinkest under the burden, and bearest it very impatiently[b], quite contrary to the advice given to others; and therefore it was concluded he could not be a virtuous, honest, and upright man at heart, only in shew and appearance. Bolducius renders the words, *God cometh unto thee*, or *thy God cometh*: very wrongly, though the sense may be the same; God cometh and visits thee by laying his afflicting hand upon thee: *it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled*; suggesting that it was but a touch, a slight one, a light affliction; thereby lessening Job's calamity and distress, or making little and light of it, and aggravating his impatience under it, that for such a trial as this he should be so excessively troubled, his passions should be so violently moved, and he be thrown into so much disorder and confusion, and be impatient beyond measure; no bounds being set to his grief, and the expressions of it; yea, even to be in the utmost consternation and amazement, as the word[b] signifies.

Ver. 6. Is *not* this *thy fear*, &c.] The fear of God, that which is of him, comes from him, is a grace of his implanted in the hearts of his people at conversion, and is increased and encouraged, and drawn forth into fresh exercise through the grace and goodness of God displayed; for a slavish fear, or a fear of punishment, of wrath and damnation, is not the true grace of fear, which may be in unregenerate men, and even in the devils; but this lies in a reverential affection for God on account of his goodness, and in a carefulness not to offend him on that account; in an hatred of sin, and a departure from it; in an attendance on the worship of God, and is sometimes put for the whole of it; and is accompanied with faith in God, joy in the Holy Ghost, humility of soul, and holiness of heart and life: now Job professed to have this fear of God in his heart, and was thought to have it; this was his general character, ch. i. 1. but, in his present case and circumstances, Eliphaz asks what was become of it, where it was now, and in what it appeared? and jeers him about it, as if he should say, does it lie in this, in fainting and sinking under afflictions, in being troubled and terrified, and thrown into a consternation by them, and in breaking out into such rash expressions of God and his providence? is it come to this at last, or rather to nothing at all? for he suggests either that Job never had the true grace of fear in him, contrary to the character given of him, and confirmed by God himself, ch. i. 1, 8. and ii. 3. or that he had cast it off, and it was gone from him, and left, ch. xv. 4. which can never be, where it once is, it being the great security against a final and total apostacy from God, Jer. xxxii. 40. or that what he had was merely hypocritical, like that which is taught by the precept of men, was only in appearance, and not in reality, as his conduct now shewed; for had he had the true fear of God before his eyes, and on his heart, he could never have cursed the day of his birth, nor arraigned the providence of God, and charged him with injustice, as he supposed he did; whereby his fear, his piety, his religion he had professed, appeared to be just nothing at all[c]: it follows, *thy confidence*; that is, in God; for Job professed none in any other, in any creature or creature-enjoyment, ch. xxxi. 24. this when right is a strong act of faith and trust in the Lord, a thorough persuasion and full assurance of interest in him as a covenant-God, and in his love and favour, and in Christ as the living Redeemer, and of the truth of the work of grace upon the heart, and of the certainty of the performance of it; also a holy boldness in prayer to God, and a firm and assured belief of being heard and answered; as well as an open and courageous profession of him before men, without any fear of them; for all this Job had been famous, and now he is asked, where it all was? and what was become of it? how it appeared now? and intimates he never had any, or had cast it away, and that it was come to nothing; as was concluded from the rash expressions of his lips, and from the sinkings of his spirit under his present afflictions; but Job's trust and confidence in God and in Christ still continued; see ch. xiii. 15. and xix. 25. *thy hope*: which also is a grace wrought in the heart, in regeneration; is of things unseen and future, yet to be enjoyed either here or hereafter; and that which is right has Christ for its object, ground, and foundation, and is of singular use to keep up the spirits of men under afflictive providences: and Eliphaz observing Job to be very impatient under them, inquires about his hope; and intimates that what he had professed to have was the hope of the hypocrite, and not real, and was now come to nothing; hope that is true, though it may become low, it cannot be lost; nor was Job's, especially with respect to spiritual and eternal things; see ch. xiv. 7, 14. and xix. 25, 26, 27. *and the uprightness of thy ways?* before God and men, walking uprightly in the ways of God, according to the revelation of his will made unto him, and acting the just and upright part in all his dealings with men; and for which he was celebrated, and is a part of the character before

[a] Defatigaris, Cocceius.
[b] תלא תלא aegre tulisti, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus; impatienter fers, Schmidt, Michaelis, Piscator.
[b] תבהל consternaris, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.
[c] הלא יראתך adeone nihil pietas tua! Schultens.

given of him, ch. i. 1, 8. and ii. 3. but it is insinuated by Eliphaz that there was nothing in it; it was only in shew, in appearance, it was not from the heart; or it would not be thus with him as it was, nor would he behave in the manner he now did: some read the words as in the margin, and in some copies of our Bible, *is not thy fear thy confidence? and the uprightness of thy ways thy hope?* and with some little variation Mr. Broughton; *is not thy religion thy hope, and thy right ways thy confidence?* that is, didst thou not hope and expect, and even wert thou not confident of it, that because of thy fear of God, and of the uprightness of thy ways before men, that thou shouldest not only be increased in thy worldly substance, but be preserved and protected in the enjoyment of it? and were not these the reasons which induced thee to be religious, and make such a shew of it? suggesting, that he was only religious from mercenary views and selfish principles, and so tacitly charges him with what the devil himself did, ch. i. 9. and this way go many Jewish and Christian interpreters[d]: some render the words much in the same way, but to a better sense, and more in favour of Job, and by way of instruction and comfort to him: *should not thy fear be thy confidence, and thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways*[e]? shouldest thou not take encouragement from thy fear of God, and the uprightness of thine heart and ways, to expect deliverance and salvation, and not faint and sink as thou dost? or is not this the cause of all thine impatience, thy fear of God, trust and hope in him, and thine integrity? concluding thou shouldest have been dealt with after another manner for the sake of these things, and therefore art ready to think thou art hardly dealt with by God, having deserved better treatment; thus making Job to think highly of himself, and to entertain wrong notions of God; so Schmidt; but the first sense I have given of the words seems best.

Ver. 7. *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent?* &c.] Here Eliphaz appeals to Job himself, and desires him to recollect if ever any one instance had fallen under his observation, in the whole course of his life, or it had ever been told him by credible persons, that an *innocent* man, by whom he means not one entirely free from sin original or actual, for he knew there was no such persons in the world, since the fall of Adam, but a truly good and gracious man, who was not guilty of any notorious and capital crime, or did not live a vicious course of life; if he ever knew or heard of any such persons that *perished*: which cannot be understood of eternal ruin and destruction, which would be at once granted, that such as these described can never perish in such a sense, but have everlasting life; nor of a coporeal death, which is sometimes the sense of perishing, since it is notorious that innocent and righteous persons so perish or die, see Eccl. vii. 15. Isa. lvii. 1. and could it be meant of a violent death, an answer might have been returned; and Eliphaz perhaps was not acquainted with it himself, that that innocent and righteous person Abel thus perished by the hands of his brother: but this is rather to be understood of perishing by afflictions, sore and heavy ones, not ordinary but extraordinary ones; and which are, or look like, the judgments of God on men, whereby they lose their all, their substance, their servants, their children, as well as their own health, which was Job's case; and therefore if no parallel instance of an innocent person ever being in the like case, it is insinuated that Job could not be an innocent man: *or where were the righteous cut off?* such as are truly righteous in the sight of God, as well as before men, who have the gift of righteousness bestowed on them, and live soberly, righteously, and godly; in what age or country was it ever known that such persons, in their family and substance, were cut off by the hand and providence of God, and abandoned and forsaken by him, and reduced to such circumstances that there could be no hope of their ever being in prosperous ones again? and Job now being in such a forlorn and miserable case and condition, it is suggested, that he could not be a righteous man: but admitting that no such instance could be produced, Eliphaz was too hasty and premature in his conclusion; seeing, as it after appeared, Job was not so cut off, abandoned, and forsaken by God, as not to rise any more; for his latter end was greater than his beginning: and besides, innocent and righteous persons are often involved in the same calamities as wicked men are, and their afflictions are the same; only with this difference, to the one they are the proper punishment of sin, to the other they are fatherly chastisements and trials of their grace, and issue in their good; the Targum explains it of such persons, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, none such as they perishing, or being cut off.

Ver. 8. *Even as I have seen,* &c.] Here he goes about to prove, by his own experience, the destruction of wicked men; and would intimate, that Job was such an one, because of the ruin he was fallen into: *they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same*: figurative expressions, denoting that such who devise iniquity in their hearts, form and plan schemes of it in their minds, signified by *ploughing iniquity*, and who were studious and diligent to put into practice what they devised; who took a great deal of pains to commit sin, and were constant at it, expressed by *sowing wickedness*: these sooner or later eat the fruit of their doings, are punished in proportion to their crimes, even in this life, as well as hereafter, see Hos. viii. 7. and x. 13. Gal. vi. 7, 8. though a Jewish commentator[b] observes, that the thought of sin is designed by the first phrase; the endeavour to bring it into action by the second; and the finishing of the work, or the actual commission of the evil, by the third; the punishment thereof being what is expressed in the next verse; the Targum applies this to the generation of the flood.

Ver. 9. *By the blast of God they perish,* &c.] They and their works, the ploughers, sowers, and reapers of iniquity; the allusion is to the blasting of corn by the east wind, or by mildew, &c. having used the figures of ploughing and sowing before; and which is as soon and

[d] Montanus, Mercerus, Piscator, some in Vatablus; so Ben Gersom and Bar Tzemach.

[e] So some in Michaelis.

[b] R. Simeon Bar Tzemach.

as easily done as corn, or any thing else, is blasted in the above manner; and denotes the sudden and easy destruction of wicked men by the power of God, stirred up by his wrath and indignation, because of their sins; who when he blows a blast on their persons, substance, and families, they perish at once: *and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed:* meaning his wrath and anger, which is like a stream of brimstone, and kindles a fire on the wicked, which are as fuel to it, and are soon consumed by it; the allusion is to breath in a man's nostrils, and the heat of his wrath and fury discovered thereby: some think this refers to Job's children being destroyed by the wind, see Isa. xl. 4.

Ver. 10. *The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion,* &c.] Which Aben Ezra interprets of God himself, who is compared to a lion; who not only by his voice terrifies, but in his wrath tears the wicked in pieces, and destroys them, and so is a continuation of the preceding account; and others, as R. Moses and R. Jonah, whom he mentions, take this to be a continuation of the means and methods by which God destroys wicked men sometimes, namely, by beasts of prey; this being one of his sore judgments he threatens men with, and inflicts upon men, see Lev. xxvi. 22. Ezek. xiv. 21. and in this they are followed by some Christian interpreters, who render the words *at* or *by the roaring of the lion, and by the voice of the fierce lion, by the teeth of the young lions* [c], they the wicked *are broken*, ground to pieces, and utterly destroyed; but it is better, with Jarchi, Ben Gersom, and others, to understand it of kings and princes, of the mighty ones of the earth, tyrannical and oppressive rulers and governors; comparable to lions of different ages, because of their grandeur and greatness, their power and might, their cruelty and oppression in their several different capacities; signifying, that these do not escape the righteous judgments of God: the Targum interprets the roaring of the lion of Esau, and the voice of the fierce lion of Edom; and another Jewish writer [d] of Nimrod, the first tyrant and oppressor, the mighty hunter before the Lord; but these are too particular; wicked men in power and authority in general are here, and in the following clauses, intended, see Jer. iv. 7. and l. 17. Nahum ii. 11, 12, 13. 1 Tim. iv. 17. and the sense is, that such ploughers and sowers of iniquity as are like to fierce and roaring lions are easily and quickly destroyed by the Lord: *and the teeth of the young lions are broken;* the power of such mighty ones to do mischief is taken away from them, and they and their families are brought to ruin; the teeth of lions are very strong in both jaws; they have 14 teeth, four incisors or cutters, four canine or dog teeth, six molares or grinders.

Ver. 11. *The old lion perisheth for lack of prey,* &c.] Or rather *the stout* and *strong lion* [e], that is most able to take the prey, and most skilful at it, yet such shall perish for want of it; not so much for want of finding it, or of power to seize it, as of keeping it when got, it being taken away from him; signifying, that God oftentimes in his providence takes away from cruel oppressors what they have got by oppression, and so they are brought into starving and famishing circumstances. The Septuagint render the word by *myrmecoleon*, or the *ant-lion*, which Isidore [f] thus describes; "it is a little animal, very troublesome to ants, which "hides itself in the dust, and kills the ants as they carry "their corn; hence it is called both a lion and an ant, "because to other animals it is as an ant, and to the ants "as a lion," and therefore can't be the lion here spoken of; though Strabo [g] and Ælianus [h] speak of lions in Arabia and Babylon called ants, which seem to be a species of lions, and being in those countries, might be known to Eliphaz. Megasthenes [i] speaks of ants in India as big as foxes, of great swiftness, and get their living by hunting: *and the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad;* or *the whelps of the lioness* [k], these are scattered from the lion and lioness, and from one another, to seek for food, but in vain; the Targum applies this to Ishmael, and his posterity; Jarchi, and others, to the builders of Babel, said to be scattered, Gen. xi. 8. rather reference may be had to the giants, the men of the old world, who filled the earth with violence, which was the cause of the flood being brought upon the world of the ungodly. Some think that Eliphaz has a regard to Job in all this, and that by the *fierce lion* he designs and describes Job as an oppressor and tyrant, and by the *lioness* his wife, and by the *young lions* and *lion's whelps* his children; and indeed, though he may not directly design him, yet he may obliquely point at him, and suggest that he was like to the men he had in view, and compares to these creatures, and therefore his calamities righteously came upon him.

Ver. 12. *Now a thing was secretly brought to me,* &c.] From reason and experience, Eliphaz proceeds to a vision and revelation he had from God, shewing the purity and holiness of God, and the frailty, weakness, folly, and sinfulness of men, by which it appears that men cannot be just in the sight of God, and therefore it must be wrong in Job to insist upon his innocence and integrity. Some indeed have thought that this was a mere fiction of Eliphaz, and not a real vision; yea, some have gone so far as to pronounce it a diabolical one, but without any just foundation; for there is nothing in the manner or matter of it but what is agreeable to a divine vision or to a revelation from God; besides, though Eliphaz was a mistaken man in the case of Job, yet was a good man, as may be concluded from the acceptance of a sacrifice for him by the Lord, which was offered for him by Job, according to the order of God, and therefore could never be guilty of such an imposture; nor does Job ever charge him with any falsehood in this matter, who doubtless would have been able to have traversed and exposed him; add to all this, that in his discourse annexed to and continued along with this account, stands a passage, which the apostle has quoted as of divine

[c] Rugitu leonis & voce ferocis leonis, &c. Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so some in R. Simeon Bar Tzemach.
[d] R. Obadiah Sephorno.
[e] ליש leo major, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Schmidt; leo strenuus & fortis, Michaelis; robustior leo, Schultens.

[f] Origin. l. 12. c. 3.
[g] Geograph. l. 16. p. 533.
[h] De Animal. l. 7. c. 47. & l. 17. c. 42.
[i] Apud Strabo, l. 15. p. 485.
[k] בני לביא filii leænæ, Bochart. Schultens.

inspiration, 1 Cor. iii. 19. from ch. v. 13. When Eliphaz had this vision, whether within the seven days of his visit to Job, or before, some time ago, which he might call to mind on this occasion, and judging it apposite to the present case, thought fit to relate it, is not certain, nor very material to know: it is introduced after this manner, a *thing* or *word*, a word of prophecy, a word from the Lord, a revelation of his mind and will, which was hidden and secret, and what before he was not so well acquainted with; this was *brought* unto him by the spirit of God, or by a messenger from the Lord, sent on this occasion, and for this purpose; and the manner in which it was brought was *secretly* or *by stealth*, as Mr. Broughton and others [l] render it; it was *stolen* unto him, or *secretly* brought, as the Targum, and we, and others [m]; it was in a private way or manner; or *suddenly*, as some others [n], at unawares, when it was not expected by him: it may have respect to the still and silent manner in which it was revealed to him, *there was silence, and he heard a voice*; a still one, a secret whisper; or to the almost invisible person that revealed it, whose image he saw, but could not discern his form and likeness; or it may be to the distinguishing favour he enjoyed, in having this revelation particularly made to him, and not to others; he heard this word, as it were, behind the curtain, or vail, as the Jews [o] say, explaining this passage: *mine ear received a little of it*; this revelation was made, not by an impulse upon his spirits, but vocally, a voice was heard, as after declared, and Eliphaz was attentive to it; he listened to what was said, and catched at it, and took it in with much delight and pleasure, though but a small part of it, as his capacity was able to retain it; or it was but a small part of the will of God, an hint of his only, as some interpret it [p]. Schultens has shewn, from the use of a word near this in the Arabic language, that it signifies *a string of pearls*; and so may design a set of evangelic truths, comparable to gold, silver, and precious stones, and which are indeed more desirable than them, and preferable to them; what they are will be observed hereafter.

Ver. 13. *In thoughts from the visions of the night*, &c.] Whilst Eliphaz was thinking of and meditating upon divine things, or whilst he was revolving in his mind some night-visions he had, before this was made unto him, see Dan. ii. 29. in meditation the Lord is often pleased to make known more of his mind and will to his people; and this is one way in which he was wont to do it in former times, in a vision either in the day, as sometimes, or in the night, as at others, and as here, see Numb. xii. 6. *when deep sleep falleth on men*; on sorrowful men, as Mr. Broughton renders it; such who have been laborious all the day, and getting their bread with sorrow and trouble, and are weary; who as soon as they lie down fall asleep, and sleep falls on them, and to such it is sweet, as the wise man says, Eccl. v. 12. now it was at such a time when men ordinarily and commonly are asleep that this vision was had.

Ver. 14. *Fear came upon me, and trembling*, &c.] Not only a dread of mind, but trembling of body; which was often the case even with good men, whenever there was any unusual appearance of God unto them by a voice, or by any representation, or by an angel; as with Abraham in the vision of the pieces, and with Moses on Mount Sinai, and with Daniel in some of his visions, and with Zechariah, when an angel appeared and brought him the tidings of a son to be born to him; which arises from the frailty and weakness of human nature, a consciousness of guilt, a sense of the awful majesty of God, and an uneasy apprehension of what may be the consequences of it: *which made all my bones to shake*; not only there was inward fear and outward tremour of body, but to such a degree, that not one joint in him was still; all the members of his body shook, and every bone was as if it was loosed, which are the more firm and solid parts, as is common in any considerable tremour.

Ver. 15. *Then a spirit passed before my face*, &c.] Which some interpret of a *wind* [q], a blustering wind, that blew strong in his face; and so the Targum renders it, a stormy wind, such an one as Elijah perceived when the Lord spoke to him, though he was not in that, 1 Kings xix. 11. or such a whirlwind, out of which the Lord spake to Job, ch. xxxviii. 1. or rather, as Jarchi, an angel, an immaterial spirit, one of Jehovah's ministering spirits, clothed in an human form, and which passed and repassed before Eliphaz, that he might take notice of it: *the hair of my flesh stood up*; erect, through surprise and dread; which is sometimes the case, when any thing astonishing and terrible is beheld; the blood at such times making its way to the heart, for the preservation of that, leaves the external members of the body cold, and the skin of the flesh, in which the hair is, being contracted by the impetuous influx of the nervous fluid, causes the hair to stand upright, particularly the hair of the head, like the prickles of hedge-hogs [r]; which has been usual at the sight of an apparition [s].

Ver. 16. *It stood still*, &c.] That is, the spirit, or the angel in a visible form; it was before going to and fro, but now it stood still right against Eliphaz, as if it had something to say to him, and so preparing him to attend to it; which he might do the better, it standing before him whilst speaking to him, that he might have the opportunity of taking more notice of it: *but*, notwithstanding this advantageous position of it, *I could not discern the form thereof*; what it was, whether human or any other: *an image was before mine eyes*; he saw something, some appearance and likeness, but could not tell what it was; perhaps the fear and surprise he was in hindered him from taking in any distinct idea of it, or that particular notice of it, so as to be able to form in his own mind any suitable notion of it, or to describe it to others: there was si-

[l] יגנב furtive, V. L. Montanus, Cocceius, Drusius; furtivum verbum venit, Schultens.
[m] Clanculum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; clam, Beza.
[n] Subito, Schmidt, Michaelis.
[o] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 89. 2.
[p] In David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 217. 3.

[q] רוח ventus, Vatablus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Broughton.
[r] Obstupui, steteruntque comæ.——Virgil. Æneid. l. 2. ver. 774. & l. 3. ver. 48. arrectæque horrore comæ. Æneid. 4. ver. 280. & l. 12. ver. 868.
[s] Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. p. 665.

lence both in the spirit or image, which, standing still, made no rushing noise, and in Eliphaz himself, who kept in his breath, and listened with all the attention he could to it; or a small low voice, as Ben Melech interprets it: so it follows, *and I heard a voice*; a distinct articulate voice or sound of words, very audibly delivered by the spirit or image that stood before him: *saying*; as follows.

Ver. 17. *Shall mortal man be more just than God?* &c.] Poor, weak, frail, dying man, and so sinful, as his mortality shews, which is the effect of sin; how should such a man be more righteous than God? who is so originally and essentially of himself, completely, perfectly, yea, infinitely righteous in his nature, and in his works, both of providence and grace; in chastising his people, punishing the wicked, and bestowing favours upon his friends, even in their election, redemption, justification, pardon, and eternal happiness: yea, not only profane wicked sinners can make no pretensions to any thing of this kind, but even the best of men, none being without sin, no, not man in his best estate; for the righteousness he had then was of God, and therefore he could not be more just than he that made him upright. This comparative sense, which our version leads to, is more generally received; but it seems not to be the sense of the passage, since this is a truth clear from reason, and needed no vision or revelation to discover it; nor can it be thought that God would send an angelic spirit in such an awful and pompous manner, to declare that which every one knew, and no man would contradict; even the most self-righteous and self-sufficient man would never be so daring and insolent as to say he was more righteous than God; but the words should be rather rendered, *shall mortal man be justified by God, or be just from God?* or *with* him, or *before* him[t], in his sight, by any righteousness in him, or done by him? shall he enter into his presence, stand at his bar, and be examined there, and go away from thence, in the sight and account of God, as a righteous person of himself? no, he cannot; now this is a doctrine opposed to carnal reasoning and the common sentiments of men, a doctrine of divine revelation, a precious truth: this is the *string of pearls* Eliphaz received, see ver. 12. that mortal man is of himself an unrighteous creature; that he can't be justified by his own righteousness in the sight of God; and that he must look and seek out for a better righteousness than his own, to justify him before God; and this agrees with Eliphaz's interpretation of the vision, ch. xv. 14. with the sentiments of his friend Bildad, who seems to have some respect to it, ch. xxv. 4. and also of Job himself, ch. ix. 2. and in like manner are we to understand the following clause: *shall a man be more pure than his Maker?* even the greatest and best of men, since what purity was in Adam, in a state of innocence, was from God; and what good men have, in a state of grace, is from the grace of God and blood of Christ, without which no man is pure at all, and therefore can't be purer than him from whom they have it: or rather *be pure from*, or *with*, or *before his Maker*[u], or be so accounted by him; every man is impure by his first birth, and in his nature-state, and therefore can't stand before a pure and holy God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; or go away from his presence, and be reckoned by him a pure and holy creature of himself; nor can any thing that he can do, in a moral or ceremonial manner, cleanse him from his impurity; and therefore it is necessary he should apply to the grace of God, and blood of Christ, for his purification.

Ver. 18. *Behold, he put no trust in his servants*, &c.] Some think the divine oracle or revelation ends in the preceding verse, and that here Eliphaz makes some use and improvement of it, and addresses Job, and argues with him upon it, with a view to his case and circumstances; but rather the account of what the oracle said, or was delivered by revelation, is continued to the end of the chapter, there being nothing unworthy of God, either in the matter or manner of it: and here Eliphaz himself is addressed, and this address ushered in with a *behold*, as a note of admiration, asseveration, and attention; it being somewhat wonderful and of importance, sure and certain, and which deserved to be listened to, that God, the Maker of men and angels, did not, and does not, *put* any *trust* or confidence *in his servants*; meaning not the prophets in particular, as the Targum, though they are in an eminent sense the servants of God; nor righteous men in general, as Jarchi and others, who though heretofore servants of sin, yet through grace become servants of righteousness, and of God; but as men who dwelt in houses of clay are opposed to them, and distinguished from them, in the next verse, they must be understood of angels, as the following clause explains it; who always stand before God, ministering unto him, ready to do his will, and to do it in the most perfect manner creatures are capable of; they go forth at his command into the several parts of the world, and execute his orders; they worship him, and celebrate his perfections, ascribing honour and glory, wisdom, power, and blessing to him; and this they do cheerfully, constantly, and incessantly. Now though God has intrusted these servants of his with many messages of importance, both under the Old and New Testament dispensation, yet he has not trusted them with the salvation of men, to which they are not equal, but has put it into the hands of his Son; nor indeed did he trust them with the secret of it, so as to make them his counsellors about it; no, Christ only was the wonderful Counsellor in this affair; the counsel of peace, or that respecting the peace and reconciliation of men, was only between him and his Father; God was only in and with Christ, and not angels reconciling men, or drawing the plan of their reconciliation; and when this secret, being concluded on and settled, was revealed to angels, it is thought by some to be the reason of so many of them apostatizing from God; they choosing rather to have nothing to do with him, than to be under the Son of

[t] האנוש מאלוה יצדק an mortalis a Deo justificabitur? Codurcus, Bolducius, Deodatus, Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 709. Num mortalis a numine justus erit? Schultens; so Mr. Broughton, can the sorrowful man be holden just before the Puissant!

[u] אם מעשהו יטהר גבר an quisquam vir a factore suo mundus habebitur? Codurcus; an a conditore suo purus erit vir? Schultens; so Mr. Broughton, can the human wight be clear before him that was his Maker?

God in human nature: but, besides this, there are many other things God has not trusted the angels with, as his purposes and decrees within himself, and the knowledge of the times and seasons of the accomplishment of them, particularly the day and hour of judgment: though the sense here rather seems to be this, that God does not and did not trust them with themselves; he knew their natural weakness, frailty, mutability, how liable they were to sin and fall from him, and therefore he chose them in Christ, put them into his hands, and made him head over them, and so confirmed and established them in him; and, as it may be rendered, *did not put stability* or *firmness* [w] in them, so as to stand of themselves; or *perfection* in them, as some render it [x], which cannot be in a creature as it is in God: *and his angels he charged with folly*: that is, comparatively, with respect to himself, in comparison of whom all creatures are foolish, be they ever so wise; for he is all-wise, and only wise; angels are very knowing and intelligent in things natural and evangelical, but their knowledge is but imperfect, particularly in the latter; as appears by their being desirous of looking into those things which respect the salvation of men, and by learning of the church the manifold wisdom of God, 1 Pet. i. 12. Eph. iii. 10. or by *folly* is meant vanity, weakness, and imperfection [y], a liableness to fall, which God observed in them; and which are in every creature in its best estate, and were in Adam in his state of innocence, and so in the angels that fell not, especially previous to their confirmation by Christ, see Psal. xxxix. 5. and so the sense is the same with the preceding clause: some render it by repeating the negative from that, *and he putteth not glorying* or *boasting in his angels* [z]; he makes no account of their duties and services, so as to glory in them; it is an humbling himself to regard them; or he puts nothing in them that they can boast of, since they have nothing of themselves, all from him, and therefore cannot glory as though they had received it not. Others observe, that the word has the signification of light, and differently render the passage; some, *though he putteth light in his angels* [a], makes them angels of light, comparable to morning-stars, yet he puts no trust in them; and what they have is from him, and therefore not to be compared with him, nor can they glory in themselves; or, *he putteth not light*, or *not clear light into* them [b]; that which is perfect, and free from all manner of darkness; such only is in himself the Father of lights, with whom it dwells in perfection, and there is no shadow of turning in him: some would have this understood of the evil angels, whom God charged with folly; but this is too low a term, a phrase not strong enough to express their sin and wickedness, who are not chargeable only with imprudence, but with rebellion and treason against God; nor does this sense agree with parallel places, ch. xv. 14, 15, 16. and xxv. 4, 5. and besides, the beauty of the comparison of them with men would be lost, and the strength of the argument with respect to them would be sadly weakened, which we have in the following verse.

Ver. 19. *How much less on them that dwell in houses of clay, &c.*] Meaning men, but not as dwelling in houses, in a proper sense, made of clay dried by the sun, as were common in the eastern countries; nor in mean cottages, as distinguished from cedar, and cieled houses, in which great personages dwelt, for this respects men in common; nor as being in the houses of the grave, as the Targum, Jarchi, and others, which are no other than dust, dirt, and clay; for this regards not the dead, but the living; but the bodies of men are meant, in which their souls dwell; which shews the superexcellency of the soul to the body, and its independency upon it, being capable of existing without it, as it does in the separate state before the resurrection; so bodies are called tabernacles, and earthen vessels, and earthly houses, 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. 2 Cor. iv. 7. and v. 1. and bodies of clay, ch. xiii. 12. so the body is by Epictetus [c] called clay elegantly wrought; and another Heathen writer [d] calls it clay steeped in, or macerated and mixed with blood: being of clay denotes the original of bodies, the dust of the earth; and the frailty of them, like brittle clay, and the pollution of them, all the members thereof being defiled with sin, and so called vile bodies, and will remain such till changed by Christ, Phil. iii. 21. now the argument stands thus, if God put no trust in angels, then much less in poor, frail, mortal, sinful men; he has no dependence on their services, whose weakness, unprofitableness, and unfaithfulness, he well knows; he puts no trust in their purposes, and resolutions, and vows, which often come to nothing; nor does he trust his own people with their salvation and justification, or put these things upon the foot of their works, but trusts them and the salvation and justification of them with his Son, and puts them upon the foot of his own grace and mercy: and if he charges the holy angels with folly, then *much more* (for so it may be also rendered) will he charge mortal sinful men with it, who are born like the wild ass's colt, and are foolish as well as disobedient, even his chosen ones, especially before conversion; or thus, if so stands the case of angels, then much less can man be just before him, and pure in his sight: the weakness, frailty, and pollution of the bodies of men, are further enlarged on in some following clauses: *whose foundation is in the dust*; meaning not the lower parts of the body, as the feet, which support and bear it up; rather the soul, which is the basis of it, referring to its corruption and depravity by sin; though it seems chiefly to respect the original of the body, which is the dust of the earth, of which it consists, and to which it will return again, this being but a poor foundation to stand upon, Gen. ii. 7. and iii. 17. Eccl. xii. 7. for the sense is, whose foundation is dust, mere dust, the particle ב being redun-

[w] לא יאמין non posuit stabilitatem, Mercerus, Vatablus; firmitatem, Junius & Tremellius.
[x] So Mr. Broughton.
[y] תהלה vanitatem, Codurcus; emissionem, lapsationemve, Schultens.
[z] Gloriationem, Montanus.

[a] Sic Beza & Belg. nov. vers.
[b] Lumen, Pagninus, Mercerus; lucem, Junius & Tremellius; so R. L. vi, Ben Gersom, Sephorno, and others; lucem exactissimam, Vatablus; clear light, Broughton.
[c] Arrian. Epictet. l. i. c. 1.
[d] Theodor. Gadareus, apud Sueton. Vit. Tiber. c. 57.

dant, or rather an Arabism: which *are crushed before the moth?* that is, which bodies of men, or houses of clay founded in the dust; or, *they crush them:* or *which* or *whom* they *crush*[e]; either God, Father, Son, and Spirit, as some; or the angels, as others; or distresses, calamities, and afflictions, which sense seems best, by which they are crushed *before the moth* or *worm*[f]; that is, before they die, and come to be the repast of worms, ch. xix. 26. or before a moth is destroyed, as soon, or sooner[g], than it is; so a man may be crushed to death, or his life taken from him, as soon as a moth's; either by the immediate hand of God, as Ananias and Sapphira, or by the sword of man, as Amasa by Joab; or rather, *like a moth*[h], as easily and as quickly as a moth is crushed between a man's fingers, or by his foot: some, as Saadiah Gaon, and others, render it, *before Arcturus*[i], a constellation in the heavens, ch. ix. 9. and take the phrase to be the same as that, *before the sun;* Psal. lxxii. 17. and to denote the perpetuity and duration of their being crushed, which would be as long as the sun or Arcturus continued, that is, for ever; but either of the above senses is best, especially the last of them.

Ver. 20. *They are destroyed from morning to evening,* &c.] That is, those that dwell in houses of clay, before described; the meaning is, that they are always exposed to death, and liable to it every day they live; not only such who are persecuted for the sake of religion, but all men in common, for of such are both the text and context; who have always the seeds of mortality and death in them, that is continually working in them; and every day, even from morning to evening, are innumerable instances of the power of death over men; and not only some there are, whose sun rises in the morning and sets at evening, who are like grass in the morning, gay and green, and by evening cut down and withered, live but a day, and some not that, but even it is true of all men, comparatively speaking, they begin to die the day they begin to live; so that the wise man takes no notice of any intermediate time between a time to be born and a time to die, Eccl. iii. 2. so frail and short is the life of man; his days are but as an hand's breadth, Psal. xxxix. 5. *they perish for ever;* which is not to be understood of the second or eternal death which some die; for this is not the case of all; those that believe in Christ shall not perish for ever, but have everlasting life; but this respects not only the long continuance of men under the power of death until the resurrection, which is not contradicted by this expression: but it signifies that the dead never return to this mortal life again, at least the instances are very rare; their families, friends, and houses, that knew them, know them no more; they return no more to their worldly business or enjoyments, see ch. vii. 9, 10. and x. 21. *without any regarding* it; their death; neither they themselves nor others, expecting it so soon, and using no means to prevent it, and which, if made use of, would not have availed, their appointed time being come; or *without putting*[k], either without putting light into them, as Sephorno, which can only be true of some; or without putting the hand, either their own or another's, to destroy them, being done by the hand of God, by a distemper of his sending, or by one providence or another; or without putting the heart to it, which comes to the sense of our version; though death is so frequent every day, yet it is not taken notice of; men do not lay it to heart, so as to consider of their latter end, and repent of their sins, and reform from them, that they may not be their ruin; and this is and would be the case of all men, were it not for the grace of God.

Ver. 21. *Doth not their excellency* which *is in them go away?* &c.] Either the soul which is in them, and is the most excellent part of them; this, though it dies not, yet it goes away and departs from the body at death; and so do all the powers and faculties of it, the thoughts, the affections, the mind, and memory, yea, all the endowments of the mind, wisdom, learning, knowledge of languages, arts, and sciences, all fail at death, 1 Cor. xiii. 8. Psal. cxlvi. 8. and so likewise all that is excellent in the body, the strength and beauty of it depart, its strength is weakened in the way, and its comeliness turned into corruption: or, as it may be rendered, *which is with them*[l]; and so may likewise denote all outward enjoyments, as wealth and riches, glory and honour, which a man cannot carry with him, do not descend into the grave with him, but then go away: a learned man[m] renders the words, *is not their excellency removed* which was *in them?* and thinks it refers to the corruption of nature, the loss of original righteousness, and of the image of God in man, which formerly was his excellency in his state of innocence, but now, through sin and the fall, is removed from him; and this, indeed, is the cause, the source and spring, of his frailty, mortality, and death: hence it follows: *they die even without wisdom;* that dies with them, or whatsoever of that they have goes away from them at death; wise men die as well as fools, yea, they die as fools do, and multitudes without true wisdom, not being wise enough to consider their latter end; they die without the wisdom which some are made to know, in the hidden part, without the fear of God, which is real wisdom, or without the knowledge of Christ, and of God in Christ, which is the beginning, earnest, and pledge of life eternal. Now then since man is such a frail, mortal, foolish, and sinful creature, how can he be just before God, or pure in the sight of his Maker? which is the thing designed to be proved and illustrated by all this; and here ends the divine oracle, or the revelation made to Eliphaz, when he had the vision before related.

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[e] ידכאום conterent eos, Montanus, Mercerus, Michaelis, Schultens; sub. trinitas personarum, Schmidt; angeli, Mercerus; so Sephorno and R. Simeon Bar Tzemach; calamitates, Vatablus; so some in Bar Tzemach.

[f] לפני עש coram verme, Cocceius; so the Targum and Bar Tzemach.

[g] Antequam tinea, Junius & Tremellius; citius quam tinea, Piscator.

[h] σητὸς τρόπον, Sept. instar tineæ, Noldius, Schmidt; so Aben Ezra and Broughton.

[i] Donec fuerit Arcturus, Pagninus, Vatablus; so some in Aben Ezra, Ben Melech.

[k] מבלי משים propter non ponentem, Montanus; sub. manum, Codurcus; cor, R. Levi, Jarchi, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis.

[l] בם cum ipsis, Piscator; so some in Mercerus and Drusius, and Mr. Broughton.

[m] Schmidt; quæ fuerat, Beza.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL * THE TANJORE

CHAP. V.

IN this chapter Eliphaz goes on to prove, and further confirm and establish, what he had before asserted, that not good men, but wicked men only, are afflicted of God, at least greatly, so as to have their substance wholly destroyed and perish, which was Job's case; and this partly from the case, state, and sentiments of all the saints, ver. 1, 2, and from his own observation and experience, ver. 3, 4, 5. and then he proceeds to give some advice; and seeing afflictions do not come by chance, but are of God, it is right in such circumstances for a man to seek to the Lord for pardon and salvation, and commit his cause unto him, ver. 6, 7, 8. who does many great things in a providential way to the good of man in general, and to the disappointment of wicked crafty men, and to the serving of the poor in particular, ver. 9—16. so that it is best patiently to bear the afflicting hand of God, and it is an happiness to be corrected by him, since he delivers such out of all their troubles, and preserves them from many evils, and bestows many good things on them; which would be Job's case particularly, if he behaved according to the advice given, and which is left with him to consider of, ver. 17—27.

Ver. 1. *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee*, &c.] That is, call upon God, which, if seriously, and not ironically spoken, was good advice; God is to be called upon, and especially in times of trouble; and invocation is to be made in faith, in sincerity, and with fervency, and to be accompanied with confession of sin, and repentance for it; and sooner or later God hears and answers those that call upon him; but Eliphaz suggests, that if Job did call upon him, it would be in vain, he would not hear him, he going upon the same maxim that the Jews did in Christ's time, *God heareth not sinners*: John ix. 31. or call upon him to give him an oracle from heaven, to favour him with a vision and revelation, and see if he could get any thing that would confront and confute what he had delivered as coming that way; which, if it could be done by him, would appear to be a falsehood and an imposture, since one revelation from God is not contradicted by another: or else the sense is, *call* over the catalogue and list of good men that have been from the beginning of the world, and see if there be any that *answers to thee*[n], whose case, character, and behaviour, correspond with thee; if ever any of them was afflicted as thou art, or ever behaved with so much indecency, impatience, murmuring, and blasphemy against God, as thou hast done; that ever opened his mouth, and cursed the day of his birth, and reflected upon the providence and justice of God as thou hast, as if thou wert unrighteously dealt with: or rather, *call now*, and summon all creatures together, angels and men, and get any one of them to be thy patron, to defend thy cause, and plead for thee, to give a reply to what has been said, from reason, experience, and revelation: and shouldest thou obtain this, which is not likely, *lo, there is one that can answer thee*[o], as some render the words, meaning either God or himself; thus Eliphaz insults Job, and triumphs over him, as being entirely baffled and conquered by him, by what he had related as an oracle and revelation from heaven: *and to which of the saints wilt thou turn?* or, *look*, or *have respect*[p], that will be of any service to thee? meaning either the Divine Persons in the Godhead, sometimes called Holy Ones, as in Josh. xxiv. 19. Prov. ix. 10. and xxx. 3. Hos. xi. 12. the Holy Father, the Holy Son, and the Holy Spirit, who may and should be turned and looked unto; God the Father, as the God of providence and grace for all good things; Jesus Christ his Son, as the Redeemer and Saviour for righteousness and eternal life; the Blessed Spirit, as a sanctifier to carry on and finish the work of grace; but it is suggested, it would be in vain for Job to turn and look to any of these, since he would be rejected by them as a wicked man, nor would any of them plead his cause: or else the holy angels, as the Septuagint express it, and who are called saints and holy ones, Deut. xxxiii. 2. Dan. viii. 13. Zech. xiv. 5. and it is asked, which of those he could turn or look to, and could expect relief and protection from? signifying, that none of these would vouchsafe to converse with him, nor take him under their care, nor undertake to plead his cause: or rather holy men, such as are sanctified or set apart by God the Father, to whom Christ is made sanctification, and in whose hearts the Holy Spirit has wrought principles of grace and holiness, and who live holy lives and conversations; and it is insinuated, that should he turn and look to these, he would find none of them like him, nor in the same circumstances, nor of the same sentiments, or that would take his part and plead for him; but that all to a man would appear of the same mind with Eliphaz, that none but wicked men were afflicted by God as he was, and that he was such an one, and that for the reason following: the Papists very absurdly produce this passage in favour of praying to departed saints, when not dead but living ones are meant, and even turning to them is discouraged; and besides, this would contradict another tenet of the Papists, that the Old-Testament saints, until the coming of Christ, were in a sort of purgatory, called Limbus Patrum, and therefore uncapable of helping saints on earth that should apply unto them.

Ver. 2. *For wrath killeth the foolish man*, &c.] Not one that is an idiot, and destitute of common sense, and has no understanding in things natural and civil; but a wicked man, who has no knowledge of things divine and spiritual, and so foolish; which is the character of every natural man, and of God's people before conversion; and even of some professors, who are foolish virgins, and carry the lamp of a religious pro-

[n] היש עונך si est correspondens tibi, Bolducius.
[o] Ecce est qui respondeat tibi, Schultens.

[p] אל תפנה, Sept. obtueberis, Montanus; respicies, Vatablus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis.

fession without the oil of grace; and such an one Eliphaz took Job to be, whom sooner or later the wrath of the Lord, as the Targum interprets it, which is revealed from heaven, and comes down upon the children of disobedience, would consume like devouring fire: or this may be understood of the wrath and passion of such men themselves, which sometimes rises in them to such an height, as that they die in a fit of it; or do those things which bring them to death, either by the hand of God, or by the civil magistrate: *and envy slayeth the silly one;* one that is simple and void of understanding, and is easily persuaded and drawn into sin, either by his own heart, or by evil men, or by the temptations of Satan; and in whose heart envy at the prosperity of others dwells, and which insensibly preys upon him, eats up his own spirits, and is rottenness to his bones, and crumbles them into dust, Prov. xiv. 30. or the word may be rendered *jealousy*, or *zeal*[s], as it sometimes is, and may signify the jealousy of the Lord, zeal for his own glory, which he sometimes stirs up as a man of war, and which smokes against wicked men, and consumes them as fire, see Isa. xlii. 13. Psal. lxxix. 5. Deut. xxix. 20. Eliphaz by all this would represent and insinuate that Job was such a man, hot, passionate, and angry with God and his providence, and envious at the prosperity of others, particularly his friends; and so was a foolish and silly man, in whose breast wrath and envy rested, and would be his ruin and destruction, as he was already under slaying and killing providences.

Ver. 3. *I have seen the foolish taking root,* &c.] Such foolish wicked men as before described; those Eliphaz had observed to prosper in the world, and increase in riches, and even to have attained to a seeming stability and firmness, as if they would ever continue in such happy circumstances, see Jer. xii. 2. Psal. xxxvii. 35, 36. by this he would obviate an objection that here might be raised and made against the assertion he was proving, that wicked men are afflicted and punished of God for their sins; whereas it is notorious that they are not in trouble as other men, but in very prosperous and flourishing circumstances; this he grants is their case for a while, as he had observed, but in a short time they pass away, they and their substance disappear, and are no more seen, as follows: *but suddenly I cursed his habitation:* not that he wished ill to him, or imprecated evils upon him; for cursing and bitterness only fit the mouths of wicked men, and not good men, among whom Eliphaz must be allowed to be; but he immediately thought within himself, as soon as he saw the flourishing state of the wicked, that the curse of the Lord was in their houses, as in Prov. iii. 33. that they and all they had were under a curse, and that God had given them what they had with a curse, and had cursed all their blessings: which makes the difference between a good man and a wicked man: the one has what he has, his cottage and his small substance, with a blessing; the other his pleasant habitation, as the word[t] here used signifies, his stately palace, rich furniture, and large estates, with a curse; or he prognosticated, he foresaw, and could foretell, and that without pretending to an extraordinary spirit of prophecy, that in a short time the curse of God would light upon him, and upon his house, see Zech. v. 3, 4.

Ver. 4. *His children are far from safety,* &c.] From outward safety, from evils and dangers, to which they are liable and exposed, not only from men, who hate them for their father's sake, who have been oppressors of them, or from God, who visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children; and from spiritual and eternal safety or *salvation*, or from salvation in the world to come, as the Targum, they treading in their fathers' steps, and imitating their actions: *and they are crushed in the gate;* or openly, publicly, as Aben Ezra and others; or in the courts of judicature whither they are brought by those their parents had oppressed, and where they are cast, and have no favour shewn them; or literally by the falling of the gate upon them; and perhaps some reference is had to Job's children being crushed in the gate or door of the house, through which they endeavoured to get when it fell upon them and destroyed them; the Targum is, "and are crushed "in the gates of hell, in the day of the great judgment:" *neither is there any to deliver* them; neither God nor man, they having no interest in either, or favour with, partly on account of their father's ill behaviour, and partly on account of their own; and sad is the case of men when it is such, see Psal. l. 21.

Ver. 5. *Whose harvest the hungry eateth up,* &c.] This is to be understood of the foolish rich man before described, as taking root and flourishing; though he sows, and reaps and gathers in his harvest, and fancies he has goods laid up for many years, to be enjoyed by him, yet he is taken away by death, and another eats what he has gathered; either his hungry heirs, that he has kept bare, and without the proper necessaries of life; or the poor whom he has oppressed, who, driven by hunger, seize upon his harvest, and eat it up, whether he be alive or dead: Sephorno interprets this of the wicked man himself, who should eat up his own harvest, and not have enough to satisfy him, the curse of God being upon his land; and another learned interpreter[u] thinks the sense is, that such should be the curse of God on the fields of wicked men, that they should produce no more than what was usually left to the poor, and therefore should have no need to gather it: *and taketh it even out of the thorns;* that is, either the hungry man takes the harvest out of the thorns, among which it grows, see Matt. xiii. 7. or which he had gotten *through the thorns*, as Mr. Broughton renders it; that is, the owner, through many difficulties; and hunger will break through many to get at it; or though his harvest being got in, is enclosed with a thorn hedge, the hungry man gets through it, and takes it out from it, surrounded by it; the above-mentioned Jewish writer understands this also of the wicked man, who takes his own harvest out from among the thorns, so that there is nothing left for the poor and his friends, as it is meet there should: the word[w] for *thorns* has

[s] קנאה zelus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.

[t] נוהו pulchritudini ejus, V. L. commodam mansionem ejus, Cocceius; amœnum, Schultens.

[u] Schmidt.

[w] מצנים de lanceis, Bolducius. צנה est & clypeus, umbo, Codurcus.

also the signification of armour, particularly of shields; hence the Targum is, "and armed men with warlike "arms shall take it away;" to which agrees the Vulgate Latin version, "and the armed men shall take it away;" that is, soldiers should forage, spoil, and destroy it: *and the robber swalloweth up their substance*; the house-robber, who breaks in and devours all at once, and makes a clear riddance of it; some render it *the hairy man*[v], either that neglects his hair, as beggars, or such that live in desert places, as robbers, that they may appear the more terrible; or that take care of it, and nourish it, and tie it up in locks, and behind their heads, as Bar Tzemach and Ben Melech observe they do in Turkey; others translate it *the thirsty*[w], and so it answers to the hungry in the preceding clause, and designs such who thirst, and gape after, and covet the substance of others, and greedily catch at it, and swallow it up at once, at one draught, as a thirsty man does a large quantity of liquor, see Prov. i. 12, 13. this may have some respect to the Sabeans and Chaldeans, that swallowed up Job's substance, and took away his cattle from him at once, and were no other than bands of robbers; and the use of the word for a thief or a robber, as we take it, is confirmed by a learned man[x], who derives it from the Arabic word صم, which signifies to smite with a club or stone.

Ver. 6. *Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust*, &c.] Or rather, *for* or *indeed*[y], this being a reason shewing that wicked men are justly afflicted and punished; seeing their afflictions come not from the creatures, though they may be instruments, but from God for the sins of men: the word for affliction also signifies iniquity or sin, the cause of affliction, as well as affliction the fruit of sin; and so does the word in the following clause; and Aben Ezra understands both, not of natural but moral evil, and so do others[z]; both senses may be taken in: sin does not come from God, the Maker of the dust of the earth, he is not the author of sin, nor does this spring out of the dust which he has made; good things, as Schmidt observes, come out of the earth for the use of man as well as beasts, bread, and wine, and oil, and all the necessaries of life; the precious things produced by the influence of the sun and moon, the precious things of the everlasting hills, and of the earth, and the fulness of it; indeed, the earth was cursed for the sin of men, but this is taken off; and, however, it is not owing to the soil, or to the air and climate in which a man lives, that he is sinful; for though there may be national vices or some sins peculiar to or more predominant in one nation than in another, yet this is not to be attributed to such causes; for all sin is from a man's self, and proceeds out of his own evil heart, which is desperately wicked and evil continually, and from whence all the impure streams of sin flow, see Matt. xv. 19. and so afflictions are not to be ascribed to second causes, such as the things before mentioned, or Job's losses by the Sabeans and Chaldeans; nor did he place them to that account, but to the hand of God; nor to chance and fortune, or to be reckoned fortuitous events, as if they were chance-productions, spontaneous things that spring up of themselves, and not under the direction of an all-wise Providence; but they are to be considered as of God, and as of his appointment, and directed by his sovereign will and pleasure, and overruled for his glory; who has fixed what they shall be, of what kind and sort, what the measure of them, to what pitch they shall rise, and how long they shall last: *neither doth trouble spring out of the ground*; the same thing as before in different words, neither sin, the cause of trouble, the effect of sin; sin may very fitly be expressed by a word[a] which signifies trouble, because it is both troublesome, wearisome, and offensive to God, and brings trouble to the bodies and souls of men here and hereafter. Here Eliphaz begins to lower the tone of his voice, and to speak to Job in a seemingly more kind and friendly manner, observing to him the spring of afflictions, and giving him advice how to behave under them.

Ver. 7. *Yet man is born unto trouble*, &c.] Or *but*[b], after the negative follows the positive part of the assertion; before we have what is denied as the cause of affliction, here what it is affirmed to be, or what it is to be ascribed unto, even to the appointment of God for sin: to be born to it is to be appointed to it, as all men are appointed to death, and to every thing previous and that leads on to it; and it signifies that affliction or trouble springs from the birth-sin of man, from original sin, the sin of the first parent, and of his nature; as all sins arise from hence, and are streams from this fountain of pollution, so all disorders and diseases of body, all distresses and anguish of mind, and death in every sense, corporeal, spiritual, and eternal; and these are the lot and portion, the estate and inheritance, of the sons of men by nature, what they are born unto, and are full of, see ch. xiv. 1. the same word is here used as in the preceding verse, and signifies labour, mischief, the mischief of sin, improbity, wickedness, moral evil; and man may be said to be born to sin, inasmuch as he is conceived, shapen, and born in it; and as he is born at once into a sinful state, and sins as soon as born, goes astray from the womb, is a transgressor from thence, and the imagination of his heart evil from his infancy and youth upwards, he becomes a slave to sin, and is a home-born one; not that he is laid under a necessity of force to sin, or his will compelled to it; for he sins most freely, is a voluntary slave to it; he serves divers lusts as pleasures, and gives himself up to work all iniquity with greediness; but there is such a connexion between his birth, the circumstances of it, and sin, that sin is the certain consequence of it, and immediately, naturally, and necessarily follows upon it; that is, by a necessity of consequence, though not of coaction or force; it is as natural for man to sin as it is for a thirsty man to covet and drink water; or as for

[v] צמים comatus, Cocceius, Schmidt; horridus, Junius & Tremellius.

[w] Sitientes, V. L. sitibundi, Montanus, Bolducius; so Simeon Bar Tzemach.

[x] Hinckelman. Præfat. ad Alcoran. p. 28, 29.

[y] כי quia, Pagninus, Montanus; etenim, Beza, Mercerus; nam, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens; so Broughton; sane, Bolducius.

[z] און iniquitas, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Bolducius, Schmidt, Michaelis; improbitas, Codurcus.

[a] עמל perversitas, Pagninus; improbitas, Schultens.

[b] כי sed, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt, so Broughton.

an Ethiopian to be born black, and a leopard with spots; or, as it follows, *as the sparks fly upward*: which they do naturally and necessarily when coals are blown, and which are here called *the sons of coals*[c]; and to these, troubles and afflictions, the fruits and effects of sin, may be aptly compared; not only for the necessity of them, it is if needs be they are, but for the nature of them, being fiery and troublesome, hence called fiery trials, and signified by fires and flames of fire, 1 Pet. iv. 12. Isa. xxiv. 15. and xliii. 2. and also for the number of them, being many, and very grievous: some interpret this of flying fowls, of young vultures, as the Septuagint; of young eagles, as others; Aben Ezra makes mention of this sense, as if it was, as a fowl is born to fly, so man is born to labour; to labour in the law, according to the Targum; or to labour for his bread; or rather, to labour and sorrow; that is, to affliction and trouble: a learned man[d] thinks the phrase, according to the use of it in the Arabic language, designs the more rapid cast of a dart, of the vibration of it, which is very quick.

Ver. 8. *I would seek unto God*, &c.] Or *truly*[e], *certainly, doubtless, I do seek unto God*, verily I do so; for so the words are introduced in the original text, and express what Eliphaz had done when under afflictions himself; for he was not without them, though he had not them to such a degree as Job had; and when he was under them, this was the course he took; he sought unto God by prayer to support him under them, to sanctify them to him, and to deliver him out of them; and this he proposes for Job's imitation, and suggests, that if he was in his case, this would be the first step he should take; and good advice this is, nothing more proper for a man, especially a saint, than, when afflicted of God, to seek unto him, to seek his face and his favour, to entreat his gracious presence, and the discoveries of his love, that he may see that it is not in wrath, but in love, he afflicts him; to submit unto him, humble himself before him, acknowledge his sins, and implore his pardoning grace and mercy; to entreat him to help him, in this time of need, to exercise the graces of faith and patience, and every other; to desire counsel and advice how to behave under the present trial, and to be made acquainted with the reasons, ends, and uses of the dispensation, as well as to beg for strength to bear up under it, and in his own time to grant deliverance from it: *and unto God would I commit my cause*; or *direct my word or speech*[f] to him; that is, in prayer, as Sephorno adds; I would, as if he should say, make known my case to him, tell him the whole of it, and pour out my soul before him; and then I would leave it with him, and not wrangle, quarrel, and contend with him, but say, here am I, let him do what seemeth good unto him: some render the words, *truly*, or *indeed I shall discourse concerning God, and order my speech about Deity*[g]; I shall no longer insist on this subject, but drop it, and hereafter treat of God, his nature, being, and perfections, and particularly his works; though these are rather observed in the following verses, as so many arguments to engage Job to seek the Lord, and leave his case and cause to him.

Ver. 9. *Which doeth great things*, &c.] The things of creation are great things, the making of the heavens and the earth, and all therein, by the word of the Almighty, out of nothing, and which is a display of great power, wisdom, and goodness; the things of Providence are great things, which God is always doing; as the upholding all things in being by the word of his power, governing the whole universe, ordering all things in it, supplying and feeding all creatures, men and beasts; and especially the things of grace are great things, the covenant of grace, and its blessings, redemption by Jesus Christ, the work of grace upon the heart, the quickening and enlightening dead and dark sinners, taking away their hearts of stone and giving them hearts of flesh, and constantly supplying them with his grace for the finishing of it; the consideration of all which is a great encouragement to seek the Lord in time of need, as well as of what follows concerning them: *and unsearchable*; the things of nature; many of them are such as puzzle the greatest philosophers, who are not able, with all their sagacity and penetration, to find out the causes and reasons of them; and in providence the way of God is often in in the deep, and is not to be tracked and followed; and the dispensations of his grace to the sons of men are so sovereign and distinguishing, that it made the apostle say, speaking of them, *O the depth*, &c. Rom. xi. 33. and there are some things not to be inquired into, nor can they be searched out; secret things belong to God, as his purposes relating to the eternal state of particular persons, and the times and seasons of various future events, as the day of judgment, &c. *marvellous things*; in nature, as the formation of man and all creatures; in providence, and it may be respect may be had to the wonders done in Egypt, and the marvellous things in the field of Zoan, the plagues of Egypt, and the deliverance of Israel, and their passage through the Red sea; which were things done much about this time, or before it, as some think, and of which Eliphaz might have heard, and were fresh in his memory; and wonderful things are done in grace, as the effects of marvellous loving-kindness; and those *without number*; the works of God are manifold, and not to be counted; the stars of heaven, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, and cattle on a thousand hills, the fishes of the sea, small and great, see Psal. civ. 25. to which may be added, those animalcules, of which 1,000,000,000 do not exceed the bigness of a small grain of sand, as they may be seen through a microscope[h]; the various things done every day in providence, the special blessings of goodness, and the kind thoughts of the heart of God, which, if one attempt to reckon

[c] בני רשף, filii prunæ, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius, Bolducius, Schmidt.

[d] Hinckelman. Præfat. ad Alcoran. p. 29. So Schultens renders it, tela coruscа.

[e] אולם profecto, Junius & Tremellius; enimvero, Piscator, Cocceius, Schultens; certe, Mercerus, Vatablus, Beza; verum, enimvero, Schmidt, Michaelis; so Broughton.

[f] אשים דברתי ponam eloquium meum, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; deponerem verba mea, i. e. dirigerem, Vatablus; dirigerem sermonem meum, Beza, Michaelis; dispose my talk unto God, Broughton.

[g] Enunciative disseram de Deo, & de Numine instruam sermocinationem meum, Schultens.

[h] Leuwenhoeck apud Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 667.

up, they are more than can be numbered, Psal. xl. 5.

Ver. 10. *Who giveth rain upon the earth,* &c.] Not upon the land of Israel only, as the Targum and Jarchi, see Deut. xi. 11. but upon the whole earth; this is particularly mentioned as being of God, and which none of the vanities of the Gentiles can give; and it is a free gift of his, which tarries not for the desert of men, and is bestowed on the godly and ungodly; and is a great blessing of goodness, which enriches the earth, makes it fruitful, and through it it produces plenty of good things for man and beast: *and sendeth water upon the fields;* or *out-places*[i]; places without cities and towns, such as gardens, fields, and deserts, where showers of rain are sent of God to water them, many of which are not under the care of man, but are under the providence of God; the Targum and Jarchi interpret this of Gentile lands, as distinct from the land of Israel, to whom God *gives* rain, and to the other *sends* it; some render it, *upon the streets*[k], that is, upon persons that lie in the streets, and have no houses to dwell in, and to whom rain in hot and dry countries was welcome.

Ver. 11. *To set up on high those that be low,* &c.] Not the low plants, which, through rain, are made to run up on high, though there is a truth in that; but husbandmen and gardeners, and such-like persons, in low circumstances, who, by means of showers of rain, which make their gardens, fields, and lands fruitful, are raised to enjoy good estates, and large possessions: *that those which mourn may be exalted to safety:* or *are black*[l], that are clothed in black, as a token of mourning; or whose faces are black with famine, see Lam. iv. 8. and v. 10. or are in very distressed circumstances, and black through poverty, as the Targum, and mourn over and grieve at their sad and deplorable case; those, through rain and fruitful seasons, are brought out of such an uncomfortable situation, and put into a better condition of life, where they are as in a fortress, out of the reach of such sad calamities: some connect the words with the following, that in order to do this, to raise up the humble and exalt mourners, *he disappoints the devices of the crafty,* &c.

Ver. 12. *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty,* &c.] Or, *it disappointeth;* that is, the rain, as some Jewish commentators[m] interpret it, and the whole paragraph to this sense; the rain coming upon the earth makes it fruitful, and causes it to produce a plentiful crop, whereby the schemes of crafty men are disappointed, who in a time of drought withhold the corn, and enhance the price of it, and distress the poor; and this in order to make a penny of them, according to Amos viii. 4, 6. but through the rain falling are not able to gain their end, but are obliged to bring out their corn, and sell it at a low price, and so are taken in their own craftiness; their counsel becomes brutish, and they are brought into bad circumstances themselves, and the poor saved from being ground and oppressed by them, and have hope for the future of plenty of provisions, to the confusion and astonishment of their oppressors: but the Targum interprets this of the Egyptians cunningly devising mischief against the Israelites, without success; and not amiss, since that affair might be well known to Eliphaz, and he might have it in view: the fact was this, a new king of Egypt, after the death of Joseph, observing the great increase of the people of Israel in his dominions, and fearing, in case of a war, they should join the enemy, and get out of the land by such an opportunity, calls his nobles, courtiers, and counsellors together, to form some wise schemes how to diminish them; and the first was, to set task-masters over them, and afflict them with hard bondage, but this succeeded not; for the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied and grew; another decree was, to order the midwives to kill the male children of the Israelites, and save alive the females; but the midwives, fearing God, obeyed not the order, and the people still multiplied; and then a third project was formed, to cast every son born to the Israelites into the river, and drown them; but notwithstanding this they were preserved, as Moses, and doubtless many others; the people increased so, that they went out of Egypt 600,000 men; this was a recent thing, it may be in the times of Eliphaz, and which he might easily call to mind: and he might also have respect to a more remote case, that of the builders of Babel, who devised a scheme to build a tower, whose top should reach to heaven, and secure them from a dispersion of them throughout the earth; when God descended in the display of his power and providence, confounded their language, so that they were obliged to desist from their enterprise, and were scattered throughout the earth, which by their scheme they thought to have prevented: this may be applied to wicked crafty men in common, who devise schemes to commit sin, and gratify their lusts, to get for themselves riches and honour, and to do mischief to others, which God in his providence breaks, frustrates, and makes of none effect; and to false teachers, that walk in craftiness, lie in wait to deceive, and make use of cunningly-devised fables, coin new doctrines, invent new forms of worship, and appoint new ordinances, and contrive different ways and methods of salvation; all which is foolishness with God, and to such persons the following verse is applied by the Apostle Paul: and this may likewise respect wicked princes and potentates, with their counsellors and wise politicians, who in former, as well as in later times, have formed designs against their neighbours, and to the hurt of the interest of true religion particularly; but have been baffled and confounded by Divine Providence, of which, as there were many instances in Israel of old, so in our British Israel of late: *so that their hands cannot perform* their *enterprise;* what their heads have contrived, what they have resolved and determined upon, and what they have begun to effect, but could not go on with; or, *bring it soundly to pass,* as

[i] חוצות in genere significat loca quæ sunt foris, Piscator; exteriora, Mercerus; open fields, Broughton; faciem viarum, Beza.

[k] Super faciem platearum, Pagninus, Mercerus, Bolducius, Cocceius, Schultens; super facies platearum, Montanus, Schmidt; super platias, Vatablus, Michaelis.

[l] קדרים denigrati, Montanus, Bolducius; atrati, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis; pullati, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus, Beza; sordidati, Schultens.

[m] Aben Ezra, Jarchi, & R. Simeon Bar Tzemach.

Mr. Broughton renders it; that is, could not complete it, or bring it to perfection; and indeed not able to do *any thing*[n], as some translate the word, not any thing of what they devised and contrived: it signifies *that which is*, which has a being and substance, and solidity in it[o], but nothing of this kind could be done; it is sometimes rendered *wisdom*, and *sound wisdom*, Prov. ii. 7. Mic. vi. 9. and so it is here by some[p], and may signify, that though their counsels were deeply laid, and wisely formed, according to the best rules of wisdom and prudence, they yet are not able to bring them to pass; which shews the infinitely superior wisdom of God, and his overruling providence, and which therefore must be a great encouragement to seek unto him, and leave every cause and case with him.

Ver. 13. *He taketh the wise in their own craftiness*, &c.] As beasts are taken in a pit, or birds in a snare or net, or with birdlime; so these crafty men, who are wise in their own opinion, and really so in things natural, civil, and worldly, or however, to do evil, are entangled and taken in their own schemes; they fall into the pit they have digged for others, and are snared in the works of their own hands, as Haman and his sons were hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai; or, *by their own craftiness*[q], by the crafty schemes they themselves have formed: so sometimes those very things crafty men design to prevent, are brought about by the very means they make use of; thus Joseph's brethren designed to prevent the accomplishment of his dreams, which portended their subjection to him, by selling him to the Ishmaelites, who carried him to Egypt, where, in process of time, he was made governor of the land, and where his brethren became obedient to him; with which fact Eliphaz might be acquainted, it being not long before his time: so the Jews, to prevent the Romans taking away their city and nation, contrived to put Christ to death, and did, whereby they brought the wrath of God upon them, executed by those very persons; the same they did also, to prevent the spread of his fame and glory in the world, and that he might not be believed on as the Saviour of men, whereas, hereby he became the Saviour of them: and he a crucified Christ, being preached to the world by his ministers, the savour of his knowledge has been diffused in every place, his glory great in all the earth, and will be more so: the Targum applies this to the wise men of Pharaoh, and the Apostle Paul to the Jewish doctors and wise philosophers of the Gentiles, 1 Cor. iii. 19. which quotation proves the authority of this book: *and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong*: that is, the counsel or well-contrived schemes of the crafty and wise before mentioned, who twist and wind about, as the word[r] here used signifies, that there is no tracing their measures, and finding out the spring of them, nor the ends they have in view; yet these are sometimes carried on to execution in a rash and precipitate manner, and so miscarry; and like a man that is had to a precipice, and is thrown down from thence, and is destroyed at once, so are their counsels and schemes dashed to pieces by the providence of God: or, *is hastened*[s]; too much haste is made to accomplish it, and so it comes to nought, through an over-eagerness to have it done at once; not waiting a fit opportunity for the accomplishment of it.

Ver. 14. *They meet with darkness in the day-time*, &c.] Which may denote their infatuation in things the most plain and clear, and which are obvious to every one's view, even to such as are of much meaner capacities than themselves; and so it sometimes is, that the greatest politicians, men of the greatest sagacity and penetration, capable of forming and conducting the wisest counsels, yet blunder in things plain and easy to every one; which must be imputed to their being given up to a judicial blindness of mind by the Lord, who destroys the wisdom of the wise, and brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent; or this may signify the defeat of their counsels, when they are in the highest pitch of esteem among men, as Ahithophel's counsel was as the oracle of God; or the destruction of such persons and their schemes when they are in the meridian of their glory, who being in high and slippery places, come to desolation in a moment: *and grope in the noon-day as in the night*; which intends the same as before; this was threatened to the Jews in case of disobedience, and was fulfilled in them, Deut. xxviii. 29. Isa. lix. 9, 10. a learned man renders it, *as the night they grope*, or *feel, at noon-day*[t]; as the Egyptians felt darkness when it was noon, and when light was in all the dwellings of the Israelites, Exod. x. 22, 23. this may be applied to the case of many in a land of Gospel light, who are in darkness, walk in darkness, and are darkness itself; though the light of the glorious Gospel shines all around them on others, and know no more of divine and spiritual things than the Gentiles, but grope or feel about like persons blind, and in the dark as much as they, Acts xvii. 27. nay, they not only have the great things of the Gospel hid from them, and Satan blinds their minds lest this light should shine into them, but *they run into darkness*[u], as the words of the first clause may be rendered; those *lucifugæ*, such as the Jews were, and the Deists now are, run from the light of divine revelation, and love darkness, and which is the aggravation of their condemnation, John iii. 19, 20.

Ver. 15. *But he saveth the poor*, &c.] Who are so in a literal sense, and whom the Lord saves with a temporal salvation; these being the butt of the crafty, wise, and cunning, on whom their eyes are, for whom they lay snares, and lie in wait to draw them in; and these being helpless and without friends, God takes notice of them, appears for them, and arises for their help, and saves them: *from the sword*; of their enemies, drawn against them, and ready to be sheathed in them: *from their mouth*; from their reproaches,

[n] תושיה quicquam, Pagninus, Vatablus, Drusius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; quicquam rei, Cocceius, Michaelis; so Kimchi in Sepher Shorash, rad. ישׁ.
[o] Consistentiam, Montanus; nihil solidi, Tigurine version.
[p] Sapientiam, Schmidt; so Aben Ezra & Syr. ver. astu, Codurcus.
[q] בערמם per suam ipsorum astutiam, Schulteus.
[r] נפתלים intorquentium, Schmidt; tortuosorum, Schulteus.
[s] נמהרה festinata, ab origine festinandi, Schultens.
[t] כלילה ימששו tanquam noctem palpent, Schultens.
[u] ינגשו incurrent, V. L. incurrunt, Vatablus, Mercerus.

calumnies, detraction, and evil speaking; or *from the sword, their mouth*[w], as some; or *from the sword of their mouth*[x], as others; or which comes out of it; whose mouths and tongues are as sharp swords, which destroy their credit and reputation, and threaten them with ruin: the Targum is, "from the slaughter "of their mouth:" *and from the hand of the mighty:* their mighty enemies, that are mightier than they; the Targum is, "from the hand of a mighty king;" such an one as Pharaoh, which the same paraphrase makes mention of in the preceding verse, and from whom the poor Israelites were delivered: this may be applied to the poor in a spiritual sense, who are poor in spirit, and are sensible of their spiritual poverty, whom the Lord looks unto, has a regard for, and saves them from *the sword* of avenging justice; that being awaked against the man, his fellow, and so warded off from them, and from the mouth of a cursing and condemning law, and from Satan the accuser of the brethren; and of wicked men, whose tongue rising up in judgment against them, he condemns; and from the *hand* of Satan the strong man armed, and who is stronger than they; and of all their spiritual enemies.

Ver. 16. *So the poor hath hope*, &c.] Who observing this and that and the other poor man crying to the Lord and saved, hopes that he may be saved by him also; and having had experience of salvation out of one trouble or more, even out of six troubles, as in a following verse, entertains a comfortable hope he shall be saved out of the seventh, or whatsoever he is in: the word[y] used signifies one that is weak and feeble, attenuated, and exhausted of his strength, wealth, and substance; and may be applied to one spiritually poor, and in a very destitute and forlorn condition in himself; and yet, through the revelation of the grace and mercy of God to him, has hope of safety in Christ, the strong hold and hope set before him to flee unto; and of salvation by him, it being in him, and for the chief of sinners, and altogether free; and of eternal life through him, as being promised of God, that cannot lie: the free gift of God through Christ, and in his hands to dispose of: *and iniquity stoppeth her mouth:* that is, iniquitous men: very wicked men, who are iniquity and wickedness itself; these shall stop their mouths, through shame at what they have said concerning the poor that God saves, see Mic. vii. 9, 10. and through admiration at the goodness of God in saving them, Isa. lii. 15. having nothing to say against the ways and dispensations of Divine Providence, they are apt to quarrel with, Psal. cvii. 40, 41, 42. and especially at the last day such shall have their mouths stopped, and shall not be able to open them against the Lord or his people, being convinced of their hard speeches which they have spoken against them, Jude, ver. 15. and will be like the man at the feast without a wedding-garment, speechless, or muzzled, and his mouth stopped, Matt. xxii. 12.

Ver. 17. *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth*, &c.] Reproves, rebukes, convinces by his word, which is profitable for correction of men's minds and manners; and by his messengers, the prophets and ministers, who are sent as reprovers of the people, and to rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in their principles, and sober in their conversation; and by his spirit, which makes the correction of the word and ministers effectual, and who reproves and convinces of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and sometimes this is done by afflictive providences, by blows as well as words, which are the rod of correction God makes use of with his children; for this is not the correction of a judge reproving, condemning, and chastising malefactors and criminals, but of a father correcting his children, in love, in judgment, and in measure, for faults committed; Prov. iii. 12. so God's corrections are for sin, to bring his people to a sense of it, to humiliation and repentance for it, and to an acknowledgment of it; and often for remissness in duty, private or public, and when they set too high a value on the creature, and creature-enjoyments, trust in them, and glory of them, to the neglect of the best things: now such persons are happy who are corrected by God in this manner; for these corrections are fruits and evidences of the love of God to them, and of their relation to God as children; he grants them his presence in them, he sympathizes with them, supplies and supports them under them, and delivers out of them; he makes them work for their good, spiritual and eternal; by these he prevents and purges sin, tries and brightens their graces; makes them more partakers of his holiness; weans them from this world, and fits them for another: and this account is introduced with a *behold*, as a note of attention, exciting it in Job and others; thereby suggesting that it was worthy of notice and regard, and a matter of moment and importance; and as a note of admiration, it being a wonderful thing, a mere paradox with natural men especially, and contrary to all their notions and things, that an afflicted man should be a happy man, who generally reckon good men to be unhappy men, because of their afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions; and as a note of asseveration, affirming the truth and certainty of the assertion, and which is confirmed by after-testimonies, and by the experience of the saints, Psal. xciv. 12. and cxix. 67, 71. the Targum restrains this to Abraham; but it is true of every good man whom God afflicts in a fatherly way: *therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty;* who is able to save and to destroy, to take off his hand, or lay it heavier if not regarded, to bear up his people under all their afflictions, or to deliver them out of them; or of Shaddai[z], God all-sufficient, who has a sufficiency in himself, and needs not any thing from his creatures; whose grace is sufficient for his people, to supply them in all their straits and difficulties; or of him who is all-nourishing, who has breasts of consolation to draw out to his people in distress, the word[a] used coming from one that signifies a pap, or breast, as some think;

[w] So some in Michaelis.

[x] A gladio oris eorum, V. L. a gladio qui ex ore eorum, De Dieu, Schultens.

[y] לדל tenui, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius, Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[z] שדי Ἱκανὸς, Symmachus; Saddai, Montanus, Drusius; omnisufficientis, Cocceius.

[a] Alii a mamma deducunt quæ שד, Ebræis, q. mammosum dicas, quod omnia dat, Drusius.

hence mention is made of the blessings of the breast, when he is spoken of under this character, Gen. xlix. 25. now this chastising of his is not to be understood of chastisement in a way of vindictive wrath and justice, and as a proper punishment for sin, for this is laid on Christ, the surety of his people, Isa. liii. 5. and to inflict this on them would be a depreciating the satisfaction of Christ, be contrary to the justice of God, and to his everlasting and unchangeable love; but this is the chastening of a father, and in love, and for the good of his people, in whch he deals with them as with children: the word signifies *instruction* [b]; affliction is a school of instruction, in which the saints learn much of the mind and will of God, and more of his love, grace, and kindness to them; and are enriched with a larger experience of divine and spiritual things: and therefore such chastening should not be *despised* or rejected as nauseous and loathsome, as the word signifies: indeed no affliction is joyous; the bread of affliction, and water of adversity, are not palatable or grateful to flesh and blood; yea, are even a bitter and disagreeable potion, as the cup of sorrow was to the human nature of Christ; but yet should not be rejected, but drank, for the same reason he gives, it being the cup given by his heavenly Father; John xviii. 11. nor should it be despised as useless and unprofitable, as the word is used in Psal. cxviii. 22. seeing afflictions are of great use for humiliation for sin, for the increase of grace and holiness; the chastening of the Father of spirits is for profit now, and works a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, Heb. xii. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 17. this passage seems to be referred to by Solomon, Prov. iii. 11. and is quoted by the apostle, in Heb. xii. 5. where he uses a word [c] by which he translates this, which signifies to *make little of*: and as on the one hand afflictions should not be magnified too much, as if there were none, nor ever had been any but them; so, on the other hand, they should not be slighted and overlooked, and no notice taken of them, as if they were trifling and insignificant, and answered no end or purpose; the hand of God should be observed in them, and acknowledged; and men should humble themselves under his mighty hand, and quietly and patiently bear it; and, instead of despising, should bless him for it, it being for their good, and many salutary ends being answered by it.

Ver. 18. *For he maketh sore, and bindeth up*, &c.] Or, *though he maketh sore, yet he bindeth up* [d]; as a chirurgeon, who makes a wound the sorer by probing and opening it, to let out the matter and make way for his medicine, and then lays on the plaster, and binds it up: so God causes grief and puts his people to pain, by diseases of body, or by making breaches in their families and estates, and such-like cutting providences; and then he binds up their breach, and heals the stroke of their wound, and in the issue makes all whole again: so in spiritual things; he cuts and wounds, and gives pain and uneasiness, by the sharp two-edged sword of the word, and by his spirit making use of it; and lays open all the corruption of nature, and brings to repentance and humiliation for all transgressions; and then pours in the oil and wine of pardoning grace and mercy, and binds up the wounds that are made: *he woundeth, and his hands make whole*; or *heal* [e]; the same thing is meant, expressed by different words; and the whole suggests, that every afflicted man, and particularly Job, should he behave well, and as he ought, under the afflicting hand of God, would be healed, and become sound and whole again, in body, mind, family, and estate; for, though God for the present caused grief, yet he would have compassion, since he did not willingly grieve the children of men; did not do it for his own pleasure, but for their good; as a skilful chirurgeon cuts and wounds in order to heal; see Deut. xxxii. 39. Hos. vi. 1. Lam. iii. 32, 33.

Ver. 19. *He shall deliver thee in six troubles*, &c.] Behaving as before directed; seeking unto God, committing his cause and case to him, and leaving it with him; and not despising the chastening of the Lord, but receiving and bearing it with reverence, patience, and submission: and then the sense is, that God would deliver out of whatsoever troubles he was or should be in, though they were ever so many; a certain number being put for an uncertain one, Psal. xxxiv. 19. *yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee*; which is a number expressive of multitude and of perfection, and so may denote the multitude and fulness of afflictions; the tribulations of God's people are many, through which they pass to heaven, and there is a measure of them to be filled up; and when they are come to the height, and the measure is fully up, then the Lord puts a stop to them, and delivers out of all their troubles; and in the midst of them all, so preserves them, that *no evil* shall so much as *touch* them; not the evil of punishment; for, though those troubles and afflictions that attend them are evil things, in a natural or civil sense, they are disagreeable and distressing, yet they are not the effect of vindictive justice; there is not a drop of wrath and vengeance in them; and though they do come upon them and unto them, upon their persons and families; yet not so as to do any real hurt, or as to destroy them; see Psal. xci. 10. some think that seven particular troubles are meant, hereafter mentioned, as Jarchi; as famine, war, an evil tongue, destruction, dearness of provision, the beasts of the earth, and the stones of the field.

Ver. 20. *In famine he shall redeem thee from death*, &c.] In a time of extreme want of provisions, God so cares for his own dear people, that they shall not be starved to death by the famine; so in the famine in Egypt, which the Targum takes notice of, in the times of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, and the patriarchs, there was food provided for them, so that they and their families were sustained, and perished not for lack of the necessaries of life: God sometimes goes out of his ordinary way, and works wonders for his poor and needy in distress, when they cry unto him; see Isa. xli. 17, 18. *and in war from the power of the sword*; or, *from the hands of the sword* [f]: from swords in hand, when drawn, and men are ready to push with them.

[b] מוסר παιδεια, Sept. eruditionem, Cocceius.
[c] Ὀλιγωρει
[d] Assembly's Annotations.

[e] תרפינה sanabunt, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
[f] מידי חרב de manu gladii, V. L. e manibus gladii, Pagninus & Montanus, &c.

with all their force; as he delivered and preserved Abraham from the sword of the four kings, when he waged war with them; and the Israelites, in the war of Amalek, in the times of Moses, which the Targum here refers to; and David from the hurtful sword of Goliah, and others with whom he was concerned in war: and so the Lord covers the heads of his people in the day of battle oftentimes, when multitudes fall on their right hand and on their left.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue*, &c.] Of Satan, as Jarchi, the accuser of the brethren; or rather from the evil tongue of wicked men, their slanders, calumnies, and reproaches; the tongue is a small weapon, but it is a cutting one; it is like a scourge or whip, with which wicked men strike hard: the enemies of Jeremiah encouraged on* another to smite him with their tongue, ch. xviii. 18. and a sad thing it is to be under the lash of some men's tongues, and a great mercy it is to be delivered from them: God does sometimes hide his people, and keeps them secretly, as in a pavilion, from the strife of tongues; Psal. xxxi. 20. he either restrains the tongues of men, lays an embargo on them, and will not suffer them to say that evil of his people which Satan and their wicked hearts prompt them to; or, if they are suffered to defame and speak evil of good men, yet they do it in such a romantic way, and so overcharge and load it, that it is not credited by any what they say, even by those of their own party; so that the characters of God's people suffer not by their lies and calumnies: some render it, *when the tongue wanders about*[g]; walks through the earth, and spares none, all ranks and degrees of men; God hides his people from being hurt by it, see Psal. lxxiii. 9. Aben Ezra interprets the word rendered *tongue* of a nation or people; and so it may be understood of one nation entering into another, passing through it, and making desolations in it; as the Scythians, Gauls, Goths, Huns, and Vandals, have done in different ages; and that, in such a time of calamity, God has his hiding-places in Providence for the protection and safety of his people; but the Targum interprets it of an evil tongue, and particularly of the tongue of Balaam: *neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh*; meaning either of pestilence, which is the destruction that wastes at noon-day, Psal. xci. 6, 10. which, when it comes into a nation or neighbourhood, shall not come nigh the good man, and infect him; or if it does, shall not carry him off; and if it does that, it carries him home to heaven and happiness, and therefore he has no reason to be afraid of it: or of a general calamity; as when there is a complication of judgments in a nation, or in the world in general, as war, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, &c. as if all were just falling to pieces and into ruin; and yet even then the saints have no cause to fear; see Psal. xlvi. 1, 2, 3, 4. or the destruction of the whole world at the last day, when the heavens and earth, and all therein, shall be burnt up; for then good and righteous men will be safe with Christ, and dwell with him in the new heavens and the new earth, which shall be prepared for them; see 2 Pet. iii. 10—13. the Targum refers this to the destruction of the Midianites.

Ver. 22. *At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh*, &c.] Not deride and despise them, and make a jest of them; for good men have a reverence and awe of the righteous judgments of God upon them, when they are in the world, Psal. cxix. 120. but the sense is, that such shall reckon themselves safe and secure amidst such calamities, provision being made for their protection and sustenance; and be cheerful and comfortable, putting their trust and confidence in the Lord, as Habakkuk was, in a time of great distress, when all the necessaries of life were cut off from the stall, the herds, the flocks, and the fields; Hab. iii. 17, 18, 19. just as a man that is in a good harbour, or has a good house over his head, laughs at blustering storms and winds[h], or thinks himself secure, and so is cheerful and pleasant amidst all the noise that is about him, see Hab. i. 10. *neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth*; either, literally taken, beasts of prey, that wander about in the earth, noisome and pernicious ones; which are one of God's sore judgments which he threatens the disobedient with, and promises the obedient he will rid them of; and therefore they have no reason to be afraid of them, see Ezek. xiv. 21. Lev. xxvi. 6, 22. some think serpents are particularly designed, which creep upon the earth, and whose food is the dust of the earth, with all other poisonous animals, between which and men there is an antipathy; and yet good men need not be afraid of these; see Mark xvi. 18. Acts xxviii. 3, 4, 5. or figuratively, cruel and barbarous men, thieves and robbers, as Jarchi; or rather fierce and furious persecutors, and particularly the beasts of Rome, Pagan and Papal; though the literal sense is to be preferred; the Targum interprets this of the camp of Og, comparable to the beasts of the earth.

Ver. 23. *For thou* shalt be *in league with the stones of the field*, &c.] So as to receive no hurt from them, by walking among them, and even barefoot, which was usual in the eastern countries, see Psal. xci. 12. or by their being in the field, so as to hinder the increase of them; but on the contrary, even from such fields as were stony ground, a large crop has been produced, and so rather receive benefit by them, as men do from those with whom they are in league; and may therefore likewise signify, that these stones should be useful in being boundaries or fences about their fields, and landmarks in them, which should not be removed: many interpreters take notice of a sense that Pineda gives of these words, and which Coccejus calls an ingenious one, that it refers to a custom in Arabia, which may be called Scopelism, and was this; a man's enemies would lay stones in his field, and these signified, that if any attempted to till and manure those grounds where they were laid, some evil would befall him by the means of those persons who laid the stones there; and which stones were thought to be ominous and formidable; something like it is in 2 Kings iii. 19, 25. and so the sense is, that a good man had nothing to fear from such stones, he being in league with them;

[g] בשוט dum pervagabitur, Vatablus; quum grassatur, Coccejus, Codurcus; grassabitur, Grotius; so Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom, and R. Jonah, in Ben Melech.

[h] Ridebis ventos hoc munere tectus & imbres, Martial.

and this malicious practice is thought to have had its origin in Arabia Petræa[h]; but the first sense seems best: *and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee;* a covenant being made with them, as in Hos. ii. 18. meaning either literally, the beasts of the field; and these either the same as before, wild beasts, or beasts of prey; or rather, in distinction from them, tame beasts, as cows and horses, which should be so far from doing any hurt, as sometimes is done by these tame creatures, that they should be very serviceable in tilling fields and drawing carriages, and the like: or else figuratively, men comparable to such creatures; and so the sense may be, that when a man's ways please the Lord, and he behaves according to his mind and will, particularly under afflictions, even his enemies are made to be at peace with him; Prov. xvi. 7. the Targum interprets this of the Canaanites, comparable to the beasts of the field.

Ver. 24. *And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle* shall be *in peace, &c.*] Not a place of religious worship, though the Targum renders it an house of doctrine or instruction; for we read not of any such but the tabernacle of Moses, erected in the wilderness, and which was indeed about, or little after, the times of Job; but it cannot be reasonably thought he did or could attend there; nor the tabernacle of his body, now in great pain and anguish, in which there were no rest nor soundness, being filled with sore boils and burning ulcers; but his dwelling-house, which was built as a tent or tabernacle: such were the houses of the eastern people, made to move from place to place, for the sake of pasturage for their flocks and herds, in which their wealth consisted; so Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, dwelt in tabernacles; and hence in after-times more firm, fixed, and stable dwellings, were so called; David calls his palace the tabernacle of his house, Psal. cxxxii. 3. though this also includes all that dwelt in his house, his family; and the meaning is, that should be behave aright under the afflicting hand of God, his family should live in concord, harmony, and love; there should be no discord, animosity, and contention among them, but they should be at peace and in unity among themselves; as indeed Job's children were whilst he had them, and before this calamity came upon him; and that also they should be secure from enemies, and dwell unmolested by them; and be in the utmost safety, enjoying all kind of prosperity, inward and outward, temporal and spiritual; which the word *peace* includes, as used in eastern countries, whose common salutation was, *peace be with thee;* thereby wishing all kind of happiness: or the words may be rendered, *peace* shall be *thy tabernacle*[i]; as is a good man's tabernacle: he dwells in God, who is all love, all peace, in whom there is no wrath or fury; he dwells by faith in Christ, who is his peace, his peace-maker, and peace-giver; and in whom he has peace amidst all the tribulation he meets with in the world; the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keeps and guards him in Christ, as in a garrison, safe and secure; and he enjoys much peace, as the fruit of the spirit, arising from a view of interest in the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and when he dies he enters into peace, and dwells and abides in it as his everlasting mansion, Isa. lvii. 2. now all this, Eliphaz says, Job, behaving well, should know; that is, have an experience of it; should really enjoy it, and find it in fact true what he asserted: *and thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin:* meaning not his wife, as some interpreters, Jewish and Christian, understand it; and so in the Talmud[k], the word being rendered *she that tarried at home,* Psal. lxviii. 12. which is a description of a good housewife, that keeps at home and minds the affairs of her family; but rather it designs the same as his tabernacle in the preceding clause, his dwelling-house, and signifies a fine, fair, and beautiful one; a spacious and goodly building, and well stored with rich household goods; and including his family also: and to *visit* this is to take care of his family, rule and govern them well, protect and defend them, and provide all things necessary for them; as well as to inspect into the affairs of his house, inquire, examine, and see how things are managed; to know the state, condition, and circumstances it is in; which is looking well to the ways of his household: and this he should do, and *not sin;* not that a man, even a good man, can so conduct himself always in his family as not to be guilty of any sin at all, but not of sin in common, or continually; at least not any gross and notorious ones: the sense is, that he should not sin himself, whilst making such a visit and inquiry, by an undue heat, excessive anger, by rash and passionate expressions, things not being entirely to his mind; or be the cause of sin in others, by provoking his children to wrath, by threatening and menacing his servants in a severe, boisterous, and blustering manner; but reproving both, as there may be occasion, in a mild and gentle way; or else not sin by conniving at it and not correcting for it, which was the fault of Eli: Ben Gersom thinks Eliphaz tacitly suggests, and strikes at, Job's indulgence to his children; and so Sephorno: the word used having the signification of wandering and straying, some take the sense to be this; that he should have a sure and certain dwelling-place to come into, and abide in, and should not wander about[l], or be as a stroller and vagabond in the earth: though this has sometimes been the case of good men; as of the godly in the times of the Maccabees, who wandered in deserts and mountains, in caves and dens of the earth; and even of the disciples of Christ, who had no certain dwelling-place; yea, of Christ himself, who had not where to lay his head: rather, since the word signifies to miss the mark, and so be disappointed; in which sense it is used in Judg. xx. 16. the sense may be, that when he visited his habitation he should find nothing amiss or wanting, but every thing should answer his expectations and wishes, so Aben Ezra; and Mr. Broughton renders it, *shalt not misprosper;* and others, *shalt not be frustrated*[m]; baulked, disappointed of thine ends and views, designs, hopes, and wishes.

[h] See Egmont and Heyman's Travels, vol. 2. p. 136.
[i] כי שלום אהלך quod pax tentorium tuum, Montanus, Bolduc; so Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.
[k] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 31. 1. Yebamot, fol. 62. 2. & 63. 1. Sanhedrin, fol. 76. 2.
[l] לא תחטא non errabis, i. e. non eris erro & palans, Codurcus; non aberrabis, Beza, Piscator, Cocceius.
[m] Nec votis frustrabere, Schultens.

Ver. 25. *Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, &c.*] Not his seed sown in the earth, and the increase of that, but his children, as the next clause explains it, as Bar Tzemach well observes; and designs either their greatness in wordly things, in wealth and riches, in honour and dignity, in power and authority, or else their numbers; for the word may be rendered *much* or *many*[r], a multitude of children being reckoned a great temporal blessing; but this seems rather intended in the following words: *and thine offspring as the grass of the earth;* as numerous as the spires of grass, which can no more be told than the stars of the heavens, or the sand of the sea, by which the same thing, a numerous progeny, is sometimes illustrated: this is to be understood not of his immediate offspring, but his descendants in successive ages and generations, and which should be as beautiful as the grass of the earth when in its verdure; pointing at the comeliness of their persons, their honour and dignity raised unto, the largeness of their substance, the greatness of their prosperity, and flourishing circumstances they should be in; though it may also denote the original of them, amidst all, being of the earth and earthy, and their frailty and fading condition; for which reason all flesh is said to be as grass, and men are frequently compared unto it, see Psal. xc. 5, 6. and cii. 4. and ciii. 15. Isa. xl. 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, &c.*] Or, *go into thy grave*[s], which is represented as a house to enter into and dwell in; and so the wise man calls it man's long home, and Job his house, and which is appointed for all living, Eccl. xii. 5. Job xvii. 13. and xxx. 23. for all men must die, and so come to the grave, good men as well as bad, the righteous and the wicked: this is not to be understood literally, for the dead cannot go or *come* to their graves, but are carried thither, as Stephen was, and all are; but it denotes their willingness to die, who choose to be absent from the body, that they may be present with the Lord, and are desirous to depart this world, and be with him, as the Apostle Paul was; and therefore cheerfully give up the ghost, and resign their souls into the hands of Christ, desiring him to receive them; and rejoice when they observe the grave is near, and ready for them; whilst others have their souls demanded and required of them, and are forced to death and the grave against their wills, and are driven away in their wickedness: now this, with respect to good men, is said to be *in a full age*, not *in abundance*, as the Vulgate Latin version, in an abundance or fulness of wealth and honour, and with great pomp and splendour, which is not the case of all good men, but of very few; nor in the full time which God has determined and appointed men should live, which may be called *the fulness of time:* for in this every man comes to the grave, good and bad, young and old; no man dies before or lives beyond it, see Job xiv. 5. but in the full age of men or the common term of man's life; the highest which he usually attains unto, which is threescore years and ten, and at most fourscore, Psal. xc. 10. and such who die before this are said to die before their time, the usual term of life; who die before the midst of this, are said not to live out half their days, Eccl. vii. 17. Psal. lv. 23. but he that arrives to this dies in a good old age, and has filled up his days, which men, at most, ordinarily live: Mr. Broughton renders it, *in lusty old age*, enjoying great health, strength, and vigour; and so Nachmanides takes the word to be compounded of כ, *as*, and לח, *moist*, lively, strong, and lusty; as if the sense was, that Job should die indeed in old age, but, when old, be as hearty as a young man in his full strength, and whose bones are moistened with marrow; as was the case of Moses, whose eyes were not dim, nor his natural force or radical moisture abated, Deut. xxxiv. 7. but the word denotes extreme decrepit old age[t], coming from the root in the Arabic language, which signifies to be of an austere, rugged, wrinkled, contracted countenance[u], which is usually the case of old men: now this is to be understood, not as if every good man arrives to such an age, or that none but good men do; for certain it is, that some good persons, as Abijah, die in their youth, and many wicked men live to a great age, see Eccl. vii. 15. but Eliphaz here speaks suitably to the legal dispensation under which he was, in which temporal blessings were promised to good men, as shadows of spiritual things, and this of long life was a principal one, see Psal. xci. 16. Eph. vi. 2, 3. this is illustrated by the following simile: *like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season;* there is a very great resemblance between ripe corn and old age; corn, when it is in its full ear, and ripe, its ears will hang down; the stalks, being dry and withered, are weak, and not able to bear the weight of them; so old men stoop, their knees bend, the strong men bow themselves, being unable to bear the weight of the body; fields of corn, ripe for the harvest, look white, and so the hairs of a man's head in old age; the almond-tree flourishes, which, when in full bloom, is a lively emblem of the hoary head: and there is a great likeness between ripe corn, and shocks and sheaves of it, and a good old man; a good man is comparable to a corn of wheat that falls into the ground, to which Christ compares himself, John xii. 24. and to wheat he compares his saints, Matt. xiii. 30. for their choiceness, excellency, purity, and solidity; and these, like a corn of wheat, grow up gradually in grace, in spiritual light, knowledge, faith, and experience, and at length come to maturity; the good work is performed and perfected in them, and they come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; and then they are cut down with the scythe or sickle of death, which is the proper time, like corn *in his season;* which, if cut before it is ripe, would not be fit for use, and, if it stood longer, would shed and come to nothing: and then, as corn, when cut down and reaped, is put up in shocks and

[r] רב multum, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Mercerus, Piscator, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[s] תבוא—אלי קבר ingrederis in sepulchrum, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius, Michaelis; intrabis ad tumulum, Schultens.

[t] בכלח in summa senectute, Michaelis; in decrepita senectute, Schultens.

[u] كلح austero et tetrico (corrugato) vultu fuit, Golius, col. 2057. Castell. col. 1733. So Hinckelman. Præfat. ad Alcoran. p. 29. Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 7. p. 152. Thesaur. Philolog. l. 2. c. 1. p. 507, 508.

sheaves, which are lifted up from the earth, and made to ascend, as the word [r] signifies, and are laid in carts and waggons, and carried home with expressions of joy, (hence we read of the joy of harvest,) and are laid up in the barn or granary; so the saints are carried by angels, the reapers, into Abraham's bosom, as Lazarus was, into heaven, and as all the elect will be gathered by the angels at the harvest, the end of the world; attended with their shouts and acclamations, and with expressions of joy from Gospel ministers, who now go forth bearing the precious seed of the word, and sow it in tears, but then shall return with joy, bringing their sheaves with them, see Matt. xiii. 30, 39. and xxiv. 31. Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6. 2 Thess. ii. 10, 20.

Ver. 27. *Lo this, we have searched it*, &c.] This is the concluding part of Eliphaz's first oration or speech to Job; and in order to engage his attention to it, observes, that what he had said was not his own single opinion, but the sentiment of the rest of his friends; and that it was the result of laborious and diligent investigation; that they had searched the records of former times, and inquired of ancient people, as well as had made the strictest observations on things during their course of life; and the sum and amount of all was what he had declared, and which they had found to be sure and certain, the truth of the matter; that it is an undoubted truth, which should not be disputed and called in question, but to be held as a first principle, which was this; that wicked men are punished for their sins, and that good men are never greatly afflicted, at least not to such a degree as to be stripped of all the necessaries of life, and to be in a most desolate and perishing condition; and since this had been so thoroughly investigated by them, and such *a probatum est* was written upon it, he exhorts Job to *hear it;* agree to it, believe it, receive it, and make a proper use of it, as he hoped he would: *and know thou it for thy good;* or *for thyself* [s]; take it to thyself, as belonging to thee, as suitable to thy case; apply it to thyself, learn some lessons from it, and make good use of it; which is what is proposed by all that has been said.

CHAP. VI.

THIS and the following chapter contain Job's answer to the speech of Eliphaz in the two foregoing; he first excuses his impatience by the greatness of his afflictions, which, if weighed by good and impartial hands, would be found to be heavier than the sand of the sea, and which words were wanting to express, ver. 1, 2, 3. and the reason why they were so heavy is given, they being the arrows and terrors of the Almighty, ver. 4. and by various similes he shews that his moans and complaints under them need not seem strange and unreasonable, ver. 5, 6, 7. and what had been said not being convincing to him, he continues in the same sentiment and disposition of mind, and wishes to be removed by death out of his miserable condition, and gives his reasons for it, ver. 8—13. and though his case was such as required pity from his friends, yet this he had not from them, but represents them as deceitful, and as having sadly disappointed him, and therefore he neither hoped nor asked for any thing of them, ver. 14—23. and observes that their words and arguments were of no force and weight with him, but hurtful and pernicious, ver. 24—27. and in his turn gives them some exhortations and instructions, and signifies that he was as capable of discerning between right and wrong as they, with which this chapter is concluded, ver. 28—30.

Ver. 1. *But Job answered and said.*] Though Eliphaz thought his speech was unanswerable, being, as he and his friends judged, unquestionably true, and the fruit of strict, laborious, and diligent search and inquiry; or, *then Job answered* [t], as the same particle is rendered, ch. iv. 1. after he had heard Eliphaz out; he waited with patience until he had finished his discourse, without giving him any interruption, though there were many things that were very provoking, particularly in ch. iv. 5, 6, 7. and v. 2. and when he had done, then he made his reply; and this was no other than what every man has a right unto, to answer for himself when any charge or accusation is brought against him; when his character is attacked, or his good name, which is better than precious ointment, is taken from him; and is what all reasonable men, and the laws of all civilized nations, allow of.

Ver. 2. *Oh that my grief were thoroughly weighed*, &c.] Or, *in weighing weighed* [u], most nicely and exactly weighed; that is, his grievous affliction, which caused so much grief of heart, and which had been shewn in words and gestures; or his *wrath and anger* [w], as others render it; not his anger against Eliphaz, as Sephorno, but as before, meaning the same thing, his affliction; which either, as he understood, was the fruit and effect of the wrath and anger of God, who treated him as an enemy; or rather, that wrath, anger, and resentment raised in his own mind by those afflictive providences, and which broke out in hot and passionate expressions, and for which he was blamed as a foolish man, ch. v. 2. or else the *complaint* [x], the groans and moans he made under them; or the *impatience* [y] he was charged with in bearing of them; and now he wishes, and suggests, that if they were well weighed and considered by kind and judicious persons, men of moderation and temper, a great allowance would be made for them, and they would easily be excused; that is, if, together with his expressions of grief, anger, and impatience, his great afflictions, the cause of them, were but looked into, and carefully examined, as follows: *and my calamity laid in the balances together!* that is, his affliction, which had a being, as the word signifies, as Aben Ezra observes, was not through the prepos-

[r] בעלות sicut ascendere, Montanus, Bolducius, Schmidt, Michaelis; sicut ascendit, Pagninus, Mercerus.

[s] דע לך scito tibi, Montanus, Mercerus, &c.

[t] ויען tunc respondit, Drusius.

[u] שקול ישקל librando, libraretur, Cocceius, Schultens.

[w] כעשי ira mea, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Schmidt, &c. so the Targum and Sept.

[x] Querela mea, Vatablus, Mercerus.

[y] Impatientia, Belgæ, Castalio.

sessions of fear as before, nor merely in fancy as in many, or as exaggerated, and made greater than it is, which is often the case; but what was real and true, and matter of fact; it was what befell him, had happened to him, not by chance, but by the appointment and providence of God; and includes all his misfortunes, the loss of his cattle, servants, and children, and of his own health; and now to be added to them, the unkindness of his friends; and his desire is, that these might be taken up, and put together in the scales, and being put there, that the balances might be lifted up at once, and the true weight of them taken; and the meaning is, either that all his excessive grief, and passionate words, and extravagant and unwarrantable impatience, as they were judged, might be put into one scale, and all his afflictions in another, and then it would be seen which were heaviest, and what reason there was for the former, and what little reason there was to blame him on that account; or however, he might be excused, and not be bore hard upon, as he was; to this sense his words incline in ch. xxiii. 2. or else by his grief and calamity he means the same thing, his grievous afflictions, which he would have put together in a pair of balances, and weighed against any thing that was ever so heavy, and then they would appear to be as is expressed in the following verse. Job by all this seems desirous to have his case thoroughly canvassed, and his conduct thoroughly examined into, and to be well weighed and pondered in the scale of right reason and sound judgment, by men of equal and impartial characters; but he tacitly suggests that his friends were not such, and therefore wishes that some third person, or other persons, would undertake this affair.

Ver. 3. *For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea,* &c.] Or *seas**; all sand is heavy in its own nature, Prov. xxvii. 3. especially the sand of the sea, that which is immediately taken out of it; for that on the shore is lighter, being dried by the winds and heat of the sun, but the other is heavier, through the additional weight of water; and much more especially how heavy must all the sand of the sea be, and of all the seas that are in the world: yet Job suggests by this hyperbolical expression, exaggerating his case, that his affliction was heavier than it all, a most intolerable and insupportable burden; the afflictions of God's people are but light when compared with what their sins deserve, with the torments of the damned in hell, with the sufferings of Christ in their room and stead, and with everlasting happiness, the eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17. but in themselves they are heavy, and press hard; they are so to flesh and blood, and especially unless everlasting arms are put under men, and they are supported and upheld with the right hand of God's righteousness; they are heavy when attended with the hidings of God's face, and a sense of his wrath and displeasure, which was Job's case, see ch. xiii. 24. and xxiii. 2, 3. some render it *more copious,* or *numerous*[a], and indeed the word has this signification, as in Numb. xx. 20. and the metaphor is more frequently used to express a multitude, even what is innumerable, Hos. i. 10. yet the notion of heaviness best agrees with the preceding figure of weighing in balances, and therefore at least is not to be excluded; some learned men take in both, as the sense of the word, the number of afflictions, and the bulk and weight of them: *therefore my words are swallowed up;* either by his friends, as Kimchi, who catched at them, and put a wrong construction on them, without thoroughly examining the true sense of them; as men that swallow down their food greedily, don't chew it, nor take the true taste of it, and so are no judges whether it is good or bad; but this sense seems to have no connexion with what goes before; rather they were swallowed up by himself, and the meaning either is, that such was the weight and pressure of his afflictions, that he wanted words to express it; his words *failed* him, as the Targum: or they *come short,* as Mr. Broughton renders it; they were not sufficient to set forth and declare the greatness of his troubles; or he faltered in his speech, he could not speak out plainly and distinctly, because of his grief and sorrow, see Psal. lxxvii. 4. what he had said was delivered amidst sighs and sobs, through the heaviness of the calamity on him; they were but half-words, attended with groanings that could not be uttered; by which he would signify, that though his friends had charged him with speaking too much and too freely, he had not spoken enough, nor could he, by reason of the greatness of his affliction; and also to excuse his present answer, if it was not delivered with that politeness and fulness of expression, with that eloquence and strength of reasoning and discoursing he at other times was capable of: or rather the words may be rendered, *therefore my words break out with heat*[b]; in a vehement manner, in a hot and passionate way I am blamed for; but this is to be be imputed to the heavy burden of affliction and sorrow upon me, which, if considered, some allowances would be made, and the charge be alleviated.

Ver. 4. *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me,* &c.] Which are a reason proving the weight and heaviness of his affliction, and also of his hot and passionate expressions he broke out into; which designs not so much outward calamities, as famine, pestilence, thunder and lightning, which are called the arrows of God, Deut. xxxii. 23, 24. Ezek. v. 16. Psal. xci. 5, 6. and xviii. 13, 14. all which had attended Job, and were his case; being reduced to extreme poverty, had malignant and pestilential ulcers upon him, and his sheep destroyed by thunder and lightning; and which were like arrows, that came upon him suddenly, secretly, and at unawares, and very swiftly; these arrows flew thick and fast about him, and stuck in him, and were sharp and painful, and wounded and slew him; for he was now under slaying circumstances of Providence; but rather these mean, together with his afflictions, the inward distresses, grief, and anguish of his mind arising from them, being attended with a keen sense of the divine displeasure, which was the case of David, and is expressed in much the same language, Psal. xxxviii. 1, 2. Job here considers his afflictions as coming from God, as arrows shot from his bow; and as coming from him, not as a father, in a way of paternal chastisement and love, dealing with him as a child of his, but account-

* ימים marium, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis, Schultens.

[a] יכבד copiosior & gravior est, Michaelis; so Schultens.
[b] על־כן דברי לעו propterea verba mea æstuantia sunt, Schultens.

ing him as an enemy, and setting him up as a mark or butt to shoot at, see ch. vii. 20. and xvi. 12, 13, 14. yea, not only as the arrows of a strong and mighty man, expert in archery, who shoots his arrows with great strength and skill, so that they miss not, and return not in vain, see Psal. cxx. 4. and cxxvii. 4. Jer. l. 9. but as being the arrows of the Almighty, which come with force irresistible, with the stretching and lighting down of his arm, and with the indignation of his anger intolerable: *the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit;* alluding to the custom of some people, that used to dip their arrows in poison, or besmear them with it: so the Persians, as Jarchi observes, and Heliodorus[c] reports of the Ethiopians, that they dipped their arrows in the poison of dragons, and which made them inflammatory, and raised such an heat, and such burning pains, as were intolerable; and now, as such poison presently infected the blood, and penetrated into and seized the animal spirits, and inflamed and soon exhausted them; so the heat of divine wrath, and a sense of it, which attended the arrows of God, his afflictions on Job, so affected him, as not only to take away his breath, that he could not speak, as in the preceding verse, or rather, as to cause those warm and hot expressions to break out from him, but even to eat up his vital spirits, and leave him spiritless and lifeless; which was Heman's case, and similar to Job's, Psal. lxxxviii. 3, 4, 5. *the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me;* the Lord is sometimes compared to a man of war in arms, stirring up his wrath and jealousy, Exod. xv. 3. Isa. xlii. 13. and in this light he was viewed by Job, and so he apprehended him, as coming forth against him, and which was terrible; and his terrors were like an army of soldiers set in battle-array, in rank and file, ready to discharge, or discharging their artillery upon him; and which sometimes design the inward terrors of mind, of a guilty conscience, the terrors of God's judgment here, or of a future judgment hereafter, of death and hell, and eternal damnation, through the menaces and curses of the law of God transgressed and broken; but here afflictive providences, or terrible things in righteousness, which surrounded him, attacked him in great numbers, and in a hostile military way, with great order and regularity, and which were frightful to behold; perhaps regard may be also had to those scaring dreams and terrifying visions he sometimes had, see ch. vii. 14, 15.

Ver. 5. *Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?*] No, they neither of them do, when the one is in a good pasture, and the other has a sufficiency of provender; but when they are in want of food, the one will bray, and the other will low, which are tones peculiar to those creatures, and express their mournful complaints; wherefore Job suggests, that should he make no moan and complaint in his sorrowful circumstances, he should be more stupid and senseless than those brute creatures: and he may have some respect to the different circumstances of himself and his friends; he himself, when he was in prosperity, made no complaints, as the wild ass brays not, and the ox lows not, when they have both food enough; but now, being in distress, he could not but utter his sorrow and trouble, as those creatures when in lack of food; and this may serve as an answer to his different conduct now and formerly, objected to him, ch. iv. 3, 4, 5. and so his friends; they lived in great tranquillity and prosperity, as Aben Ezra observes, and roared and grieved not, which doubtless they would, were they in the same circumstances he was; though it became them, as things were, to have uttered words of condolence to their friend in distress, instead of sharp reproofs and hard censures.

Ver. 6. *Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt?* &c.] As any sort of pulse, peas, beans, lentiles, &c. which have no savoury and agreeable taste unless salted, and so many other things; and are disagreeable to men, and disrelished by them, and more especially things bitter and unpleasant; and therefore Job intimates, it need not seem strange that the wormwood and water of gall, or the bread of adversity and water of affliction, he was fed with, should be so distasteful to him, and he should shew such a nausea of it, and an aversion to it, and complain thereof as he did: though some apply this to the words and speeches of Eliphaz, and his friends he personated, which with Job were insipid and foolish talk, and very unsuitable and disagreeable to him, yea, loathed and abhorred by him, not being seasoned with the salt of prudence, grace, and goodness, see Col. iv. 6. *or is there any taste in the white of an egg?* none at all. The same things are designed by this as the former. Mr. Broughton renders it, *the white of the yolk;* and Kimchi says[d], it signifies, in the language of the Rabbins, the red part of the yolk, the innermost part; but others, from the use of the word in the Arabic language, interpret it of the froth of milk[e], which is very tasteless and insipid: but the first of the words we render *white* always signifies *spittle;* and some of the Jewish writers[f] call it the spittle of soundness, or a sound man, which has no taste, in distinction from that of a sick man, which has; and the latter word comes from one which signifies to dream: and Jarchi observes, that some so understand it here; and the whole is by some rendered, *is there any taste or savour in the spittle of a dream or drowsiness*[g]? such as flows from a person asleep, or in a dream; and so may fitly express the vain and empty words, as the Septuagint translate the phrase, of Job's friends, in his esteem, which to him were no other than the words of some idle and dreaming person, or were like the dribble of a fool or madman, as David mimicked, 1 Sam. xxi. 13. and it is observed[h], that the word *spittle* is very emphatically used, since it is useless in judging of different tastes, and mixed with food, goes into nourishment, as the white of an egg.

Ver. 7. *The things that my soul refused to touch are as my sorrowful meat.*] Meaning either the above things, that which is unsavoury, and the white of an egg, or any other food, which in the time of his prosperity he would not touch with his fingers, much less

[c] Ethiopic. l. 9. c. 19.
[d] Sepher Shorash, rad. חלם; so Ben Melech.
[e] Hottinger. Smegma Oriental. l. 1. c. 7. p. 152. Hinckelman. Praefat. ad Alcoran. p. 29.
[f] R. Isaac in Kimchi ibid. Ben Melech & Ben Gersom in loc.; so some in Bar Tzemach; saliva sanitatis, Gussetius, p. 266.
[g] בריר חלמות in saliva somnolentiae, Schultens.
[h] Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 670.

eat, but now was glad of, and were his constant food in his present sorrowful circumstances; the sense given by some Jewish writers[i] is, that what he disdained to touch or wipe his hands with formerly, he was glad to make use of as a table-cloth to eat his bread of sorrow upon; but it rather intends the insipid and disagreeable words of his friends, their doctrines, instructions, and exhortations they gave him, but were refused and rejected by him; and which he before compares to unsavoury food, the white of an egg, or the spittle of a dreaming man, or the dribble of a fool; and which were as much loathed and nauseated by him, as his food that was *loathed* by him[k], either because of his want of appetite, or because of the badness of it, such as were corrupt and *rotten*, and even as the *excrements* of food[l]; those he refused to receive with as much indignation as he could such sort of food offered him; and therefore we find, that notwithstanding all that had been said to him, he continued in the same sentiment and disposition of mind, to desire death rather than life, as follows.

Ver. 8. *And that I might have my request*, &c.] Or that it *might come*[m]; that it might go up to heaven, enter there, and come into the ears of the Lord, be attended to, admitted, and received by him, see Psal. xviii. 6. or come to Job, be returned into his bosom, be answered and fulfilled; the same with the *desire* that *cometh*, which is, when the thing desired is enjoyed, Prov. xiii. 12. or that what he had requested would come, namely, death, which is sometimes represented as a person that looks in at the windows, and comes into the houses of men, and seizes on them, Jer. ix. 21. and this is what Job wishes for; this was his sole request; this was the thing, the one thing, that lay uppermost in his mind, and he was most importunately solicitous for: *and that God would grant me the thing that I long for*: death, as the following words explain it; this is not desirable by nature, but contrary to it; it is itself a penal evil, the sanction and curse of the law; it is an enemy, and a very formidable one, the king of terrors; and, though a very formidable one, is desired by good men from a principle of grace, and with right views, to be rid of sin, and to be with Christ; yet it often is done by persons in melancholy, sullen, and humorous fits, when they can't have what they would, as in Rachel, Elijah, and Jonah, Gen. xxx. 1. 1 Kings xix. 4. Jonah iv. 8, 9. and because of sore troubles and afflictions, which was the present case of Job; though it must be said that it was not, as is frequently the case with wicked men, through the horrors of a guilty conscience, which he was free of; and he had faith, and hope of comfort in another world, and in some degree he submitted to the will and pleasure of God; though pressed with too much eagerness, importunity, and passion: and it may be observed, that Job did not make request to men, to his servants, or friends about him, to dispatch him, as Abimelech and Saul did; nor did he lay hands on himself, or attempt to do it, as Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas: the wretched philosophy of the stoics was not known in Job's time, which not only makes self-murder lawful, but commends it as an heroic action; no, Job makes his request to the God of his life, who had given it to him, and had maintained it hitherto, and who only had a right to dispose of it; he asks it as a favour, he desires it as a gift, he had nothing else to ask, nothing was more or so desirable to him as death.

Ver. 9. *Even that it would please God to destroy me*, &c.] Not with an everlasting destruction of body and soul; for destruction from the Almighty was a terror to him, ch. xxxi. 23. but with the destruction of the body only; not with an annihilation of it, but with the dissolution of it, or of that union there was between his soul and body: the word[n] used signifies to bruise and beat to pieces; his meaning is, that his body, his house of clay in which he dwelt, might be crushed to pieces, and beat to powder, and crumbled into dust; and perhaps he may have regard to his original, the dust of the earth, and his return to it, according to the divine threatening, Gen. iii. 19. a phrase expressive of death; and so Mr. Broughton renders it, *to bring me to the dust*, to the dust of death, Psal. xxii. 15. *that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off*: he had let loose his hand in some degree already; he had given his substance and his body into the hand of Satan; his own hand had touched him, but he had only gone skin-deep, as it were; he had smote him in his estate, in his family, and in the outward parts of his body; but now he desires that he would stretch out his hand further, and lift it up, and give a heavier stroke, and pierce him more deeply; strike through his heart and liver, and *make an end* of him, as Mr. Broughton translates the word, and dispatch him at once; cut him off like the flower of the field by the scythe, or like a tree cut down to its root by the ax, or cut off the thread of his life, Isa. xxxviii. 12.

Ver. 10. *Then should I yet have comfort*, &c.] Either before death, and in the midst of all his pains and sorrows, being in view of it as near at hand, and sure and certain; could he but be assured of its near approach, he could exult in his afflictions; it would be an alleviation of his trouble, that he should be soon out of it; and he would sit and sing upon the brink of eternity, and say, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? his sufferings being just at an end, and being comfortably persuaded of a happy future state, and a glorious resurrection, see ch. xix. 25, 26, 27. or after death, when destroyed and cut off by it; and he hereby signifies as if he expected no comfort on this side death and the grave; that is, no temporal comfort, his comforts were gone, his substance, his children, and health, and he had no hope of the restoration of them, Eliphaz had suggested; but he believed, that though he now had his evil things, as Lazarus since, yet after death should be comforted with the presence of God, in which is fulness of joy; with the discoveries of his love, as a broad river to swim in; with a glory that should be on him, and revealed in him, with which the sufferings of this present time are not to be compared; and with the company

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[i] Jarchi & R. Mesallem in loc.
[k] כדוי לחמי ut fastidia panis mei, Cocceius.
[l] Velut excrementum panis, Neuman. apud Michael.

[m] תבוא ut veniat, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt, Michaelis; utinam veniret, Schultens.
[n] וידכאני me conterat, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Schmidt; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Michaelis, Schultens.

of angels, and glorified saints, as well as be freed from all bodily disorders and pains, and death itself, from all sin and sorrow, from Satan's temptations, divine desertions, doubts, and fears: *yea, I would harden myself in sorrow*; meaning either upon the first news of death's being near at hand, he would harden himself against all pains and pangs of death; when those should beset him around, and he should find trouble and sorrow through them, he would not regard them, but most cheerfully and patiently bear them, and most courageously go through them, not at all intimidated by them, or by death, and the most terrible agonies of it: or *though I should be hot, burn*, or *be burnt in sorrow* or *pain*[x], as some render it; or *parched with pain*, as Mr. Broughton; though I should be still more and more inflamed with these burning ulcers upon me, or be dried up with a burning fever, or my body cast into a fire, and be scorched and burnt in the flames of it, I should not value it; I could bear the most excruciating pains, and sharpest torments, could I but be assured I should die. Some observe, that the word signifies to *leap*[y]; and so the Septuagint render it; and then the sense is, that he should leap for joy, as men do when they are elevated at good news, or possess what is exceeding grateful to them, was it certain to him he should die quickly; and so the Targum interprets it of exultation. The word in the Arabic language, as a good judge[z] of it observes, is used of the prancing and pawing of a horse, which makes the ground to shake; he strikes with his foot, and which as done in the midst of a battle, mocking at fear, at the rattling quiver, and glittering spear and shield, is most beautifully described in Job xxxix. 21—25. in like manner, Job suggests, he should rejoice in the view of death, and mock at the fear of it: or this may respect the happiness he should enjoy after death; for in the Syriac and Arabic versions the words are rendered, *and I shall be perfected in virtue*; and the word used has the signification of solidity, confirmation, stability, and perfection; and to this sense it is rendered by some[r], though to different purposes; and after this suffering state is over, the saints will be established, settled and perfected in all virtue, in knowledge, holiness, and happiness: therefore *let him not spare*; laying on his blows thicker and heavier, till he has beaten me to pieces, and utterly destroyed me, a petition the reverse of David's, Psal. xxxix. 13. his desire is to have it done quickly and thoroughly, neither to spare him any longer, nor abate in measure, but strike him immediately, and that effectually, so as to dispatch him at once: *for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One*; that is, of God, as some[s] supply it, whose name is holy, who is holy in his nature, and in all his works, and is eminently glorious in the perfection of his holiness; for though there are holy men and holy angels, there are none holy as the Lord: his *words* are the doctrines delivered out by him concerning Christ the promised seed, and salvation by him, which were spoken of by the mouth of all the prophets from the beginning of the world, of which Job had knowledge, ch. xix. 25. see Gen. iii. 15. Luke i. 70, 71. and the duties of religion enjoined men in those early times; which Sephorno refers to the laws and commandments given to the sons of Noah; of which see the note on Gen. ix. 4. Here every thing is included, both with respect to doctrine and practice, then revealed unto the sons of men, all which Job had a special regard unto: he embraced, professed, and practised them; he did not hide them from himself, or shut his eyes to the evidence of them, and smother within him the light he had; nor did he conceal them from others, but communicated the knowledge of them among his neighbours, as far as he could reach; he was not ashamed to profess the true religion of God; he held fast, and did not deny the faith in the midst of a dark and Heathenish country, and he acted up to his profession and principles in his life and conversation: now having a testimony of a good conscience within him, that he, through the grace of God, had acted a sincere and upright part in the affair of religion, and having knowledge of a living Redeemer, and faith in him, and in his justifying righteousness, he was not afraid of death, come when it would, and in whatsoever shape: and whereas his friends had suggested that he was a hypocrite and a wicked man, his conscience bore witness to the contrary; and to let them know they were mistaken in him, he signifies, he was not afraid to die, yea, he desired it; he cared not how soon he left the world, and appeared before God, the Judge of all, since the truth of grace was in him, and the righteousness of Christ upon him, and he had not, through the course of his profession of religion, departed wickedly from his God, his truths and ordinances. Some[u] read this in connexion with the first clause, putting the rest in a parenthesis: *this is yet my comfort (though* or *when I am burned* or *parched with pain, and he spares not), that I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.*

Ver. 11. *What is my strength, that I should hope?* &c.] For a perfect restoration of health, suggested by Eliphaz; since it was so sadly weakened by the present affliction, which made death more desirable than life lengthened out in so much weakness, pain, and sorrow: or *that I should bear*[w], such a weight and heavy load that lay upon him, and crushed him, and to which his strength was not equal; or *continue and endure*[x]; *what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?* what end can be answered by living, or desiring a long life? His children were gone, and none left to take care of and provide for; his substance was taken away from him, so that he had not to support himself, nor to be useful to others, to the poor; he had lost all power, authority, and influence, among men, and could be no more serviceable by his counsel and advice, and by the administration of justice and equity as a civil magistrate; and as to religious matters, he was reckoned an hypocrite and a wicked man by his friends, and had lost his character and interest as a good man; and so

[x] ואסלדה calefaciam, Pagninus, Bolducius; flagrem, Vatablus; crucior, Junius & Tremellius; urar, Drusius, Mercerus; so Gersom, Kimchi, Peritsol, & Ben Melech.
[y] ἡλλόμην, Sept. saltarem præ gaudio; so some in Munster.
[z] Et pede terram quatiam cum exultatione, Schultens.

[r] Consolidescam, Montanus; corroborer, Beza; so Aben Ezra.
[s] Vatablus, Tigurine version, Michaelis.
[u] So Vatablus, Mercerus, Codurcus, Cocceius.
[w] כי איחל ὅτι ὑπομένω, Sept. ut sustineam, V. L.
[x] Ut durem, Junius & Tremellius.

for him to live could answer no valuable end, and, therefore, he desires to die; for what is here, and in the two following verses, said, contain reasons of his above request..

Ver. 12. Is *my strength the strength of stones?* &c.] Is it like such especially which are foundation and corner stones that support a building? or like a stone pillar, that will bear a prodigious weight? no, it is not: *or is my flesh of brass?* is it made of brass? or is it like to brass for hardness, or for sustaining any weight laid on it? it is not; and, therefore, it can't bear up under the ponderous load of afflictions on it, but must sink and fail; it is but flesh and blood, and that flesh like grass, weak and feeble; and, therefore, death is better than life laden with such an insupportable burden.

Ver. 13. *Is my help in me?* &c.] Or *my defence*[f], as some; is it not in my power to defend myself against the calumnies and reproaches cast upon me? it is; and, though I have no help in myself to bear my burdens, or extricate myself out of my difficulties, yet I have the testimony of a good conscience within me, that supports me; and I have the strength and force of reason and argument on my side, to defend me against all objectors: *and is wisdom driven from me?* either sound doctrine, the law[z], or, rather, the Gospel, the wisdom of God in a mystery, revealed in the words of the Holy One before mentioned; or wisdom in the hidden part, the fear of God, which is wisdom, true grace in the heart, which, when once implanted, can never be driven out; or natural reason and understanding, of which he was not bereaved; for, though his body was thus sorely afflicted, he retained his reasoning and intellectual faculties. The words, in connexion with the former, may be read, *what, if help is not with me, is wisdom also driven quite from me*[a]? does it follow, because I am not able to help myself out of this afflicted and distressed condition in which I am, that I am deprived of my reason? or be it that I am such a weak impotent creature, and even distracted, as you take me to be, should I not then rather be pitied than insulted? so some[b] connect the words following.

Ver. 14. *To him that is afflicted pity* should be shewed *from his friend*, &c.] An *afflicted* man is an object of pity, one that is afflicted of God: either inwardly with a wounded spirit, with a sense of God's displeasure, with divine desertions, with the arrows of the Almighty sticking in him, the poison thereof drinking up his spirits; or outwardly with diseases of body, with want of the necessaries of life, with loss of near relations, as well as substance, which was Job's case; or afflicted by Satan, shot at, sifted and buffeted by him, distressed by his temptations, suggestions, and solicitations; or afflicted by men, reproached and persecuted for righteousness-sake: in all such cases and circumstances *pity* should be shewed; which is an inward affection of the mind, a sympathy of spirit, a sensible feeling of the afflictions of others, and which is expressed by gestures, motions, and actions, as by visiting them in their affliction, speaking comfortably to them, and relieving their necessities according to ability, and as the case requires: and this may be expected from a *friend*, and what the law of friendship requires, whether it be in a natural and civil sense, or in a religious and spiritual one; the union between friends being so near and close, that they are, as it were, one soul, as David and Jonathan were; and as the people of God, members of the same body are, so that if one suffers, all the rest do, or should suffer and sympathize with it: and though this duty is not always performed, at least as it should be, by natural and spiritual friends, yet this grace is always shewn by God, our best of friends, who pities his children, and by Christ, who is a friend that loves at all times, a brother born for adversity, and that sticks closer than any brother, and cannot but be touched with the feeling of the infirmities of his friends. The words may be rendered, *to him that is melted*[c]; afflictions are like a furnace or fining-pot for the melting of metals, and are called the furnace of afflictions: and saints are the metal, which are put into it; and afflictions also are the fire, or fiery trials, which heat and melt, and by which means the dross of sin and corruption is removed, and the graces of the spirit are tried and made the brighter; though here it rather signifies the melting of the heart like wax or water through the affliction, and denotes the anguish and distress, the trembling and fears, a person is in through it, being overwhelmed and borne down by it, which was Job's case: or *he that melts pity*, or *whose pity melts*, or *melts in pity to his friend, he forsakes*[d], &c. that is, he that fails in pity, is destitute of compassion, and shuts up the bowels of it to his friend in distress, has not the fear of God before his eyes; and this sense makes Job himself to be the friend in affliction, and Eliphaz, and those with him, the persons that are deficient in their mercy, pity, and compassion. Some render the words[e], *should reproach* be cast *on him that is afflicted, as that he forsakes the fear of the Almighty?* the word for *pity* is so used in Prov. xiv. 34. and the reproach on Job was, that he had cast off the fear of God, ch. iv. 6. and xv. 4. This grieved him most of all, and added to his affliction, and of which he complains as very cruel usage; and very cutting it was that he should be reckoned a man destitute of the fear of God, and that because he was afflicted by him; though rather the following words, *but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty*, are a charge upon his friend Eliphaz for not shewing pity to him in his affliction, which was tacitly forsaking the fear of God. Job here recriminates and retorts the charge of want of the fear of God on Eliphaz himself; for to shew mercy to an afflicted friend is a religious act, a part of pure and undefiled religion, a branch of the fear of God; and he that neglects it is so far wanting in it, and acts contrary to his profession of God, of fear of him, and love to him; see James i. 26. 1 John iii. 17. or *otherwise he forsakes*, &c.[f].

Ver. 15. *My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook*, &c.] Meaning his three friends, personated by

[f] בי עזרתי defensio mea penes me, Junius et Tremellius, Piscator.
[z] תושיה lex, Mercerus; so Peritsol.
[a] So Cocceius and Schultens.
[b] So De Dieu.
[c] למס liquefacto, Vatablus, Mercerus, Beza; so Ben Gersom.

[d] Cujus liquescit benignitas, Junius et Tremellius, Piscator; qui misericordia erga amicum contabescit, Schultens.
[e] Mercerus, Vatablus, so Ben Gersom. Some interpret it as a charge that he forsakes both mercy and the fear of the Lord; so R. Simeon Bar Tzemach, Sephorno, and Ben Melech.
[f] So Pagninus & Beza.

Eliphaz, who were of the same sentiments with him, and behaved towards Job as he did: these were his brethren, not by birth, by blood, nor by country, but by the profession of the same religion of the one true and living God, in opposition to the idolatrous people among whom they dwelt; and this their relation to him is an aggravation of their perfidy and treachery, unfaithfulness and deceit, by which is meant their baulking and disappointing him in his expectations; when they came to visit him as friends, he might reasonably expect they came to condole and sympathize with him, and comfort him; but, instead of this, they reproached him and grieved him, and were miserable comforters of him; and this he illustrates by the simile of a *brook*, which he enlarges upon in the following verses: these friends and brethren of his he compares to a *brook*, not that was fed by a spring which continues, but filled with falls of water and melting snows from the hills, with which it is swelled, and looks like a large river for a while, but when these fail it is soon gone; hereby representing his friends in his state of prosperity, who looked big, and promised long and lasting friendship, but proved, in time of adversity, unfaithful and deceitful; and so it denotes the fickleness and inconstancy of their friendship: *and as the stream of brooks they pass away*; or *pass by*[f], as a stream of water, fed by many brooks, or flows of water like unto many brooks, which run with great rapidity and force, and are quickly gone and seen no more; thus his friends, as such, passed by him, and were of no use to him any more than the priest and Levite were to the man that fell among thieves, Luke x. 30, 31, 32.

Ver. 16. *Which are blackish by reason of the ice*, &c.] When frozen over, they look of a blackish colour, and is what is called a black frost: and these either describe Job and his domestics, as some[g] think, whom Eliphaz and his two friends compared to the above streams of water, passed away from, or passed by and neglected, and shewed no friendship to; who were in black, in mournful and rueful circumstances, through the severe hand of God upon them. The word is rendered, *those which mourn*, ch. v. 11. or rather the friends of Job compared to foul and troubled waters frozen over, which cannot be so well discerned, or which were black through being frozen, and which describes the inward frame of their minds, the foulness of their spirits, the blackness of their hearts, though they outwardly appeared otherwise, as follows: *and wherein the snow is hid*; or *on whom the snow* falling, and lying on heaps, *hides*[h], or covers: so Job's friends, according to this account, were, though black within as a black frost, yet white without as snow; they appeared, in their looks and words at first as candid, kind, and generous, but proved the reverse.

Ver. 17. *What time they wax warm they vanish*, &c.] The ice and the snow, which, when the weather becomes warm, they melt away and disappear; and in like manner, he suggests, his friends ceased to be friends to him in a time of adversity; the sun of affliction having looked upon him, they deserted him, at least did not administer comfort to him: *when it is hot they are consumed out of their place*: when it is hot weather, and the sun has great strength, then the waters, which swelled through the floods and fall of rain and snow, and which, when frozen, looked black and big, as if they had great depth in them, were quickly dried up, and no more to be seen in the place where they were; which still expresses the short duration of friendship among men, which Job had a sorrowful experience of.

Ver. 18. *The paths of their way are turned aside*, &c.] That is, the waters, when melted by the heat of the sun, and the warmth of the weather, run, some one way, and some another, in little streams and windings, till they are quite lost, and the tracks of them are no more to be seen; denoting that all appearance of friendship was quite gone, and no traces of it to be found: *they go to nothing, and perish*: some of them are lost in little meanders and windings about, and others are exhaled by the heat of the sun, and go into *Tohu*, as the word is, into empty air; so vain and empty, and perishing, were all the comforts he hoped for from his friends; though some understand this of the paths of travellers in the deserts being covered in the sand, and not to be seen and found; of which see Pliny[i].

Ver. 19. *The troops of Tema looked*, &c.] A city in Arabia, so called from Tema a son of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 15. these troops or companies were travelling ones, either that travelled to Tema, or that went from thence to other places for merchandise, see Isa. xxi. 13, 14. these, as they passed along in their caravans, as the Turks their successors now do, looked at those places, where in the winter-time they observed large waters frozen over, and covered with snow, and expected to have been supplied from thence in the summer-season, for the extinguishing of their thirst: *the companies of Sheba waited for them*; another people in Arabia, which went in companies through the deserts, where being in great want of water for their refreshment, waited patiently till they came to those places, where they hoped to find water to relieve them, which they had before marked in the winter-time.

Ver. 20. *And they were confounded because they had hoped*, &c.] When they came to the places where they hoped to find water, finding none were ashamed of their vain hope, and reflected upon themselves for being so foolish as to raise their expectations upon such a groundless surmise: *they came thither, and were ashamed*; which is the same thing expressed in different words; and aptly enough describes Job's disappointment in not meeting with that relief and comfort he expected from his friends, to whom he makes application of all this in the following words.

Ver. 21. *For now ye are nothing*, &c.] Once they seemed to be something to him; he thought them men wise, good, and religious, kind, bountiful, and tender-hearted; but now he found them otherwise, they were nothing to him as friends or as comforters in his distress: the Cetib, or Scripture, is, as we read, and is followed by many; but the marginal reading is,

[f] יעברו praetereunt; Mercerus, Schmidt; transeunt, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[g] So Michaelis.
[h] עלימו יתעלם שלג super quibus accumulatur nix, Beza; tegit se, q. d. multa nive teguntur, Drusius; the frost is hidden by the snow, so Sephorno; or rather the black and frozen waters.
[i] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 29.

now ye are to it[a]; that is, ye are like to it, the brook whose waters he had been describing; so Jarchi interprets it; Mr. Broughton very agreeably takes in both, *so now ye are become like that, even nothing;* as that deceitful brook is no more, nor of any use to travellers fainting through thirst; so ye are like that, of no use and advantage to me in my affliction: *ye see my casting down:* from a state of prosperity to a state of adversity; from a pinnacle of honour, from being the greatest man in the east, a civil magistrate, and the head of a flourishing family, to the lowest degree of disgrace and dishonour; from wealth and riches to want and poverty; as well as saw the inward dejection of his mind, through the poisoned arrows of the Almighty within him: *and ye are afraid:* of the righteous judgments of God, taking these calamities to be such, and fearing the same or the like should fall on them, should they keep him company; or however should they patronize and defend him; and afraid also of being too near him, lest his breath, and the smell of him, should be infectious, and they should catch a distemper from him; or lest he should be expensive and troublesome to them.

Ver. 22. *Did I say, bring unto me,* &c.] Or, *give unto me*[b]; did I invite you to come to me, and bring in your hands presents for me, to support me under my necessitous circumstances? *or give a reward for me of your substance?* did I ever ask any thing of you? if I had, it would have been but your duty to have given freely to me in my deplorable circumstances; and it might have been expected you would have given without asking, seeing my necessities so great: or did I desire you to communicate out of the great wealth and abundant riches you are possessed of to others on my behalf, to plead my cause among men, and to get a favourable sentence upon me, that I might not be traduced as a wicked man by censorious tongues? had I ever been troublesome to you in any respect, you might have been provoked to use me ill; but since nothing of this kind has ever been requested of you, you might have forborne ill language and hard words; which are often given to beggars; for when a man is fallen to decay, and becomes troublesome by his importunity, twenty things are raked up by his friends against his character; as that he has been lazy and indolent, or lavish and extravagant, *&c.* to save their money, and excuse them from acts of charity; but this was not the case here.

Ver. 23. *Or, deliver me from the enemies' hand?* &c.] Or, *out of the hand of straitness*[c]; out of tribulation and difficulties with which he was pressed on every side: *or redeem me from the hand of the mighty:* fetch back his cattle out of the hands of the Sabeans and Chaldeans, either by force of arms, as Abraham brought back Lot, and all his goods, when taken and carried away by the four kings, or by giving a ransom-price for them. Job had asked no such favour of them; he had not troubled them with any such suits, and therefore they had no reason to use him in the manner they did, as he apprehended; it would be soon enough to flout and fling at him when he applied to them for any relief.

Ver. 24. *Teach me, and I will hold my tongue,* &c.] Job having made his defence, and which he thought a sufficient one to acquit him of the charge against him; yet to shew that he was not stubborn and inflexible, but was open to conviction, and ready to attend and hearken to what might be further said, desires to be taught and instructed in the way of his duty; suggesting that, upon being convinced of his mistakes, he should ingenuously acknowledge them: good men are desirous of being taught both of God and men; they are not above instruction, or think themselves wiser than their teachers; they are willing to receive knowledge, not only from their superiors, but from their equals, and even from those that are inferior to them, as Job from his friends, though they had been unkind to him, and bore very hard upon him; and he promises that whilst they were speaking he would be silent, and not noisy, and clamorous, nor interrupt nor contradict them; but would patiently and attentively listen to what they said, and seriously consider it, and weigh it well in his mind; and, should he be convinced thereby, would no longer continue his complaints unto God, nor murmur at his providences; and would cease reflecting on them his friends, and no more charge them with deceit, perfidy, and unkindness; and by his silence would acknowledge his guilt, and not pertinaciously stand in an evil matter, but lay his hand on his mouth; hold his tongue, as our English phrase is, a Græcism[z]; that is, be silent, as in Hebrew; and even take shame to himself, and in this way confess his iniquity, and do so no more: *and cause me to understand wherein I have erred;* not that he allowed that he was in an error; for all that he says, both before and after, shews that he thought himself free from any; only, that whereas there was a possibility that he might be in one, he should be glad to have it pointed out; for he would not willingly and obstinately continue therein: error is common to human nature; the best of men are liable to mistakes; and those are so frequent and numerous, that many of them escape notice; *who can understand his errors?* Psal. xix. 12. wherefore wise and good men will esteem it a favour to have their errors discovered to them, and their mistakes rectified; and it becomes men of capacity and ability to take some pains to do this, since he that converts one that has erred, whether in principle or practice, saves a soul from death, and covers a multitude of sins; James v. 19, 20. Job is desirous, that if he had imbibed or uttered any error in principle, any thing unbecoming the Divine Being, contrary to his perfections, or to the holy religion which he professed, or was guilty of any in practice, in his conduct and behaviour, especially under the present providence, that it might be clearly made out unto him, and he should at once frankly and freely own it, retract and relinquish it.

Ver. 25. *How forcible are right words!* &c.] That are according to right reason; such as may be called

[a] כי עתה הייתם לו certe nunc fuistis illi, Bolducius; so Michaelis; certe nunc estis similes illi, Pagninus, Vatablus, Mercerus.

[b] הבו לי date mihi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[c] מיד צר e manu tribulatoris, vel tribulationis, Vatablus.

[z] Κρατων της γλωσσης, Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 2. c. 2.

strong reasons, or bony arguments, as in Isa. xli. 21. there are strength and weight in such words, reasonings, and arguments; they bring evidence and conviction with them, and are very powerful to persuade the mind to an assent unto them, and have great influence to engage to a profession or practice of what they are used for; such are more especially the words of God, the Scriptures of truth, the doctrines of the Gospel; these are right words, see Prov. viii. 6, 8, 9. they are not contrary to right reason, although above it; and are agreeably to sanctified reason, and received by it; they are according to the perfections of God, even his righteousness and holiness, and according to the law of God, and in no wise repugnant to it, which is the rule of righteousness; and they are doctrines according to godliness, and are far from encouraging licentiousness; and they are all strictly true, and must be right: and there is a force and strength in those words; they come with weight, especially when they come in demonstration of the spirit and power of God; they are mighty, through God, for the pulling down the strong holds of sin, Satan, and self, and for the bringing of men to the obedience of Christ; to the quickening dead sinners, enlightening dark minds, softening hard hearts; renewing, changing, and transforming men into quite another temper and disposition of mind they formerly had; for the comforting and relieving souls in distress, and saints under affliction; and have so very wonderful an influence on the lives and conversations of those to whom they come, not in word only, but in power and in the Holy Ghost, as to teach them to deny all sin and ungodliness, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly: or, *how forcible are the words of an upright man*[a]! that is, sincere, impartial, and faithful; which Job suggests his friends were not: some think Job has respect to his own words, and render the clause, *what hardness*, or *harshness*, have *right words*[b]! such as he believed his own were, and in which there were nothing hard and harsh, sharp and severe, or which might give just offence; such as his cursing the day in which he was born, or charging his friends with treachery and deceit: but rather he tacitly reflects upon the words and arguments of his friends; intimating, that though there is force and strength in right words, theirs were neither right nor forcible, but partial and unjust, and weak and impotent; which had no strength of reasoning in them, nor carried any conviction with them, as follows: *but what doth your arguing reprove?* their arguments they had used with him had no strength in them; they were of no avail; they did not reprove or convince of any evil he had been guilty of, or any mistake he had made; they were weak, impertinent, and useless, and fell with no weight upon him, nor wrought any conviction in him.

Ver. 26. *Do ye imagine to reprove words*, &c.] Or with words; with bare words, without any force of reasoning and argument in them? put a parcel of words together without any sense or meaning, or however without any cogency in them, and think to run me down with them? or is your scheme and device only, and which you pursue, to catch at and lay hold on some words of mine uttered in my distress, and make me an offender for a word, or for a few words, supposing they have been rashly and passionately spoken? have ye no facts to charge me with, before or since these calamities befell me? is the charge of hypocrisy and want of the fear of God to be supported by producing some hasty expressions, without pointing at one single action in my life and conversation? *and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind;* that is, do ye imagine to reprove them? or, are your thoughts wholly and solely intent on them? are these only the strong reasons you have to produce to fix the sin of hypocrisy upon me? for by him that is *desperate* he means himself; not that he despaired of his everlasting salvation; he was far from despair; he was a strong believer, and determined that, though he was slain, he would trust in the Lord; he was well assured he should be justified, both here and hereafter; and full well knew that his Redeemer lived, and that though he died, he should rise again and be happy in the vision of God for ever: but he despaired of a restoration to outward happiness, which Eliphaz had suggested, should he behave well; but, alas! his condition was forlorn and miserable, and there was no hope with him of being better; his children were dead, his substance in the hands of robbers, his health so extremely bad that he had no expectation of a recovery to his former state; and therefore it was very unkind and ungenerous to lay hold upon and aggravate the speeches of such an one, and improve them against him; and especially as they were only *for refreshment*[c], as some choose to render the words, see ch. xxxii. 20. they were uttered to give vent to his sorrow and grief, and not with any ill design against God or men; or the sense of the whole is, that they imagined that their words were right and fit to reprove with, and that there were force and strength in them, and had a tendency to work conviction and bring to confession; but as for the words of Job, they treated them *as wind;* as idle, vain, and empty, and useless and fruitless as the wind.

Ver. 27. *Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless*, &c.] Meaning himself; who was like a fatherless child, stripped of all his mercies, of his children, his substance, and his health; and was in a most miserable, helpless, and forlorn condition; and, moreover, deprived of the gracious presence and visible protection of his heavenly Father, being given up for a while into the hands of Satan; and now it was unkind and barbarous to overwhelm such a man, who was overwhelmed with overmuch sorrow already: or, *ye cause to fall upon the fatherless;* either their wrath and anger, as the Targum and many others[d], instead of doing him justice; or a wall, or any such thing, to crush him, as Aben Ezra; or a lot, as Simeon bar Tzemach; see Joel iii. 3. or rather a net, or a snare to entrap him in, seeking to entangle him in talk, so Mr. Broughton, which agrees with what follows: *and ye dig* a pit *for*

[a] So Aquila apud Drusium.
[b] מה נמרצו quid duritiei habent verba rectitudinis, Schmidt; so Luther.

[c] לרוח ad respirium, Schultens.
[d] אף iram, Vatablus, Mercerus, Coccejus; so Jarchi and Sephorno.

your friend; contrive mischief against him; sought to bring him to ruin; and which is aggravated by his having been their old friend, with whom they lived in strict friendship, and had professed much unto, and still pretended to have respect for; the allusion is to digging of pits for the catching of wild beasts: some render it, *ye feast upon your friend* [e]; so the word is used in 2 Kings vi. 23. Job xli. 6. this sense is taken notice of by Aben Ezra and Bar Tzemach; and then the meaning is, you rejoice at the misery of your friend; you mock him and that, and insult him in his distress, with which the Septuagint version agrees; which was cruel usage.

Ver. 28. *Now therefore be content,* &c.] Or, *may it now please you* [f]; Job addresses them in a respectful manner, and entreats them they would be so kind as to look favourably on him, and entertain better thoughts of him; and give a fresh and friendly hearing of his case, when he doubted not he should be acquitted by them of the charge of iniquity, and that his cause would appear to be a righteous one: *look upon me;* upon my countenance; and see if you can find any traces of fear and falsehood, of dishonesty and hypocrisy, of shame and blushing; and observe if there is not all the appearance of an honest mind, of a good conscience within, that has nothing to fear from the strictest examination; or look upon my body, covered all over with boils and ulcers, and see if there is not occasion for those expressions of grief, and those heavy complaints that I have made; or rather, look upon me with an eye of pity and compassion, with affection, favour, and benevolence, and not bear so hard upon me: *for it is evident unto you if I lie;* or, it is *before your faces* [g]; should I attempt to deceive you by telling you a parcel of lies, you would soon discern the falsehood in my countenance; you would easily find it out in my words, which would issue in my shame and confusion; I could not expect to go undetected by men of such sagacity and penetration; but I am not afraid of the most diligent scrutiny that can be made into my words and actions.

Ver. 29. *Return, I pray you,* &c.] From the ill opinion you have of me, and from your hard censures, and entertain other sentiments concerning me: or it may be, upon these words of Job his friends might be rising up as usual to take their leave of him, and break off conversation with him; and therefore he entreats they would return to their seats, and resume the debate, and give a friendly hearing of his case: *let it not be iniquity;* either let it not be reckoned an iniquity to return and go on hearing his case; or he entreats that they would take care not to sin in their anger and resentment against him, nor go on to charge him with iniquity: or it may be rendered, *there is no iniquity* [h]; that is, it should be found that there was no such iniquity in him as he was charged with; not that he was free from all sin, which no man is, but from that which his friends judged he was guilty of, hypocrisy; *yea, return again;* he most earnestly importunes them to return and patiently hear him out: *my righteousness* is *in it;* in the whole of this affair before them, and which was the matter of controversy between them; meaning, not his justifying righteousness before God, but the righteousness of his cause before men; he doubted not but, when things were thoroughly searched into, that his righteousness would be as clear as the light, and his judgment as the noon-day; that he should appear to be a righteous man, and his cause a just one; and should stand acquitted and free from all charges and imputations.

Ver. 30. *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* &c.] Meaning in his words; either those which he uttered when he cursed the day on which he was born, or in charging his friends with unkindness and falsehood; otherwise the tongue is a world of iniquity, and the best of men are apt to offend both God and men in word: *cannot my taste discern perverse things?* which is to be understood not of his natural taste, which very probably through his disease might be greatly vitiated, and incapable of relishing his food as in time of health, and of distinguishing good from bad; but of his intellectual taste, or of his sense and reason, his rational and spiritual taste; he had his senses exercised to discern good and evil; he could distinguish between right and wrong that was said or done, either by himself or others; he had the use of his rational powers and faculties, and therefore not to be treated as a mad or distracted man, but as one capable of carrying on a conversation, of opening his true case, and defending himself; see ch. xii. 11.

CHAP. VII.

IN this chapter Job goes on to defend himself in an address to God; as that he had reason to complain of his extraordinary afflictions, and wish for death; by observing the common case of mankind, which he illustrates by that of an hireling, ver. 1. and justifies his eager desire of death by the servant and hireling; the one earnestly desiring the shadow, and the other the reward of his work, ver. 2. by representing his present state as exceeding deplorable, even worse than that of the servant and hireling, since they had rest at night, when he had none, and were free from pain, whereas he was not, ver. 3—5. by taking notice of the swiftness and shortness of his days, in which he had no hope of enjoying any good, ver. 6, 7. and so thought his case hard; and the rather, since after death he could enjoy no temporal good: and therefore to be deprived of it whilst living gave him just reason of complaint, ver. 8—11. and then he expostulates with God for setting such a strict watch upon him, giving him no ease night nor day, but terrifying him

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[e] תכרו epulamini, Piscator; so Beza, Gussetius.
[f] ועתה הואילו sed nunc placeat vobis, Schmidt.
[g] על פניכם coram facie vestra, Bolducius, Schultens; Ben Melech interprets it, *by your life if I lie*, as being an oath.
[h] אל תהי עולה non erit iniquitas, Beza, Mercerus; nulla, Schultens.

with dreams and visions, which made life disagreeable to him, and death more eligible than that, ver. 12—16. and represents man as unworthy of the divine regard, and below his notice to bestow favours on him, or to chastise him for doing amiss, ver. 17, 18. and admitting that he himself had sinned, yet he should forgive his iniquity, and not bear so hard upon him, and follow him with one affliction after another without intermission, and make him the butt of his arrows; but should spare him and let him alone, or however take him out of the world, ver. 19—21.

Ver. 1. Is there *not an appointed time to man upon earth?*] There is a set time for his coming into the world, for his continuance in it, and for his going out of it; this is to man *on earth*, with respect to his being and abode here, not in the other world or future state: not in heaven; there is no certain limited time for man there, but an eternity; the life he will enter into is everlasting; the habitation, mansion, and house he will dwell in, are eternal; saints will be for ever with Christ, in whose presence are pleasures for evermore: nor in hell; the punishment there will be eternal, the fire will be unquenchable and everlasting, the smoke of the torments of the damned will ascend for ever and ever; but men's days and time on earth are but as a shadow, and soon gone; they are of the earth, earthly, and return unto it at a fixed appointed time, the bounds of which cannot be passed over: this is true of mankind in general, and of Job in particular; see ch. xiv. 1, 5, 14. Eccl. iii. 1, 2. the word *Enosh*[i], here used, signifies, as is commonly observed, a frail, feeble, mortal man; Mr. Broughton renders it *sorrowful man*; as every man more or less is; even a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs, is attended with them, has an experience of them: this is the common lot of mankind; and if any thing more than ordinary is inflicted upon them, they are not able to bear it; and these sorrows death at the appointed time puts an end to, which makes it desirable: now, seeing there is a set time for every man's life on earth, and there was for Job's, of which he was well assured; and, by all appearance of things, and by the symptoms upon him, this time was near at hand; therefore it should not be thought a criminal thing in him, considering his extraordinary afflictions, and which were intolerable, that he should so earnestly wish the time was come; though in his more serious thoughts he determined to wait for it: some render the words, *is there not a warfare for men on earth*[k]? the word being so rendered elsewhere, particularly in Isa. xl. 2. every man's state on earth is a state of warfare; this is frequently said by the stoic philosophers[l]; even so is that of natural and unregenerate men, who are often engaged in war with one another, which arise from the lusts which war in their members; and especially with the people of God, the seed of the woman, between whom and the seed of the serpent there has been an enmity from the beginning; and with themselves, with the troubles of life, diseases of body, and various afflictions they have to conflict and grapple with: and more especially the life of good men here is a state of warfare, not only of the ministers of the word, or persons in public office, but of private believers; who are good soldiers of Christ, enter volunteers into his service, fight under his banners, and quit themselves like men; these have many enemies to combat with; some within, the corruptions of their hearts, which war against the spirit and law of their minds, which form a company of two armies in them, militating against each other; and others without, as Satan and his principalities and powers, the men of the world, false teachers, and the like: and these are properly accoutred for such service, having the whole armour of God provided for them; and have great encouragement to behave manfully, since they may be sure of victory, and of having the crown of righteousness, when they have fought the good fight of faith; even though they are but frail, feeble, mortal, sinful men, but flesh and blood, and so not of themselves a match for their enemies; but they are more than so through the Lord being on their side, Christ being the Captain of their salvation, and the Spirit of God being in them greater than he that is in the world; and besides, it is only on earth this warfare is, and will soon be accomplished, the last enemy being death that shall be destroyed: now this being the common case of man, to be annoyed with enemies, and always at war with them, if, besides this, uncommon afflictions befall him, as was Job's case, this must make life burdensome, and death, which is a deliverance from them, desirable; this is his argument: some choose to render the words, *is there not a servile condition for men on earth*[m]? the word being used of the ministry and service of the Levites, Numb. iv. 3, 4. all men by creation are or ought to be the servants of God; good men are so by the grace of God, and willingly and cheerfully serve him; and though the great work of salvation is wrought out by Christ for them, and the work of grace is wrought by the spirit of Christ in them, yet they have work to do in their day and generation in the world, in their families, and in the house of God; and which, though weak and feeble in themselves, they are capable of doing, through Christ, his spirit, power, and grace: and this is only on earth; in the grave there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge; when the night of death comes, no man can work; his service, especially his toilsome service, is at an end; and as it is natural for servants to wish for the night, when their labours end, Job thought it not unlawful in him to wish for death, which would put an end to his toils and labours, and when he should have rest from them: are not *his days also like the days of an hireling?* the time for which a servant is hired, whether it be for a day or for a year, or more, it is a set time; it is fixed, settled, and determined in the agreement, and so are the days of man's life on earth; and the days of an hireling are few at most, the time for which he is hired is but short; and such are the days of men in this world, they are but few indeed; see ch. x. 5, 20. and xiv. 1. and as the days of an hireling are days of toil, and la-

[i] לאנוש mortali, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; misero & ærumnoso homini, Michaelis.
[k] צבא militia, Montanus, Tigurine version, Schultens; so V. L. Targum.
[l] Vid. Gataker. Annotat. in M. Antonin. de seipso, p. 77, 78.
[m] Conditio servilis, Schmidt.

bour, and sorrow, so are the days of men evil as well as few; his few days are full of trouble, Gen. xlvii. 9. Job xiv. 1. all this and what follows is spoken to God, and not to his friends, as appears from ver. 7, 8, 14, 17—21.

Ver. 2. *As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow,* &c.] Either the shadow of some great rock, tree, or hedge, or any shady place to shelter him from the heat of the sun in the middle of the day, which in those eastern countries is hot and scorching; and very burdensome and fatiguing it is for servants and labourers to work in fields and vineyards, or in keeping herds and flocks in such countries, and at such a time of the day; to which the allusion is in Cant. i. 7. Isa. xxv. 4. and xxxii. 2. Matt. xx. 12. Wherefore they *gape* for, or *pant* after some shady place for refreshment, as the word [n] used signifies; or for the shadow of the evening, or the sun-setting, when the longest shadow is cast, Jer. vi. 4. and when the work of a servant is ended, and he retires to his house for refreshment and rest: and since now such a shadow in either sense is desirable, and not unlawful to wish for, Job suggests it ought not to be charged as a crime in him, that he should importunately desire to be in the shadow of death, or in the grave, where the weary are at rest; or to have the night come on him, when he should cease from all his toil and labour, sorrows and pains: *and as an hireling looketh for* the reward of *his work;* or *for his work* [o]; either for new work, what was set him being done, or rather for the finishing of it, that he might have rest from it; or for the reward, the hire due to him upon its being done; so Job intimates he desired death with the same view, that he might cease from his works, which should follow him, and when he should have the reward of the inheritance, not in a way of debt, but of grace: nor indeed is it sinful to look or have respect unto the recompense of reward, in order to engage to go through service more cheerfully, or to endure sufferings more patiently, see Heb. xi. 26. for though the hireling is an emblem of a self-righteous person, that works for life, and expects it as the reward of his work, and of false teachers and bad shepherds, that take the care of the flock for filthy lucre's sake, see Luke xv. 19. John x. 12. yet hiring is sometimes used, in a good sense, of good men, that are hired and allured by gracious promises and divine encouragements to labour in the Lord's vineyard, and may expect their reward; see Matt. xx. 1, 2, 8.

Ver. 3. *So am I made to possess months of vanity,* &c.] This is not a reddition or application of the above similies of the servant and hireling; for that is to be understood, and to be supplied at the end of the preceding verse; that as those looked for the shadow and payment of hire, so Job looked for and earnestly desired death, or to be removed out of the world; besides, the things here instanced in don't answer; for Job, instead of having the refreshing shadow, had months of vanity, and instead of rest from his labours had nothing but wearisome nights, and continual tossings to and fro; whereas the sleep of a labouring man is sweet to him; and having laboured hard all day, the night is a time of rest to him; but so it was not with Job; wherefore this *so* refers to the common state and condition of mankind, in which Job was, with an addition of extraordinary afflictions upon him: the time of his afflictions, though but short, seemed long, and therefore is expressed by months; and some months might have passed from the time his calamities began to the present; since it must be some time before his friends heard of them, and more still before they could meet together and agree upon their coming, and were actually come to him; as also some time was spent in silence, and now in conversation with him; the Jews [p] make them to be 12 months: and these months were *months of vanity,* or *empty* [q] ones; such as winter-months, empty of all joy, and peace, and comfort; times in which he had no pleasure, no ease of body or of mind; destitute of the good things of life, and of the presence of God and communion with him; and full of trouble, sorrow, and distress: and these were *given him for an inheritance* [r]; were his lot and portion, which he received as an inheritance from his parents, in consequence of original sin, the source of all the troubles and miseries of human life, in common with other men; and which were allotted him by his heavenly Father, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, as all the afflictions of the Lord's people are the inheritance bequeathed them by their Father, and the legacy of their Redeemer: *and wearisome nights are appointed to me;* one after another, in succession; in which he could have no sleep nor rest, through pain of body and distress of mind; and so became the more weary, through long lying down and tossings to and fro, through groans and tears, and much watching; and these were prepared for him in the purposes of God, and appointed to him in his counsels and decrees; see ch. xxiii. 14. or they *prepared* or *appointed* [s]; that is, *Elohim,* the three Divine Persons.

Ver. 4. *When I lie down, I say, when shall I arise,* &c.] Or, *then I say,* &c. [t]; that is, as soon as he laid himself down in his bed, and endeavoured to compose himself to sleep, in order to get rest and refreshment; then he said within himself, or with an articulate voice, to those about him, that sat up with him; oh that it was time to rise; when will it be morning, that I may rise from my bed, which is of no manner of service to me, but rather increases weariness? *and the night be gone?* and the day dawn and break; or *night* or *evening* be *measured,* as in the margin, or *measures itself* [u]; or that *he, i. e.* God, or *it,* my heart, *measures the evening* [w], or *night;* lengthens it out to its full time: to a discomposed person, that cannot sleep, the night seems long; such count every hour, tell every clock that strikes, and long to see peep of day; these are they *that watch for the morning,* Psal. cxxx. ver. 6. *and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the*

[n] ישאף anhelabit, Montanus, Bolducius; anhelat, Beza, Tigurine version, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.

[o] פעלו opus suum, Beza, Montanus, Bolducius, Schmidt, Schultens.

[p] Vid. Misn. Ediot, c. 2. sect. 10. & R. Simeon Bar Tzemach, in loc.

[q] ירחי שוא menses vacuos, V. L. so Tigurine version, Michaelis.

[r] הנחלתי accepi hereditate, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius; so Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.

[s] מנו לי constituerunt mihi, Pagninus, Bolducius; mihi paraverunt, Mercerus; so Schmidt, Cocceius, Schultens.

[t] ואמרתי tum dixi, Beza, Piscator, Mercerus.

[u] So Saadiah Gaon.

[w] ומדד ערב tum admensus est vesperam, Schmidt; extendit, Schultens; & cor, Mercerus; so Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, and Bar Tzemach.

day: or, *unto the twilight*: the morning twilight; though some understand it of the twilight or evening of the next day, see 1 Sam. xxx. 17. and interpret *the tossings to and fro* of the toils and labours of the day, and of the sorrows and miseries of it, lengthened out to the eve of the following day; but rather they are to be understood either of the tosses of his mind, his distressed and perplexed thoughts within him he was full of; or of the tosses of his body, his frequent turning himself upon his bed, from side to side, to ease him; and with these he was *filled*, or *satiated*[x]; he had enough and too much of them; he was glutted and sated with them, as a man is with over-much eating, as the word signifies.

Ver. 5. *My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust*, &c.] Not as it would be at death, and in the grave, as Schmidt interprets it, when it would be eaten with worms and reduced to dust; but as it then was, his ulcers breeding worms, or lice, as some[y]; these spread themselves over his body: some think it was the vermicular or pedicular disease that was upon him, and the scabs of them, which were all over him like one continued crust, were as a garment to him; or those sores of his, running with purulent matter, and he sitting and rolling himself in dust and ashes, and this moisture mingling therewith, and clotted together, formed clods of dust, which covered him all over; a dismal spectacle to look upon! a precious saint in a vile body! *my skin is broken*; with the boils and ulcers in all parts, and was parched and cleft with the heat and breaking of them: *and become loathsome*; to himself and others; exceeding nauseous, and extremely disagreeable both to sight and smell: or *liquified*[z]; moistened with corrupt matter flowing from the ulcers in all parts of his body; the word in Arabic signifies a large, broad, and open wound, as a learned man[a] has observed; and it is as if he should say, whoever observes all this, this long time of distress, night and day, and what a shocking figure he was, as here represented, could blame him for wishing for death in the most passionate manner?

Ver. 6. *My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle*, &c.] Which moves very swiftly, being thrown quick and fast to and fro; some versions render it *a racer*[b], one that runs a race on foot, or rides on horseback, agreeably to ch. ix. 25. where, and in the next verse to it, other similes are used, to set forth the swiftness and fleetiness of man's days; as they also are elsewhere represented, as swift as a tale told, a word expressed, or a thought conceived, Psal. xc. 9. and so here, by the Septuagint, are said to be *swifter than speech*, though wrongly translated: this is to be understood, not of his days of affliction, distress, and sorrow; for these in his apprehension moved but slowly, and he could have been glad that they had gone on faster; but either his days in common, or particularly his days of prosperity and pleasure, these were soon over with him; and which he sometimes wished for again, see ch. xxix. 1—5. *and are spent without hope*; not without hope of happiness in another world, but without hope of being restored to his outward felicity in this; which Eliphaz had given him some hint of, but he had no hope concerning it; see ch. v. 24, 25, 26. and vi. 11, 12. and xix. 10.

Ver. 7. *O remember that my life is wind*, &c.] Or, *breath*[c]; man's life is in his breath, and that breath is in his nostrils, and therefore not to be accounted of, or depended on; man appears by this to be a poor frail creature, whose life, with respect to himself, is very precarious and uncertain; it is but as a *vapour*, an air-bubble, full of wind, easily broken and dissipated, and soon vanishes away; it is like the *wind*, noisy and blusterous, full of stir and tumult, and, like that, swiftly passes and sweeps away, and returns not again: this is an address to God; and so some[d] supply it, *O God*, or *O Lord, remember*, &c. not that forgetfulness is in God, or that he needs to be reminded of any thing; but he may seem to forget the frailty of man when he lays his hand heavy on him; and may be said to be mindful of it when he mercifully takes it off: what Job here prays for, the Lord often does, as he did with respect to the Israelites, Psal. lxxviii. 39. *mine eye shall no more see good*; meaning not spiritual and eternal good, here and hereafter; he knew he should, after this life, see his living Redeemer even with the eyes of his body, when raised again; that he should see him as he is, not through a glass, darkly, but face to face, in all his glory; and that for himself, and not another, and even see and enjoy things he had never seen before: but his sense is, that he should see or enjoy no more temporal good; either in this world, being without hope of any, or in the grave, whither he was going and would shortly be; and therefore entreats that some mercy might be shewn him whilst he lived; to which sense the following words incline.

Ver. 8. *The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no* more, &c.] Or *the eye of sight*[e]; the seeing eye, the most acute and quick-sighted eye; so Mr. Broughton renders it, *the quick eye*[f]: this is to be understood as *after*[g] death, that then the sharpest eye should not see him, he would be out of the reach of it; which must be taken with a limitation; for men after death are seen by the eyes of the omniscient God, their souls, be they in heaven or in hell, and their bodies in the grave; and as for good men, such as Job, they are at once with him in his immediate presence, beholding and beheld by him; and they are seen by angels, whose care and charge their souls become immediately upon death, and are carried by them into heaven, where they are fellow-worshippers with them; and they are seen by glorified saints, to whose company they are joined; for if the rich man in hell could see Abraham, and Lazarus in his bosom, then much more do the saints see one another: but the meaning is, that when a man is dead, he is seen no more by men on earth, by his relations, friends,

[x] שבעתי satior, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schultens.
[y] So Sephorno and Bar Tzemach.
[z] ימאס liquefit, Junius & Tremellius; colliquefacta est, Piscator, Mercerus.
[a] Hinckelman. Præfat. ad Alcoran. p. 30.
[b] Δρομέως, cursore, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion in Drusius.

[c] רוח halitus, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[d] So Beza, Vatablus, Drusius, Michaelis.
[e] עין ראי Heb. oculus visûs, Drusius, Piscator; aspectûs, Mercerus; so Simeon Bar Tzemach.
[f] Oculum perspicacissimum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[g] Posthac, Tigurine version.

and acquaintance; the consideration of which is a cutting stroke at parting, see Acts xx. 25, 38. the state of the dead is an invisible state, and therefore called in the Greek tongue Hades, *unseen*, so the dead will remain, with respect to the inhabitants of this world, till the resurrection, and then they shall see and be seen again in the same bodies they now have; for this is no denial of the resurrection of the dead, as some Jewish writers charge Job with, and infer from this and some following passages: *thine eyes* are *upon me, and I* am *not;* am a dead man, a phrase expressive of death, and of being in the state of the dead, or however of being no more in this world, see Gen. v. 24. and xlii. 36. Jer. xxxi. 15. not that the dead are nonentities, or are reduced to nothing; this is not true of them, either with respect to soul or body; their souls are immaterial and immortal, and exist in a separate state after death, and their bodies, though reduced to dust, are not annihilated; they return to earth and dust, from whence they came; but still they are something, they are earth and dust, unless these can be thought to be nothing; and this dust is taken care of and preserved, and will be gathered together, and moulded, and framed, and fashioned into bodies again, which will endure for ever: nor is the meaning, that they are nowhere; the spirits of just men made perfect are in heaven, in paradise, in a state of life, immortality, and bliss; and the souls of the wicked are in their own place, in the prison of hell, reserved with devils, to the judgment of the great day; and the bodies of both are in the graves till the day of the resurrection; but they are not, and no more, in the land of the living, in their houses and families, in their shops and business, and places of trade and merchandise, or in the house of God serving him there, according to their different stations. And this Job ascribes to God, *thine eyes* are *upon me;* meaning not his eyes of love, favour, and kindness, which had respect unto him; and yet, notwithstanding this, as it did not secure him from afflictions, so neither would it from death itself; for *though* his *eyes* were *upon* him in such sense, yet he *would not be* [a], or should die; but rather his angry eyes, the frowns of his countenance, which were now upon him, and might be discerned in the dispensations of his providence towards him, by reason of which he *was not* as he was before; not fit for any thing, as Sephorno understands it; or should he frown upon him, one angry look would sink him into the state of the dead, and he should be no more, who *looks on the earth, and it trembles*, Psal. civ. 32. Mr. Broughton renders it as a petition, *let thine eyes be upon me, that I be no more;* that is, let me die, the same request he made in ch. vi. 8, 9. but it seems best to interpret it of the eyes of God's omnipresence and providence, which are on men in every state and place: and the sense be, either as granting, that though the eyes of men should not see him after death, yet the eyes of God would be upon him when he was not, or in the state of the dead; or else, that should he long defer doing him good, it would be too late, he should soon die, and then, though he should look after him, and seek for him, he should not be in the land of the living, according to ver. 21. or this may denote the suddenness of death, which comes to a man in a moment, as Bar Tzemach observes, in the twinkling of an eye; nay, as soon as the eye of God is upon a man, that is, as soon almost as a man appears in the world, and the eye of Divine Providence is upon him, he is out of it again, and is no more; see Eccl. iii. 2.

Ver. 9. As *the cloud* is *consumed and vanisheth away*, &c.] Which being dispersed by the wind, or broke up by the sun, is never seen, or returns more; for though the wise man speaks of clouds returning after the rain, this is not to be understood of the same clouds, but of succeeding ones, Eccl. xii. 2. so pardon of sin is expressed by the same metaphor, to shew that sin thereby is no more, no more to be seen or remembered, Isa. xliii. 25. and xliv. 22. the Targum renders it *as smoke*, by which the shortness and consumption of men's days are expressed, Psal. cii. 3. but by the simile of a cloud here is not so much designed the sudden disappearance of life as the irrevocableness of it when gone, as the reddition or application following shews: *so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more;* the grave is the house or long home that all must go to, it being the appointment of God that all should die, or be in the state of the dead; which is meant by the grave, since all are not interred in the earth; and this, as here, is frequently expressed, as if it was man's act being hither brought; and when it designs an interment in the earth, it is with great propriety called a going down; and however that be, yet the state of the dead is a state of humiliation, a coming down from all the grandeur, honour, and glory of the present state, which are all laid in the dust; and when this is man's case, he comes up no more from it, that is, of himself, by his own power; none but Christ, who is God over all, ever did this; or none naturally, or by the laws of nature, for nothing short of almighty power can effect this; it must be done in an extraordinary way, and is no less than a miraculous operation; nor will this be done until the general resurrection of the just and unjust, when all that are in their graves shall come forth, the one to the resurrection of life, and the other to the resurrection of damnation; excepting in some few instances, as the Shunamite's son, the man that touched the bones of the prophet Elisha, the daughter of Jairus, the widow of Naim's son, Lazarus, and those that rose at our Lord's resurrection; this is further explained in the following verse.

Ver. 10. *He shall return no more to his house*, &c.] In a literal sense, built or hired by him, or however in which he dwelt; and if a good man, he'll have no desire to return to that any more, having a better house, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; or in a figurative sense, either his body, the earthly house of his tabernacle, an house of clay, which has its foundation in the dust; to this he shall not return until the resurrection, when it will be rebuilt, and fitted up for the better reception and accommodation of him; or else his family, to whom he shall not come back again, to have any concern with them in domestic affairs, or in part of the business of life, as David said of his child when dead, *I shall go to him, but he shall*

[a] Etiam oculis tuis ad me respicientibus, me non fore amplius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

not return to me, 2 Sam. xii. 23. *neither shall his place know him any more;* the place of his office, or rather of his habitation; his dwelling-house, his farms and his fields, his estates and possessions, shall no more know, own, and acknowledge him as their master, proprietor, and possessor, these coming at his death into other hands, who now are regarded as such; or the inhabitants of the place, country, city, town, village, and house in which he lived, shall know him no more; no more being seen among them, he will soon be forgotten; out of sight, out of mind[b].

Ver. 11. *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth,* &c.] From speaking and complaining; seeing, besides the common lot of mankind, which is a state of warfare, sorrow, and trouble, and is as much as a man can well grapple with, extraordinary afflictions are laid upon me, which make life insupportable; and seeing I enjoy no good in this present life, and am shortly going where no temporal good is to be expected, and shall never return to this world any more to enjoy any; therefore I will not be silent, and forbear speaking my mind freely, and uttering my just complaint, for which I think I have sufficient reason: or *I also will not refrain my mouth*[c]; in turn, as a just retaliation, so Jarchi; since God will not refrain his hand from me, I will not refrain my mouth from speaking concerning him; since he shews no mercy to me, I'll utter my miserable complaints, and not keep them to myself; this was Job's infirmity when he should have held his peace, as Aaron, and been dumb and silent as David, and been still, and have known, owned, and acknowledged the sovereignty of God, and not vented himself in passion as he did: *I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;* or *in the straitness*[d] of it; he was surrounded on all sides with distress, the sorrows of death compassed him about, and the pains of hell got hold upon him; he was like one pent up in a narrow place, in a close confinement, that he could not get out of, and come forth from; and he felt not only exquisite pains of body from his boils and sores, but great anguish of soul; and therefore he determines to speak in and *of*[e] all this, to give vent to his grief and sorrow, his passion and resentment: *I will complain in the bitterness of my soul;* his afflictions were like the waters of Marah, bitter ones, very grievous and disagreeable to flesh and blood, and by which his life and soul were imbittered to him; and in and *of*[f] this he determines to complain, or to utter in a complaining way what he had been meditating on, as the word[g] signifies; so that this was not an hasty and precipitate action, but what upon deliberation he resolved to do; to pour out his complaint before God, and leave it with him, in a submissive way, would not have been amiss, but if he complained of God and his providence, it was wrong: *why should a living man complain?* not even a wicked man, of *the punishment of his sin,* and much less a good man of fatherly chastisements? We see what the will of man is, what a stubborn and obstinate thing it is, *I will, I will, I will,* even of a good man when left to himself, and not in the exercise of grace, and under the influence of it; the complaint follows, by way of expostulation.

Ver. 12. Am *I a sea, or a whale,* &c.] Like the restless sea, to which very wicked, profligate, and abandoned sinners are compared, that are continually casting up the mire and dirt of sin and wickedness; am I such an one? or like the raging sea, its proud waters and foaming waves, to which fierce and furious persecutors and tyrannical oppressors are compared; did I behave in such a manner to the poor and distressed in the time of prosperity? nay, was I not the reverse of all this, kind and gentle to them, took their part, and rescued them out of the hands of those that oppressed them? see ch. xxix. 12—17. or like its tossing waves, which attempt to pass the bounds that are set to them; am I such an one, that have transgressed the laws of God and men, which are set as boundaries to restrain the worst of men? and am I a whale, or like any great fish in the ocean, the dragon in the sea, the leviathan, the piercing and crooked serpent? an emblem of cruel princes, as the kings of Egypt and Assyria, or antichrist, Isa. xxvii. 1. see Psal. lxxiv. 13, 14. The Targum is, "as the Egyptians were condemned to be "drowned in the Red sea, am I condemned? or as "Pharaoh, who was suffocated in the midst of it for "his sin, since thou settest a watch over me?" or, as another Targum, "am I as the great sea, which is "moved to extreme parts, or the leviathan, which is "ready to be taken?" or else the sense is, have I the strength of the sea, which subsists, notwithstanding its waves are continually beating, and which carries such mighty vessels upon it, and would bear down all before it, if not restrained? or of a whale, the leviathan, whose flakes of flesh are joined together, and his heart as firm as a stone, and as hard as a piece of the nether millstone, and laughs at the spear, the sword, and the dart? no, I have not; I am a poor, weak, feeble creature, whose strength is quite exhausted, and not able to bear the weight of the chains and fetters of afflictions upon me; or rather the principal thing complained of, and which he illustrates by these metaphors, is, that he was bound with the cords of afflictions, and compassed with gall and travail, and hedged in hereby, that he could not get out, as the church says, Lam. iii. 5, 7. or could not get released from his sorrows by death, or otherwise; just as the sea is shut up with bars and doors, that its waves can come hitherto, and no further; and as the whale is confined to the ocean, or surrounded with vessels and armed men in them, when about to be taken; and thus it was with Job, and of this he complains: *that thou settest a watch over me?* which Jarchi and others understand of Satan; and though in his hands, he was not suffered to take away his life; but besides him may be meant all his afflictions, calamities, and distresses, in which he lay fettered and bound, in which he was shut up as in a prison, and by which he was watched over and guarded; and from which he could make no escape, nor get a release.

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[b] Linquenda tellus & domus, &c. Horat. Carmin. l. 2. Ode 14.

[c] גם אני etiam ego, Vatablus, Beza, Piscator, Bolducius, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens; vicissim, Noldius, p. 222.

[d] בצר in angustia, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt; in arcto, Cocceius; in angusto, Schultens.

[e] De angustia, Vatablus, Drusius, Mercerus, Piscator.

[f] במר de amaritudine, Drusius, Piscator, Mercerus.

[g] אשיחה meditabor & eloquar, Michaelis.

Ver. 13. *When I say, my bed shall comfort me,* &c.] When he thought within himself that he would lie down upon his bed and try if he could get a little sleep, which might comfort and refresh him, and which he promised himself he should obtain by this means, as he had formerly had an experience of: *my couch shall ease my complaint;* he concluded, that by lying down upon his couch, and falling asleep, it would give some ease of body and mind; that his body would, at least, for some time be free from pain, and his mind composed, and should cease from complaining for a while; which interval would be a relief to him, and of considerable service. Some render it, *my couch shall burn*[h]; be all on fire, and torture me instead of giving ease; and so may have respect to his burning ulcers.

Ver. 14. *Then thou scarest me with dreams,* &c.] Not with dreams and visions being told him, as were by Eliphaz, ch. iv. 13. but with dreams he himself dreamt; and which might arise from the force of his distemper, and the pain of his body, whereby his sleep was broken, his imagination disturbed, and his fancy roving, which led him to objects as seemed to him very terrible and dreadful; or from a melancholy disposition his afflictions had brought upon him; and hence in his dreams he had dismal apprehensions of things very distressing and terrifying; or from Satan, in whose hands he was, and who was permitted to distress and disturb him at such seasons; all which he ascribes to God, because he suffered it so to be: and now these dreams not only hindered sound sleep, and getting that ease and refreshment he hoped for from thence, but even they were frightful and scaring to him, so that instead of being the better for his bed and his couch, he was the worse; these dreams added to his afflictions, and in them he suffered much, as Pilate's wife is said to do, Matt. xxvii. 19. *and terrifiest me through visions:* spectres, apparitions, and such-like things, being presented to his fancy, whilst sleeping and dreaming, which filled him with terror, and sorely distressed him, so that he could receive no benefit hereby, but rather was more fatigued and weakened.

Ver. 15. *So that my soul chooseth strangling,* &c.] Not to strangle himself, as Ahithophel did, or to be strangled by others, this being a kind of death inflicted on capital offenders; but rather, as Mr. Broughton renders it, *to be choked to death* by any distemper and disease, as some are of a suffocating nature, as a catarrh, quinsy, &c. and kill in that way; and indeed death in whatsoever way is the stopping of a man's breath; and it was death that Job chose, let it be in what way it would, whether natural or violent; so weary was he of life through his sore and heavy afflictions: and *death rather than my life:* or, *than my bones*[i]; which are the more solid parts of the body, and the support of it, and are put for the whole and the life thereof; or than these bones of his, which were full of strong pain, and which had nothing but skin upon them, and that was broken and covered with worms, rottenness, and dust; the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *and my bones death:* that is, desired and chose death, being so full of pain, see Psal. xxxv. 10.

Ver. 16. *I loath* it, &c.] Or *them*[k], either his life, which was a weariness to him, or his bones, which were so painful and nauseous; or rather, *I am become loathsome,* to himself, to his servants, and to his friends, and even his breath was strange to his wife; or *being ulcerated, I pine and waste away*[l], and must in course be quickly gone: *I would not live always;* no man can or will; there is no man that lives but what shall see death, Psal. lxxxix. 48. Job knew this, nor did he expect or desire it; and this was not his meaning, but that he desired that he might not live long, or to the full term of man's life, yea, that he might die quickly; and indeed to a good man to die is gain; and to depart out of the world, and be with Christ, is far better than to continue in it. And had Job expressed himself without passion, and with submission to the divine will, what he says would not have been amiss: *let me alone,* or *cease from me*[m]; from afflicting him any more, having as great a weight upon him as he could bear, or greater than he could well stand up under; or from supporting him in life, he wishes that either God would withdraw his afflicting hand from him, or his preserving hand; either abate the affliction, or dismiss him from the world: *for my days are vanity;* a *breath*[n] or puff of wind; a *vapour,* as Mr. Broughton renders it, that soon vanishes away; days empty of all that is good, delightful, and pleasant, and full of evil, trouble, and sorrow, as well as fleeting, transitory, and soon gone, are as nothing, yea, less than nothing, and vanity.

Ver. 17. *What* is *man, that thou shouldest magnify him?* &c.] Man in his best estate, in his original state, was but of the earth, earthly; a mutable creature, and altogether vanity; so that it was wonderful God should magnify him as he did, raise him to such honour and dignity, as to set him over all the works of his hands, and bestow peculiar marks of his favour upon him in Eden's garden; but man in his low and fallen estate, being, as the word here used is generally observed to signify, a frail, feeble, weak, and mortal creature, yea, a sinful one; it is much more marvellous that God should magnify him, or make him great, that is, any of the human race, as he has some, so as *to set his heart upon them,* as Jarchi connects this with the following clause; to think of them and provide for them in his purposes and decrees, in his council and covenant, to choose any of them to grace here, and glory hereafter: he has magnified them, by espousing them to his Son, whereby they share with him in his glory, and in all the blessings of his goodness; through the incarnation of Christ, by means of which the human nature is greatly advanced and honoured; and by their redemption through Christ, whereby they are raised to an higher dignity, and restored to a greater estate than they lost by the fall; by clothing them with the rich robe of Christ's righteousness, comparable to the gold of Ophir, and raiment of needle-

[h] ישא ardebit, Pagninus; so Kimchi in Sepher Shorash. & Ben Melech in loc.

[i] מעצמותי præ ossibus meis, Montanus, Tigurine version, Bolducius, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens; so Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis.

[k] Aspernor vitam, Piscator; so Jarchi & Ben Gersom.

[l] מאסתי tabui, Cocceius; ulceratus tabesco, Schultens.

[m] חדל ממני cessa a me, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Schmidt.

[n] הבל halitus, Michaelis, Schultens.

work; and by adorning them with the graces of the blessed Spirit; and, in a word, by taking them into his family, making them his children and his heirs, rich in grace, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven, and kings and priests unto him; taking them as beggars from the dunghill, to sit among princes, and to inherit the throne of glory. The words may be understood in a different sense, and more agreeably to the context, and to the scope of Job's discourse, as they are by some [o], of God's magnifying men by afflicting them; according to which, man is represented as a poor, weak, strengthless creature, a worm and clod of the earth; and the Lord as the mighty God, as of great and infinite power and strength, between whom there is no manner of proportion; God is not a man, that they should come together, or as if on equal foot; nor man a match for God; to wrestle with principalities and powers, which are not flesh and blood, is too much for men of themselves, and how much less able are they to contend with God? Now Job by this suggests, that his thought and sentiment of the matter was, and in which he has a particular view to himself, and his own case; that as on the one hand it was a demeaning the might and majesty of God, by making himself a combatant with man; so on the other hand it was doing man too much honour, as if he was one of more importance and consequence, and more mighty and powerful than he is; whereas he is unworthy of the divine notice in any respect, either to bestow his favours, or lay his afflicting hand upon him; compare with this 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. Hence a late learned writer [p], agreeably to the use of the word in the Arabic language, renders it, *what is mortal man, that thou shouldest wrestle with him?* strive and contendwith him as if he was thy match, when thou couldest at one blow, and even at a touch, dispatch him at once? and *that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?* have an affection for him, love him, delight in him, highly value and esteem him; it is wonderful that God should have such a regard to any of the sons of men; and yet it is certain that he has, as appears by the good things he has provided and laid up for them in covenant, by sending his Son to die for them, by calling and quickening them by his Spirit and grace, and drawing them with loving-kindness to himself; by taking continual care of them, and keeping them as the apple of his eye: though these words may be interpreted agreeably to the other sense, *that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?* or towards him, to afflict him and chastise him with afflictions, so Bar Tzemach; or to stir up himself against him, as Sephorno: and the above late learned writer chooses to render them, *that thou shouldest set thine heart against him* [q]? and so the Hebrew [r] particle is used in many other places; see Ezek. xiii. 2. and xxi. 3. compare with this Job xxxiv. 14, 15. where R. Simeon Bar Tzemach [s] thinks Elihu has respect to this passage of Job, and reproves him for it.

Ver. 18. *And* that *thou shouldest visit him every morning,* &c.] That is, *daily*, continually, as Aben Ezra interprets it; either in a way of love, grace, and mercy; so God has visited men, by raising up and sending his son to be a Redeemer of them; the son of God has visited them, as the day-spring from on high, by his incarnation and appearance in this world; see Luke i. 68, 78. and the Lord visits them, by calling them by his grace, see Acts xv. 14. by communing and conversing with them in a free and friendly manner; by helping right early, and by renewing his mercies to them every morning, all which is matter of admiration: or else the word may be taken in a different sense, as it sometimes is, either for punishing man for sin, as in Exod. xx. 5. Jer. v. 9. or for chastising the Lord's people, which is a visiting them, though in a fatherly way, and in love, and which is often and frequently done, even every morning, see Psal. lxxxix. 32, 33. and lxxiii. 14. and so the sense agrees with the former, though by some given with this difference thus, *what is man, that thou shouldest magnify him?* or make him great both in things temporal and spiritual, as he had made Job in the time of his prosperity, which he may have respect unto; having been the greatest man in all the east, with respect to both characters, whereby it was plain he had interest in the love and affections of the heart of God; and *yet, notwithstanding, nevertheless, thou visitest him* [t], with afflictions and chastisements continually; which may seem strange, and look like a contradiction, that thou shouldest: *and try him every moment?* by afflictive providences; in this way the Lord often tries the faith and patience, the fear and love, the hope and humility of his people, and all other graces, whereby they appear and shine the brighter, which was Job's case, see ch. xxiii. 10. and which he doubtless had in view in all he had said, and more particularly expostulates about in the following verses.

Ver. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from me,* &c.] From wrestling and contending with him, and afflicting of him; the Lord was too hard a combatant for Job, and therefore he chose to be rid of him, and was impatient of it; or *look off from me* [u]; so Mr. Broughton renders it, *how long wilt thou not look from me?* this is to be understood not of a look of love, which Job would never have desired to have averted from him; but a frowning and angry look, such as the Lord put on in this dispensation of his providence towards him; the allusion may be to that sharp and constant look, which antagonists in wrestling have upon each other whilst conflicting together, and so the metaphor before used is still carried on: *nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?* some think Job has reference to his disease which affected his throat, that being so dried up, or having a quinsy in it, that he could not swallow his spittle, or it was with great difficulty he did it; or rather it is a proverbial expression, signifying that his afflictions were incessant, that he had no respite nor intermission, had not space enough given him to swallow down his spittle, or take his breath, as in ch. ix. 18. so Schultens observes, that with the Arabians this was a proverbial form of speech, when they required time for any thing, *give me time to swallow my spittle:* or when they had not proper time, or any intermis-

[o] So Simeon Bar Tzemach, Sephorno, Mercerus, Diodati, Schultens.
[p] Schultens.
[q] וכי תשית אליו לבך & quod intendas cor tuum.
[r] Adversus eum. ibid.
[s] Vid. Noldii Ebr. Partic. Concord. p. 57.
[t] ותפקדנו & tamen, nihilominus visitas eum, Michaelis.
[u] תשעה ממני respicis a me? Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis; avertis oculum a me? Schultens.

sion, used to say, *you won't give me time to swallow my spittle;* and one being asked a multitude of questions, replied, *suffer me to swallow my spittle*, that is, give me time to make an answer: or the sense is, that his antagonist in wrestling with him held him so fast, and kept him so close to it, and so twisted him about, and gave him fall upon fall, so that he had no time to swallow his spittle; or he so collared him, and griped him, and almost throttled him, that he could not swallow it down; all which intends how closely and incessantly Job was followed with one affliction upon another, and how severe and distressing they were to him.

Ver. 20. *I have sinned*, &c.] Some render it, *if I have sinned*[w]; be it so that I have, as my friends say, yet since there is forgiveness with thee, why should I be so afflicted as I am? but there is no need of such a supplement, the words are an affirmation, *I have sinned*, or I am a sinner; not that he owned that he had been guilty of any notorious sin, or had lived a sinful course of life, on account of which his afflictions came upon him, as his friends suggested; but that he was not without sin, was daily guilty of it, as men, even the best of men, ordinarily are; and being a sinner was not a match for a holy God; he could not contend with him, nor answer him for one sin of a thousand committed by him in thought, word, or deed; and therefore desires him to desist and depart from him, see Luke v. 8. *what shall I do unto thee?* this he said, not as one in distress of mind on account of sin, and under the load of the guilt of it, inquiring what he must do to make satisfaction for it, how and what way he could be saved from it; for he knew that nothing done by him in a ceremonial way by sacrifices, nor in a moral way by the performance of duties, could take away sin, or atone for it, or save him from it; he knew this was only by his living Redeemer, and whom he knew and determined should be his salvation, and he only; see ch. ix. 30, 31. and xiii. 15, 16. and xix. 25. but rather as it may be rendered, *what can* or *ought I do unto thee*[x]? that is, more than I have done, namely, to confess my sin unto thee; what more dost thou require of me? or what more can be done by me, than to repent of my sin, acknowledge it, and beg pardon for it? as he does in the following verse: or *what can I do unto thee?* thou art an over-match for me, I can't struggle and contend with thee, a sinful man with an holy God: *O thou preserver of men?* as he is in a providential way, the supporter of men in their lives and beings; or, *O thou keeper of men*[y], as he is, not only of Israel, but of all others, and that night and day; perhaps Job may refer to his setting and keeping a watch over him, ver. 12. and enclosing and hedging him all around with afflictions, so that he could not get out of the world as he desired; or, *O thou observer of men*[z], of their words, ways, works, and actions, and who kept such a strict eye upon him whilst wrestling with him, and therefore what could he do? or, *O thou Saviour of men*[a], by whom only I can be saved from the sins I have been and am daily guilty of: *why hast thou set me as a mark against thee?* as a butt to shoot thine arrows at, one affliction after another, thick and fast, see ch. xvi. 12. Lam. iii. 12. the words I think may be rendered, *why hast thou appointed me to meet thee*, or *for a meeting with thee*[b]? as one man challenges another to meet him in such a place and fight him: alas! I am not equal to thee, I am a mere worm, not able to contend with thee the mighty God, or to meet thee in the way of thy judgments, and to endure the heavy strokes of thy angry hand; and so Bar Tzemach paraphrases it, "thou hast hated me, and not loved "me; that thou hast set, or appointed me to meet thee, "as a man meets his enemy in the time of his wrath, "and he stirs up against him all his fury:" and to the same sense, and much in the same words, Jarchi interprets it: *so that I am a burden to myself?* weary of his life, through the many pressing and heavy afflictions upon him, as Rebekah was of her's, because of the daughters of Heth, Gen. xxvii. 46. The reading which we follow, and is followed by the Targum, and by most interpreters, Jewish and Christian, is a correction of the scribes, and one of the eighteen places corrected by them; which is no argument of the corruption of the Hebrew text, but of the contrary; since this was only placed in the margin of the Bible, as the Masorites afterwards did with their various readings, shewing only what was their sense of this, and the like passages; and as an instruction how in their opinion to understand them, still retaining the other reading or writing; and which, according to Aben Ezra, may be rightly interpreted, and is, *so that I am a burden to thee*[c]; and which is followed by some, signifying, as Job thought at least, that he was so offensive to him that he could not bear him, but treated him as an enemy; was weary of him, as God is said to be of sinners and their sins, and of the services and duties of carnal professors, see Isa. i. 14. and xliii. 24. so Abendana interprets it, "thou hast set me for a mark "unto thee, as if I was a burden to thee."

Ver. 21. *And why dost thou not pardon my transgression*, &c.] Or *lift it up*[d]; every sin is a transgression of the law of God, and the guilt of it upon the conscience is a burden too heavy to bear, and the punishment of it is intolerable; pardon lifts up and takes away all manner of sin, and all that is in sin; it takes off the load of sin from the conscience, and eases it, and loosens from obligation to punishment for it, which comes to pass in this manner: Jehovah has taken or lifted up sin from his people, and has put and laid it, or caused it to meet on his Son, by the imputation of it to him; and he has voluntarily taken it on himself, and has bore it, and has taken it away by his blood and sacrifice, which being applied to the conscience of a sinner, lifts it up and takes it from thence, and speaks peace and pardon to him; it wholly and entirely removes it from him, even as far as the east is from the west; and for such an application Job ex-

[w] Vatablus, Drusius, Schmidt; so Sept. Syr. & Ar.
[x] מה אפעל לך quid faciam aut facere possum tibi, Michaelis; debeam, Schmidt.
[y] נצר האדם custos hominum. V. L. Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus.
[z] Observator, Schultens.
[a] Sospitator, Codurcus; servator, Drusius, Schmidt, Michaelis. Vid. Witsii Œconom. Fœder. l. 4. c. 3. sect. 30.
[b] למפגע לך in occursum tibi, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius.
[c] עליך ἐπὶ σοὶ, Sept. & tibi, Beza, Grotius.
[d] תשא tolles, Montanus, Beza, Drusius, Mercerus, Michaelis.

postulates with God, with whom there was forgiveness, and who had proclaimed himself a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; and which he does when he both removes the guilt of it from the conscience, and takes away all the effects of it, such as afflictions and the like; in which latter sense Job may well be understood, as agreeing with his case and circumstances: *and take away mine iniquity?* or *cause it to pass away*[e] from him, by applying his pardoning grace and mercy to his conscience, and by removing his afflicting hand from him: *for now shall I sleep in the dust;* having sin pardoned, and the hand of God removed; I shall depart out of the world in peace, lie down in the grave, and rest quietly till the resurrection; there being in the bed of dust no tossings to and fro as now, nor a being scared with dreams and terrified with night-visions. Mr. Broughton renders it, *whereas I lie now in the dust;* as if it referred to his present case, sitting as a mourner in dust and ashes, and his flesh clothed with clods of dust; or, in a figurative sense, lying in the dust of self-abhorrence; but the former sense seems best: *and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I* shall *not* be; meaning not in the morning of the resurrection, for then he will be found; but it is a figurative way of speaking, as Bar Tzemach observes, just as one goes to visit a sick man in a morning, and he finds him dead, and he is not any more in the land of the living: many interpreters understand this as Job's sense, that he should quickly die; he could not be a long time in the circumstances he was; and therefore if the Lord had a mind to bestow any good thing on him in the present life, he must make haste to do it, since in a short time he should be gone, and then, if he sought for him, it would be too late, he should be no more; but the sense is this, that when he lay down in the dust, in the grave, he should be seen no more on earth by any man, nay, not by the eye of God himself, should the most early and the most diligent search be made for him. Mr. Broughton takes it to be a petition and request to die, rendering the words, "why dost thou not quickly seek me out, that I should "be no more?" and to which others[f] agree.

CHAP. VIII.

In this chapter Bildad enters the lists with Job; proceeding upon the same plan with Eliphaz, he reproves him for his long and loud talk, ver. 1, 2. asserts the justice of God in his providence, of which the taking away of Job's children by death for their transgression was an instance and proof, ver. 3, 4. and suggests, that if Job, who had not sinned so heinously as they had, and therefore was spared, would make his submission to God, and ask forgiveness of him, and behave for the future with purity and uprightness, he need not doubt but God would immediately appear and exert himself on his behalf, and bless him and his with prosperity and plenty, ver. 5—7. for this was his ordinary way of dealing with the children of men, for the truth of which he refers him to the records of former times, and to the sentiments of ancient men, who lived longer, and were more knowing than he and his friends, on whose opinion he does not desire him to rely, ver. 8—10. and then by various similes used by the ancients, or taken from them by Bildad, or which were of his own inventing and framing, are set forth the short-lived enjoyments, and vain hope and confidence, of hypocrites and wicked men; as by the sudden withering of rushes and flags of themselves, that grow in mire and water, even in their greenness, before they are cut down, or cropped by any hand, ver. 11—13. and by the spider's web, which can't stand and endure when leaned upon and held, ver. 14, 15. and by a flourishing tree destroyed, and seen no more, ver. 16—19. and the chapter is concluded with an observation and maxim, that he and the rest of his friends set out upon, and were tenacious of; that God did not afflict good men in any severe manner, but filled them with joy and gladness; and that he would not long help and prosper wicked men, but bring them and their dwelling-place to nought; and this being the case of Job, he suggests that he was such an one, ver. 20—22.

Ver. 1. *Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said.*] This was the second of Job's friends that came to visit him, ch. ii. 11. and is mentioned next to Eliphaz there, and takes his turn in this controversy in the same order; which no doubt was agreed upon among themselves, as well as the part each should bear, and the general sentiment they should pursue, which was the same in them all. Some have observed, that Job's friends were like the messengers that brought him the tidings of his losses, before one had done speaking another came; and so as soon as one of his friends had delivered his discourse, and before Job could well finish his reply, up starts another to charge him afresh, as here Bildad did, who said as follows.

Ver. 2. *How long wilt thou speak these things?* &c.] Either what he had delivered in the *third* chapter in cursing the day of his birth, and wishing for death, in which sentiments he still continued, and resolutely defended; or those expressed in the *two* preceding chapters, in answer to Eliphaz; this he said, as wondering that he should be able to continue his discourse to such a length, and to express himself with such vehemence, when his spirits might be thought to be so greatly depressed by his afflictions, and his body enfeebled by diseases; or as angry with him for his blasphemy against God, as he was ready to term it, his bold and daring speeches of him, and charge of unrighteousness on him, and for his disregard to what Eliphaz had said, his contempt of it, and opposition to it; or as impatient at his long reply, wanting him to cease speaking, that he might return an answer, and therefore breaks in upon him before he had well done, see ch. xviii. 2. or as despising what he had said, representing

[e] תעביר transire facies, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius.

[f] So Junius & Tremellius.

it as idle talk, and as mere trifling; and so some render the words, *how long wilt thou trifle after this sort*[g]? or throw out such nonsense and fabulous stuff as this? *and* how long shall *the words of thy mouth* be like *a strong wind?* blustering, boisterous, and noisy, to which passionate words, expressed in a loud and sonorous manner, may be compared; and so we say of a man in a passion and rage, that he *storms*. Bildad thought that his speeches were hard and rough, and stout against God, and very indecent and unbecoming a creature to his Maker, and not kind and civil to them his friends; and yet they were like wind, vain and empty, great swelling words, but words of vanity; they were spoken, and seemed big, but had nothing solid and substantial in them, as Bildad thought.

Ver. 3. *Doth God pervert judgment?* &c.] In his dealings with men in the way of his providence; no, he does not: here Bildad opposes himself to Job, who he thought had charged God with injustice in dealing with him, and his children, in the manner he had done: the same thing is intended in the following question, *doth the Almighty pervert justice?* for judgment and justice are the same, and often go together in Scripture, as being done either by God or men, when righteousness is executed by them, and this is never perverted by the Lord; there is no unrighteousness in him, neither in his nature, nor in his ways and works, either of providence or of grace; he is the Judge of all the earth, that does and will do right; to subvert a man in his cause, he approves not of in others, and will never do it himself; to justify the wicked, and condemn the just, are both an abomination to him, and therefore neither of these can ever be thought to be done by him; for though he justifies the ungodly, he does not justify their ungodliness, nor them in it, but from it, and that by the perfect righteousness of his son; whereby the law is fulfilled, and justice satisfied, and so he is just whilst he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; though he is gracious and merciful, he is also righteous, and will not clear the guilty, or pardon sin without satisfaction to his justice; and such as are truly just or righteous, he never condemns here or hereafter; he may afflict them, but he delivers them out of their afflictions, nor are they ever forsaken by him; and, on the contrary, he punishes wicked men in this world, and in that to come, as he has the angels that sinned, the old world, Sodom and Gomorrah, and many others, and all wicked men will be punished with everlasting destruction; yea, even so strict is his punitive justice, that the sins of his own people being laid and found on his son as their surety, he has most severely punished him for them; he awoke the sword of justice against him, spared him not, but delivered him to death for us all; and though he forgives the iniquities of his children, he takes vengeance on their inventions, and chastises them for their sins, that they may not be condemned with the world; and, on the other hand, he is not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love, which he rewards in a way of grace, as well as it is a righteous thing with him to render tribulation to them that trouble them: the righteousness of God is known by the judgments he executes on wicked men, and especially will be manifest in his judgments on antichrist; and though the justice of God in the course of his providence, in some instances, may not now be so clear, his judgments will be made manifest, and especially at the great day of judgment, when every thing shall be brought to account, and God will judge the world in righteousness; all which, we may be assured of, is and will be executed by him, from the consideration of his nature and perfections, and particularly from the name he goes by in this passage, being El, the mighty God, who is able to save and to destroy, to save the righteous, and destroy the wicked; and is Shaddai, all-sufficient, stands in need of nothing; nor can he receive any thing that is not his own, and therefore uncapable of being bribed to the perversion of justice and judgment.

Ver. 4. *If thy children have sinned against him*, &c.] As no doubt they had, and, as Bildad thought, in a very notorious manner, and therefore were righteously punished for them; this instance is produced as a proof of God's not perverting, but doing justice, and the rather, because it was on account of this that it was supposed that Job charged, or was ready to charge, God with injustice; this was so far from it, that it was a righteous thing to do it, *if* or *seeing* his children had sinned; or *because* they have sinned, or *though* they have sinned, as the words[h] are by some differently rendered; and either way shews that God did not pervert justice, but acted agreeably to it. Mr. Broughton renders them, *as thy children have sinned against him, so hath he sent them into the hand of their trespass;* as a righteous retaliation for it: that Job's children had sinned, there is no question to be made of it; they were born in sin, though born of godly parents; and though they had a religious education, yet no doubt were guilty of sin in their younger years, as well as when grown up; and even though good men, as there may be reason to conclude they were, yet daily sinning, for there are none without sin; and also it is true, that all sin is against God, contrary to his nature and will, a breach and transgression of his law, and an act of hostility against himself, and a trampling under foot, or at least a neglect, of his legislative power and authority, which is an aggravation of it; yet it does not appear that Job's children were guilty of any notorious sins or atrocious crimes, or lived a sinful course of life, for which the judgments of God came upon them; nor is it a clear case that they were taken away by death in the manner they were on account of their sins, but rather purely for the trial of Job's integrity, faith, and patience: *and he have cast them away for their transgression;* or *by the hand of* it[i]; by means of it, because of it, being provoked with it. Bildad represents them as abandoned sinners, as castaways and reprobates, rejected of God with abhorrence, and utterly ruined. Some render it, *hath sent them into the hand of their transgression*[k], or trespass; that is, delivered them up to the power and do-

[g] תמלל אלה nugaberis hæc, Cocceius; talia, Tigurine version; talk after this sort? Broughton.

[h] אם quandoquidem, Michaelis; quia, Vatablus; etiamsi, V. L.

[i] ביד פשעם in manu iniquitatis suæ, V. L. so Montanus, Cocceius.

[k] In manum transgressionis ipsorum, Piscator, Beza, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens; in potestatem defectionis ipsorum, Junius & Tremellius.

minion of sin, gave them up to their hearts' lusts, and to vile affections, to do things not convenient, and which they pursued to their ruin; the Targum is, "he "sent them into the place of their transgression[l];" into hell, which their transgressions deserved, and for which they were fitted by them. Some a little more mildly render the words, *he sent them away*[m]; that is, dismissed them out of the world, took them out of it by death; which dismission is sometimes in peace, as good old Simeon prayed for, and sometimes in wrath, as Saul was taken away, see Luke ii. 29. Hos. xiii. 11. the latter is the meaning here.

Ver. 5. *If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes*, &c.] Here Bildad seems to think more mildly, and speak more kindly to Job, that though he had sinned, yet not in so gross a manner as his children, since he was spared, and they were not; and therefore if he would apply himself to God, and supplicate his grace and mercy, and live a godly life, it might yet be well with him, and he be restored to his former or to better circumstances; his sense is, that he would advise him, as Eliphaz had done before, ch. v. 8. to seek unto God *by prayer*, as the Targum adds, and of which it is explained in the next clause, and that he would do this *betimes*, or *in the morning*[n]; which is a proper time for prayer, and was one of the seasons good men in former times made use of for that purpose; see Psal. v. 3. and lv. 17. or that he would seek him in the first place, and above all things, take the first opportunity to do it, without any procrastination of it, and that with eagerness and earnestness, with his whole heart and soul; for God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and those that seek him early shall find him: *and make thy supplication to the Almighty*; not pleading any merit of his own, as deserving of any blessing on account of what he had done; but ask what he should as a favour, as a free gift, in a way of grace and mercy, as the word[o] signifies; call for the pity of the Almighty, as Broughton renders it.

Ver. 6. *If thou wert pure and upright*, &c.] By which he tacitly intimates that he was neither; though the character given of him is, that he was perfect and upright, feared God and eschewed evil, and which is confirmed by God himself, and even after he had been tried by sore afflictions. Bildad's meaning is, if he was pure in heart, and upright in his life and conversation, then things would be well with him. Men's hearts are naturally impure; no man is pure of himself, or can make his heart pure; nor is there any good man that is so pure as to be entirely free from sin; but such are pure in heart, who have clean hearts created, and right spirits renewed in them; or have new hearts and new spirits given them; have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and so keep the faith in a pure conscience; having their hearts purified by faith in the blood of Christ, whose blood cleanses from all sin; and in this sense Job was pure, having an interest in a living Redeemer, and in his blood, and a partaker of his grace; and that he was upright is before testified of him, though now called in question, an *if* being put upon it, as well as on the former, having in the course of his life walked uprightly, according to the will of God revealed unto him: *surely now*; directly at once, without delay, as Sephorno interprets it; it need not be doubted of, verily so it would be: *he would awake for thee*; who though he neither slumbers nor sleeps, yet seems to be asleep when he suffers his people to be afflicted, distressed, and oppressed, and therefore they cry unto him to awake to their judgment, and their cause; see Psal. vii. 8. and xxxv. 23. and xliv. 23. the sense is, that he would stir up and exert himself, and shew himself strong on his behalf, and appear to be on his side, and work deliverance and salvation for him; or awake his mercy, grace, and goodness, as some Jewish commentators[p] interpret it; that is, bestow his favours upon him: *and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosper*; which some understand of his body, the earthly house of his tabernacle, which if his soul was pure and upright that dwelt in it, might be called the habitation of righteousness; which, were this the case, would become healthful that was now covered with worms, and clods of dust: others interpret it of the soul, as Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom, the seat of righteousness, and of all the graces of the spirit; which is in a prosperous condition when these graces are in lively exercise, and the presence of God, and the light of his countenance, and communion with him, are enjoyed; but rather his dwelling-house in a literal sense, and all his domestic affairs, are here meant; and it is signified that all would be again in peace and prosperity, and he should enjoy great plenty of good things should he behave well; and here is a tacit intimation as if his habitation had not been an habitation of righteousness, but had been filled with the mammon of unrighteousness, with goods ill gotten, such as were obtained by rapine and oppression, and neither he nor his family righteous; a very unjust and iniquitous insinuation: the Targum paraphrases it, *and shall make the beauty of thy righteousness perfect*[q]; but Job had a more beautiful righteousness than his own; his was but as rags, and neither pure nor perfect; even the righteousness of Christ, which is perfect and beautiful, and makes such so, that are arrayed with it; see Psal. l. 2. Ezek. xvi. 14.

Ver. 7. *Though thy beginning was small*, &c.] When he first set out in the world; and which though it greatly increased, and he was the greatest man in all the east, yet Bildad suggests, should he behave well, that was comparatively small to what it would be with him hereafter; and which was fact, for he had double of what he before enjoyed; so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *and thy former state should be little to thy latter*: or rather the sense and meaning is, *though thy beginning should be small*[r]; be it so that it is; or rather that though he should begin again in the world with very little, as indeed at present he had nothing to begin with, and when he did it was but with little; one gave him a piece of money, and another an earring of gold: *yet thy latter end should greatly increase*; as it did, for the Lord blessed his latter end, and he

[l] So Munster.
[m] וישלחם & dimisit eos, Drusius; e mundo, Pagninus, Vatablus; so Gersom.
[n] תשחר mane quæsieris, Pagninus, Piscator, Mercerus.
[o] So Schmidt in loc.
[p] Gersom, Simeon Bar Tzemach, Sephorno.
[q] נות צדקך pulchritudinem justitiæ tuæ, Bolducius.
[r] והיה etsi fuerit, so some in Michaelis.

had more than at the beginning, even double to what he had in his most flourishing circumstances; see ch. xlii. 11, 12, &c. Bildad seems to have spoken under a spirit of prophecy, without being sensible of it, and not imagining in the least that so it would be in fact; for he only affirms it on supposition of Job's good behaviour for the future, putting it entirely upon that condition, which he had no great expectation of it ever being performed.

Ver. 8. *For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age,* &c.] With respect to the truth of what he had said, or should say; he does not desire Job to take his word for it, but inquire how it was in former times; by which it would appear, that when good men have been in affliction and trouble, and have behaved well under it, as became them, they have been delivered out of it, and have been afterwards in more flourishing and comfortable circumstances, as Noah, Abraham, Lot, and others; and that wicked men and hypocrites, though they have flourished for a while, yet destruction has sooner or later come upon them, and they have utterly perished, as the descendants of Cain, the builders of Babel, and the men of Sodom, and others; whereas good and upright men are never cast away by the Lord, no instance can be given of it; all which would appear, if inquiry was made into what had happened in the *former age;* not the *first age*, as the Septuagint version, the age or generation in which the first man and woman lived; for who were *their fathers*, mentioned in the next clause? but the age or generation preceding that in which Job and his friends lived; and the knowledge of things done in that might with some application and diligence be more easily obtained: *and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers;* of the fathers of the men of the former age, who lived in the age preceding that, and from whom their posterity had received the knowledge of many things by tradition, as they had received from their fathers that lived before them, and so upwards; things being handed down in a traditionary way from father to son; and though these fathers were dead, yet, by their traditions that were preserved, they were capable of teaching and instructing men; and their sayings and sentiments deserved regard, and were had in much esteem; but yet being uninspired and fallible men, were not to be received without examination; for though truth is of the greatest antiquity, and to be revered on that account, yet error is almost as old as that; and therefore great care is to be taken how any thing is received purely upon the score of antiquity; and great pains, diligence, and circumspection, are necessary to a due search of the fathers, and coming at their sense and sentiments; and so as to distinguish between truth and error, and get a true knowledge of facts done in ancient times; such a search is to be made in like manner as one would search for gold and silver, and hidden treasures.

Ver. 9. *For we are but of yesterday*[s], &c.] Which is not to be understood strictly of the day last past, but of a short space of time backward; and especially when compared with the antediluvian fathers, who lived the far greater part of them upwards of 900 years; otherwise Bildad and his two friends were men in years; Eliphaz says, that with them were the gray-headed and very aged men, much older than the father of Job, and Elihu speaks of himself as a young man, and of them as very old; see ch. xv. 10. and xxxii. 6, *and know nothing;* which is not to be taken in an absolute sense, for they knew much of the things of nature, providence, and grace; they were men of great understanding in things natural, civil, and religious, as appears by their discourses; but in a comparative sense, or when compared with the long-lived patriarchs, who through the length of their days had much time and opportunity to make their observations on things, to learn the arts and sciences, and improve themselves in all useful knowledge, human and divine; for which reason Job is sent to inquire of them; whereas they had been but a little while in the world, and knew but little, to whom might be applied that saying, as now to men since, *ars longa, vita brevis;* and especially they knew nothing as it is to be known, or nothing perfectly, or in comparison of the saints in heaven; for they that know most here know but in part, see through a glass darkly; but in the other world they see face to face, and know as they are known. Moreover, Bildad might say this of himself and his friends, in a modest manner, having learned to know themselves, their weakness, and their folly; and the first and great lesson of wisdom is to become fools in men's own apprehension, in order to be truly wise, having the like sense of themselves as Agur had, Prov. xxx. 2. see 1 Cor. iii. 18. or rather this might be said as being the sense of Job concerning them, who had a very mean and indifferent opinion of them; see ch. xii. 2. and xiii. 2. and therefore Bildad would not have him take their sense of things, but inquire of persons older and wiser: *because our days upon earth are a shadow;* man's time is rather measured by days than by months and years, being so short; and these are called *days* on earth, to distinguish them from the days of heaven, which are one everlasting day, in which there is no night of darkness, either in a literal or figurative sense, and which will never end; but the days of this life are like a *shadow*, dark and obscure; full of the darkness of adversity and trouble, as well as greatly deficient in the light of knowledge; there is nothing in them solid and substantial; the greatest and best things of this life are but a vain show; in heaven there is a better and more enduring substance: every thing is mutable and uncertain here; man is subject to a variety of changes in his mind and body, in his family and outward estate and circumstances: and life itself is but a vapour, which appears a while and soon vanishes away; or rather like a shadow, that declines, is fleeting, and quickly gone; see 1 Chron. xxix. 15.

Ver. 10. *Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee,* &c.] That is, the men of the former age, and their fathers before them, Job is directed to inquire of, and to prepare for a search into their records and traditions; from whom he might reasonably expect to be taught and told things that would be very instructive and useful to him in his present circumstances: *and utter words out of their heart?* such as were the effect of

[s] Επαμεροι, Pindar. Pythia, Ode 8.

mature judgment and long observation, and which they had laid up in their hearts, and brought out from their treasure there; and, with the greatest faithfulness and sincerity, had either committed them to writing, or delivered them in a traditionary way to their posterity, to be communicated to theirs; and which might be depended upon as true and genuine, being men of probity, uprightness, and singleness of heart; who declared sincerely what they knew, and spoke not with a double heart, having no intention to deceive, as it cannot be thought they would impose upon their own children; and therefore Job might safely receive what they uttered, and depend upon it as truth and fact; and what they said, as Jarchi observes, is as follows; or what follows Bildad collected from them, and so might Job, and think he heard them *saying*, as Piscator supplies the text, what is expressed in the next verses, if not in their words, yet as their sense.

Ver. 11. *Can the rush grow up without mire?* &c.] No, at least not long, or so as to lift up his head on high, as the word signifies[a]; the rush or bulrush, which seems to be meant, delights in watery places, and has its name in Hebrew from its absorbing or drinking up water; it grows in moist and watery clay, or in marshy places, which Jarchi says is the sense of the word here used; the Septuagint understands it of the *paper-reed*, which, as Pliny[b] observes, grows in the marshy places of Egypt, and by the still waters of the river Nile: *can the flag grow without water?* or *the sedge*[c]; which usually grows in moist places, and on the banks of rivers; this unless in such places, or if without water, cannot grow long, or make any very large increase, or come to maturity; so some[d] render it, *if the rush should grow up without*, &c. then it would be with it as follows.

Ver. 12. *Whilst it is yet in its greenness*, &c.] Before it is come to its full height, or to a proper ripeness; when as yet it has not flowered, or is about it; before the time usual for it to turn and change; it being without moisture, water, or watery clay, will change; and *not cut down* by the scythe, or cropped by the hand of man, *it withereth before any other herb*; of itself; rather sooner than such that don't require so much moisture; or in the sight and presence of them, they looking on as it were, and deriding it; a poetical representation, as Schultens observes: next follows the accommodation of these similes to wicked and hypocritical men.

Ver. 13. *So are the paths of all that forget God*, &c.] Who forget that there is a God; he is not in all, and scarce in any of their thoughts, and they live without him in the world; who forget the works of God, of creation and providence, in which there is a glorious display of his being and perfections; who forget the benefits and blessings of his goodness they are every day partakers of, and are not thankful for them; and who forget the word, worship, and ordinances of God, and follow after and observe lying vanities, idols, and the works of men's hands, and worship them, being unmindful of the rock of their salvation: now such men, as well as the hypocrites in the next clause, are like bulrushes and flags, or sedge, being unfruitful, useless, and unprofitable; and, for their sensuality and worldly-mindedness, standing in the mire and clay of an unregenerate state, and of carnal and worldly lusts; and though, especially the latter, may carry their heads high in a profession of religion, and make a fair show in the flesh whilst it is a time of outward prosperity with them, but when tribulation arises on the account of religion, they are presently offended, and apostatize; being destitute of the true grace of God, and not having the root of the matter in them, they wither of themselves; they soon drop their profession in the view of all good men, comparable to herbs and green grass, which abide in their verdure, when the other are gone and are seen no more: *and the hypocrite's hope shall perish*; who are either the same with those before described, who, being in prosperous circumstances, forget the God of their mercies they make a profession of, like Jeshurun of old, or different persons, as Bar Tzemach thinks, the former designing open profane sinners, these secret ones, under the appearance of good men: an *hypocrite* is one whose inside is not as his outside, as the Jews say; who is outwardly righteous, but inwardly wicked; has a form of godliness, but not the power of it: a name to live, but dead; that makes a shew of religion and devotion, attending the worship and ordinances of God in an external way, as if he had great delight in him and them, when his heart is removed far from him: and such have their *hope*, for the present, of being in the favour of God, and of future happiness, which is founded on their outward prosperity their esteem among men, and more especially their external righteousness, and profession of religion; but this will *perish*, even both the ground of their hope, their riches and righteousness, which come to nothing, and the hope that is built thereupon sinks into despair; if not in life, as it sometimes does, yet always at death, see ch. xi. 20. and xxvii. 8. Bildad seems to have Job in view here, whom he esteemed an hypocrite.

Ver. 14. *Whose hope shall be cut off*, &c.] The same thing as before, expressed in different words, and repeated for the certainty of it; signifying that it should be of no manner of use, should be wholly lost, and issue in black despair: the word has the signification of loathing, and is differently rendered, either, *whom his hope shall loathe*[e] or, *who shall loathe his hope*[f]; he shall fret and tease, and vex himself that he should be such a fool to entertain such a vain hope, or to place his hope and confidence in such vain things, finding himself most sadly disappointed: *and whose trust* shall be *a spider's web*; or *a spider's house*[g]; and such its web is to it; having made it, it encloses itself in it, and dwells securely: very fitly is the hope and confidence of an hypocrite compared to a spider's web, which is a very nice and curious piece of workmanship, as are the outward works of righteousness, done by hypocrites; they are wrought out and set off to the best advan-

[a] היגאה an attollit se, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Coccejus; an superbiet, so some; Beza, Schultens.
[b] Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 11.
[c] אחו carectum, V. L. ulva, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.

[d] Sic Bar Tzemach & Belgæ.
[e] אשר יקוט כסלו quem abominabitur spes ejus, Montanus; fastidit Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; cum tædio rejectabit, Schultens.
[f] Quippe abominabitur spem suam, Schmidt.
[g] בית עכביש domus araneæ, vel aranei, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

tage, to be seen of men; yet very slight and thin, and will bear no weight; such are the best works of carnal professors; they make a fine appearance, but have no substance, don't flow from principles of grace, nor are done in the strength of Christ, or to the glory of God; are but *splendida peccata*, as one calls them, and fall infinitely short of bearing the weight of the salvation of the soul: as the spider's web is spun out of its own bowels, so the works of such persons are wholly of themselves; they are their own, done without the grace of God and spirit of Christ; and such webs are not fit for garments, are too thin to cover naked souls; insufficient to shelter from divine wrath and vengeance; can't bear the besom of justice, one stroke of which will sweep them all away; and though they may think themselves safe enclosed in them as in a house, they will find themselves in the issue wretchedly mistaken; for there is no shelter, safety, and security, in such cobwebs; there is none but in Christ and his righteousness.

Ver. 15. *He shall lean upon his house*, &c.] Either the spider or the hypocrite, or the hypocrite as the spider; that is, that which is the ground of his confidence, which is as the spider's house, on that he shall depend, either on his riches and outward prosperity, which he promises himself a long continuance of, and from whence he concludes himself to be high in the favour and good will of God; or on his works of righteousness, his outward profession of religion, attendance on external worship, and a round of duties performed by him; in these he trusts, on these he depends, in such webs he enwraps himself, in such a house he dwells, and imagines himself safe; which is only making flesh his arm, leaning upon a broken reed, and building an house upon the sand: the Septuagint version is, *if he prop up his house*, by repeated outward acts of religion: *but it shall not stand*: whether it be riches, these are uncertain things, of no continuance; there are no riches durable but the unsearchable riches of Christ and his grace; or whether it be a man's own righteousness, which he endeavours to establish, or *make to stand*, as the phrase is in Rom. x. 3. but in vain; it is but a sandy foundation to build on; or the hope and confidence laid upon it is like a house built on the sand, and, when rain falls, floods come, and winds beat upon it, it falls; and great is the fall of it, Matt. vii. 26, 27. *he shall hold it fast*; as the worldling does his wealth, his gold and his silver; but it is snatched out of his hand by one providence or another, or however at last death obliges him to part with it; and the self-righteous man holds fast his righteousness, it is his own, he is fond of, an house of his own building, and can't bear to have it demolished; an idol of his own setting up, and to take it away is to take away his gods; and what has he more? wherefore he holds it as fast as he can, and will not let it go till he can hold it no longer; or, *he shall fortify himself in it* [h], as in a castle or strong hold, which he thinks impregnable, yet will soon and easily be battered down by divine justice: *but it shall not endure*; gold perishes, riches come to nought, wealth is no enduring substance, nor is a man's righteousness lasting; only Christ's righteousness is everlasting; true grace endures to eternal life, and issues in it; but external gifts, speculative and rational knowledge, and a mere profession of religion, fail, cease, and vanish away.

Ver. 16. *He is green before the sun*, &c.] Which some understand of the rush or flag, of which a further account is given, as setting forth more fully the case of wicked men and hypocrites; but to either of these do not agree the situation of it in a garden, the shooting forth of its branches, and the height of it, and its striking its roots deep in stony places: Cocceius interprets it of the *herb* or grass before which the flag withers, ver. 12. but the same objections, or most of them, lie against that also; rather, from the description of it, a tall large tree is designed, to which hypocrites in their most flourishing circumstances are compared, and yet come to nothing, Psal. xxxvii. 35, 36. that is *green* in its leaves, and looks beautiful, so they in a profession of religion, which is like green leaves without fruit; they make in it a fair shew in the flesh, take up and trim the lamp of a profession, and retain it bright and fair for a time; or, like a tree full of sap, or *juicy* [i]; or, as Mr. Broughton renders it, *juiceful*: denoting, not a fulness of the spirit and his grace, or of faith, hope, love, &c. and of righteousness and goodness, but of outward prosperity, having as much as heart could wish, and great plenty of good things laid up for many years: and this tree is said to be green and juicy *before the sun*: either in the presence and through the influence of it, as hypocrites flourish, even in a religious way, while the sun of prosperity shines upon them, and no longer; or openly and publicly, in the sight of all men, as this phrase is used, 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12. and as such men do, in the view of all men, professors and profane, doing all they do to be seen of men, and before whom they are outwardly righteous, and reckoned good men; or, *before the sun* rises, as the Targum and Aben Ezra, so hypocrites flourish, before the sun of persecution arises and smites them, because of their profession, and then they drop it; see Matt. xiii. 6, 21. *and his branch shooteth forth in his garden*: or *over* [k] it; and branch may be put for branches, which in a flourishing tree spread themselves to cover a considerable piece of ground: Mr. Broughton renders it, *and his suckers sprout over his orchard*; all which may denote the increase of a wicked man, in his family, in his wealth and substance, and particularly in his posterity, which are as branches and suckers from him; and Bildad, if these are his own words, may have respect to Job, and to his large substance and number of children he had in his prosperity, when he had an hedge set about him, and was enclosed as in a garden: and whereas the church of God is sometimes compared to a garden, Cant. iv. 12. it agrees very well with hypocrites, who have a place there, and are called hypocrites in Sion, where they have a name, and flourish for a while: many interpreters, both Jewish [l] and Christian [m], interpret this, and what follows,

[h] יחזיק roborabit in eam, Montanus, Bolducius; firmat se, Vatablus; so the Targum and Ben Gersom.

[i] רטוב succosus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schultens; viridis quidem & succi plenus, Michaelis.

[k] על supra, Junius & Tremellius, Mercerus, Codurcus; super Montanus, Piscator, Schmidt, Schultens.

[l] Saadiah Gaon, R. Levi, Ben Gersom.

[m] Vatablus, Beza, Diodati, Cocceius, Gussetius, p. 247.

of truly righteous and good men under afflictive providences, who notwithstanding continue, and are not the worse, but the better for them; their leaf of profession is always *green*, and withers not; and that *before the sun*, even of adversity and affliction; and though that beats upon them, and smites them severely, they are like green olive-trees, or the cedars of God, full of sap, full of the grace of God, and continually supplied with it; and so patiently endure temptation and affliction, bear the heat and burden of the day, and are not careful in the year of drought; see Cant. i. 6. Psal. lii. 8. Jer. xvii. 8. such are planted in the garden and house of the Lord by himself, and shall never be rooted up; where their branches spread, and they grow in grace, and in the knowledge of all divine things, and are filled with the fruits of righteousness.

Ver. 17. *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, &c.] The heap of stones where the tree stands; it strikes its roots among them, and implicates and twists them about them, and secures itself and grows up notwithstanding them: and this expresses the seeming stable state and condition of hypocrites for a season, who not only flourish, but seem to take root; and who maintain their ground amidst some difficulties; this fitly agrees with and describes such hearers of the word, and professors of religion, comparable to the seed sown on stony ground, Matt. xiii. 5, 6, 20, 21. and *he seeth the place of stones*; or, *the house of stones* [n]; a house built of stones, high and stately; yet this tree rises higher than that, overtops and overlooks it; and is represented as viewing it thoroughly, or looking down upon it, and all around it, being so high and so spreading; the Targum renders it, implicateth the house of stones; *platteth*, as Mr. Broughton, or twists about them, and so many of the Jewish writers; but this seems to be designed in the former clause: all this suits very well with good men, whose *roots are wrapped about the fountain* [o], as the words may be rendered; about the love of God, in which they are rooted and grounded, and are like trees planted by rivers of water, the river of divine love, which refreshes, revives, and makes them fruitful; and about Christ, the fountain of gardens and well of living waters; in whom they are rooted and built up, increase, flourish, and are established; and though they are among stones, and attended with many difficulties, yet they abide and surmount all; believe in hope against hope, and see and enjoy, yea, even dwell in the house of stones, the church of God, built on a rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

Ver. 18. *If he destroy him from his place*, &c.] If the sun when he is risen strikes the tree with such vehement heat that it withers and utterly perishes from the place where it grew; or roots it up, so the Targum and Nachmanides; or, if God destroys the hypocrite from his place, or he is by one means or another removed out of the garden, the church, being detested and rejected by good men; or from all his worldly enjoyments, his honour, credit, and esteem with men, which are all precarious, fickle, and inconstant; or out of the world, being cut down as a cumber-ground: *then* it *shall deny him*, saying, *I have not seen thee*: that is, either the tree shall deny that it ever was planted in such a place, or rather the place shall deny that the tree ever was planted there; the sense is, that it shall be so utterly destroyed, that neither root nor branch shall be left, nor any thing to shew that it ever grew there; its place shall know it no more, see ch. vii. 10. and xx. 9. or God shall deny the hypocrite, and say he never saw him nor knew him; he never belonged to him, nor was under his care; he never looked upon him with a look of love, grace, and mercy; he never had any delight and pleasure in him, nor regarded him as one of his; he was no tree of his planting, watering, and keeping, see Matt. vii. 23. this seems most difficult to accommodate to a good man, and those who carry it that way seem to be most puzzled with this; some render it, *shall he be swallowed?* or, *shall any one swallow him up* [p]? destroy or root him out of his place? none shall: the root of the righteous cannot be moved, nor they from that; not from the everlasting love of God, in which they are rooted, nor from Christ, in whom they are fixed: others understand this of the digging up of a tree, and transplanting it to another place, where it grows as well, or better; and so the people of God, though they have many stripping providences, and are removed from place to place, and from one condition to another, so that their former state and place know them no more; yet all things work together for their good.

Ver. 19. *Behold, this* is *the joy of his way*, &c.] Of the state and condition of the hypocrite, who, whilst he is in outward prosperity, exults and rejoices, but his joy is but short, it is but for a moment, ch. xx. 5. and this is what it comes to at last, and issues in, even entire destruction from his place; which, because it may seem strange and wonderful, and is worthy of notice and consideration, as well as to express a certainty of it, the word *behold* is prefixed; though this also is understood, by some, of good men who have much spiritual joy in their present state and condition, be it what it will; they have joy and peace in believing, even joy unspeakable, and full of glory; they have joy in the Lord, and in his ways in which they walk, when they have trouble in the world; they rejoice and even glory in tribulation, and are cheerful be they where they will, though removed from their native place and country; and especially this will be their case when they are transplanted from earth to heaven, the better and heavenly country: *and out of the earth shall others grow*; in their room and stead; where the tall flourishing tree once stood, but now utterly destroyed, other trees should grow; signifying, either the children of the hypocrites and wicked men, that should spring up in their place and imitate them, and come to the same end; or rather such as were strangers to them, that should inherit their substance and estates; and it may be good men that should succeed them, and come into the possession of

[n] בית אבנים domum lapidum, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens; so Tigurine version, Codurcus, Junius & Tremellius.

[o] על גל juxta fontem, Pagninus, Mercerus; so Vatablus, Piscator, Gersom, and Bar Tzemach.

[p] אם יבלענו num absorbebitur a loco suo? Beza; num absorbebit eum quisquam e loco suo, Diodatus.

all their wealth, even such as were before in mean circumstances, and so may be said to come *out of the earth*: it may be rendered, *out of another dust* or *earth shall they grow* [q]; signifying, that the wicked should be utterly destroyed, they and theirs; and that such as were of another family, and as it were of another earth and country, should stand in their place; see ch. xxvii. 16, 17. this may be interpreted of good men, who, though they die, others are raised up in their stead; God will have a seed to serve him, as long as the sun and moon endure; though they are forced to fly from their native place, being persecuted, to strange cities, or removed into the heavenly regions, yet God raises up others to fill up their places, and oftentimes out of other families, even of the ungodly, to support his cause and interest; and understanding the whole of truly righteous persons seems best to connect the sense with the following words.

Ver. 20. *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man*, &c.] A sincere, upright, good man; one that is truly gracious; who, though he is not *perfect* in himself, yet in Christ; and though not with respect to sanctification, which is as yet imperfect in him, yet with respect to justification, being perfectly justified by the righteousness of Christ, and all his sins pardoned for his sake: such an one God will never *cast away*: not out of his sight, being engraven on the palms of his hands, nor out of his heart's love; or will not *loath* [r] him, as the Targum, or reject him with abhorrence and contempt; he will not cast him out of his covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure; nor out of the hands of his son, where he has put him, and from whence none can pluck; nor out of his family, where the son abides for ever; or so as to perish eternally, this would be contrary to his love, to his fore-knowledge, and to his covenant; so far is he from it, that he has the greatest regard for such, delights in them, admits them to nearness to himself, sets them as a seal on his heart, keeps them as the apple of his eye, and preserves them safe to his kingdom and glory: *neither will he help the evil-doers*; meaning, not every one that does evil, or sins, but such who live in sin, make a trade of sinning, are frequent and constant in the commission of it; such God will not help, or *take by the hand* [s], in order to deliver from evil, as Gersom observes; to help them out of mischief and trouble their sins have brought upon them; or to strengthen them, support and uphold them, in their present circumstances; and much less so as to admit them to fellowship and communion with him: these words, with what follow, are Bildad's conclusion upon the sayings and sentiments of the ancients, which may be supposed, and are thought by some, to end at the preceding verse.

Ver. 21. *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.*] Directing himself to Job; and suggesting, that if he was a perfect, sincere, and upright man, God would not cast him away utterly, but help him out of his present circumstances, and restore him to prosperity; and not leave him until he had filled his heart with so much joy, that his mouth and lips, being also full of it, should break forth in strong expressions of it, and in the most exulting strains, as if it was a time of jubilee with him; see Psal. cxxvi. 2. but Bildad tacitly insinuates that Job was not a perfect and good man, but an evil-doer, whom God had cast away and would not help; and this he concluded from the distressed circumstances he was now in; which was no rule of judgment, and a very unfair way of reasoning, since love and hatred are not to be known by outward prosperity and adversity, Eccl. ix. 1. Bar Tzemach interprets *laughing* as at his own goodness, and *rejoicing* as at the evil of the wicked.

Ver. 22. *They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame*, &c.] The Chaldeans and Sabeans, who had plundered him of his substance, when they should see him restored to his former prosperity, beyond all hope and expectation, and themselves liable to his resentment, and under the displeasure of Providence: the phrase denotes utter confusion, and such as is visible as the clothes upon a man's back; see Psal. cxxxii. 18. *and the dwelling-place of the wicked shall come to nought*; or, *shall not be* [t]; shall be no more; be utterly destroyed, and no more built up again; even such dwelling-places they fancied would continue for ever, and perpetuate their names to the latest posterity; but the curse of God being in them, and upon them, they come to nothing, and are no more: thus ends Bildad's speech; Job's answer to it follows.

CHAP. IX.

THIS and the following chapter contain Job's answer to Bildad, and in this he asserts the strict justice of God; which is such, that no man can be just in his sight, not being able to answer to one charge, or for one sin, of a thousand he is guilty of, ver. 1—3. and that such are his wisdom and power, that the most daring man cannot expect to succeed in an opposition to him, ver. 4. instances are given of his power in the works of nature and providence, ver. 5—10. notice is taken of the imperceptibleness of his actions and motions, and of his sovereignty in all his ways, ver. 11, 12. and of his fierce wrath and anger, which is such as obliges the proudest of men to stoop under him; and therefore Job chose not to contend in a judicial way with him, but in a suppliant manner would entreat him, since his hand was so heavy upon him, ver. 13—21. he affirms, in direct opposition to Bildad and his friends, and insists upon it, that God afflicts both the righteous and the wicked; yea, gives the earth to the latter when he slays the former, ver. 22—24. he then observes the shortness of his days, and complains of his heavy afflictions, ver. 25—28 and concludes,

[q] מעפר אחר de pulvere alio, Montanus, Bolducius, Cocceius; so the Targum; de terra alia, Pagninus, Mercerus.

[r] ימאס abominatur, Vatablus; aversatur, Beza, Mercerus, Drusius, Piscator.

[s] לא יחזיק ביד nec apprehendit manum, Pagninus, Vatablus, Mercerus, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[t] איננו non erit, Pagninus, Mercerus, Drusius, Michaelis.

that it was in vain for him to expect his cause to be heard before God, there being no daysman between them; and wishes that the dread of the Divine Majesty might be taken from him, and then he would freely and without fear speak unto him, ver. 29—35.

Ver. 1. *Then Job answered and said.*] Without taking notice of Bildad's harsh expressions and severe censures, or his unfriendliness to him; he enters directly into the argument, grants some things, confutes others, and defends himself and his conduct.

Ver. 2. *I know* it is *so of a truth*, &c.] That is, that God is just, and does not pervert justice and judgment, as Bildad had observed, ch. viii. 3. Job was a man of great natural parts and capacity; he had a large share of knowledge of things, natural, civil, and moral; and he was a good man, in whom the true light of grace shined; and being enlightened by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of divine things, he knew much of God, of his being and perfections, and of the methods of his grace, especially in the justification of men, as appears by various passages in this chapter; he knew that God was just and holy in all his ways and works, whether of providence or grace; and this he kept in sight amidst all his afflictions, and was ready to acknowledge it: he knew this *of a truth;* that is, most certainly; for there are some truths that are so plain and evident that a man may be assured of, and this was such an one with Job; he had no need to be instructed in this article; he was as knowing in this point, as well as in others, as Bildad or any of his friends; nor did he need to be sent to the ancients to inquire of them, or to prepare himself for the search of the fathers, in order to acquire the knowledge of this, to which Bildad had advised; yet, though this was so clear a point, about which there was no room for further contest; *but* then the matter is, *how should man be just with God?* if not angels, if not man in his best estate, in which he was vanity when compared with God; then much less frail, feeble, mortal, sinful men, even the best of men, considered in themselves, and with respect to their own righteousness: for, to *be just* is not to be so through an infusion of righteousness and holiness into men, which in the best of men is their sanctification and not their justification; but this is a law-term, and stands opposed to condemnation, and signifies a man's being adjudged and pronounced righteous in a judiciary way; so a man cannot be adjudged, reckoned, or accounted by God upon the foot of works of righteousness done by him; since his best works are imperfect, not answerable to the law, but very defective, and so not justifying; are opposite to the grace of God, by which, in an evangelic sense, men are justified; these would encourage boasting, which is excluded in God's way of justifying sinners; and could justification be by them, the death of Christ would be in vain, and there would have been no need of him and his justifying righteousness: especially, it is a certain thing, that a man can never be *just*, or *justified with God*, in such a way, or through any righteousness wrought out by him; that is, either he is not and cannot be just in comparison of God; for, if the inhabitants of the heavens are not pure in his sight, the holy angels; and if man, at his best estate, was altogether vanity when compared with him, what must sinful mortals be? or not be just at his bar; should he mark their iniquities, enter into judgment with them, or an action against them, summon them before him to answer to charges he has to exhibit; they could not stand before him, or go off acquitted or discharged: or in his account; for his judgment is according to truth; he can never reckon that a perfect righteousness which is an imperfect one: or in his sight; for, though men may be just in comparison of others, or at an human bar, in an human court of judicature, and in the account of men, and in their sight, to whom they may appear outwardly righteous, as well as in their own sight; yet not in the sight of God, who sees all things, the heart and all in it, every action, and the spring of it; see Psal. cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 20. in this sense, a man can only be just with God through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, accounting that to him, putting it upon him, and clothing him with it, and so reckoning and pronouncing him righteous through it; and which is entirely consistent with the justice of God, since by it the law is fulfilled, magnified, and made honourable, and justice satisfied; so that God is just, whilst he is the justifier of him that believes in Jesus, Rom. iii. 26.

Ver. 3. *If he will contend with him*, &c.] If God will contend with man, so Sephorno; enter into a controversy with him, litigate and dispute the point in law, whether he is just or no, man cannot answer to the allegations he will produce; or if man should contend with God, a potsherd strive with its maker, to what purpose would it be? he could never avail himself by such a procedure; the match is unequal, there is no striving or contending with God in a judicial way: *he cannot answer him one of a thousand;* which some understand, that God will not answer men; he will not vouchsafe to give an answer to such that plead with him, or talk with him of his judgments in providence, or pretend to vindicate themselves, their ways, and their works, before him; but this sense seems contrary to Jer. xii. 1, 5. Ezek. xviii. 25. but the meaning is, that man cannot answer God; either not one man out of a thousand, that is, none at all; unless, by one of a thousand, is meant the interpreter, one among a thousand, even the Messiah, the chiefest among ten thousand; the one man of a thousand Solomon found upon search; see Job xxxiii. 23. Cant. v. 10. Eccl. vii. 28. he indeed has made himself responsible for his people, as their surety, and was able to answer for them; and he has answered for them, and made satisfaction for their sins; it was exacted, or required, that is, a full payment of their debts, or a plenary satisfaction for their sins, *and he answered;* according to Isa. liii. 7. but rather the sense is, that a man cannot answer, either one time of a thousand [u]; or one argument to one article exhibited, or to one objection or charge of a thousand brought against him by the law or justice of God; that is, for one sin of a thousand he has committed; so Mr. Broughton renders it, *to one thing of a thousand* [w]; this suggests that the sins of

[u] אחת מני אלף una vice ex millibus, Schmidt.

[w] Ad rem unam ex mille, Beza; ad unum argumentum ex mille argumentis, Vatablus; so Castalio, Bar Tzemach.

men are numerous; their debts are many, they are more than ten thousand talents, which they are not able to answer to, or pay off, no, not one of them: their iniquities are more than the hairs of their head, they cannot be understood or reckoned: and now a man cannot answer for one of a thousand, or the millions of sins he is guilty of; he cannot deny them, he cannot excuse them, he cannot make satisfaction for any one of them; they are committed against an infinite Being, and require an infinite satisfaction, which man cannot give; they are violations of a law, and injuries to divine justice, that no man is able to atone for; whatever obedience he is capable of, or does perform, God has a prior right unto it, and therefore can never answer for former transgressions; this being the case, sinful man cannot be just with God upon the foot of his works, which is the thing this observation is made to illustrate: man's obedience is so short, and God's commandment or law so very broad, that these two can never be brought to meet, agree together, or answer to one another; and therefore it may be strongly concluded that a man is justified, if ever he is justified at all, in the sight of God, by faith in Christ and his righteousness, without the deeds of the law, Rom. iii. 28.

Ver. 4. He is *wise in heart*, &c.] Originally, essentially, truly, really, and perfectly so; he is the only, and the all-wise God; his understanding is infinite; he is able to traverse all the schemes of men, in things civil or religious, and disappoint all their devices; for though there be ever so many of them, or be ever so deeply laid, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand; for there is no wisdom, understanding, or counsel against him; and therefore it is in vain to contend with him: he is so wise and knowing, that he sees and knows all that is in man, or is done by him, whether in public or in private; there is not a thought in his heart, nor a word on his tongue, nor an action in his life and conversation, but what he is thoroughly acquainted with; and every one of these he will bring into judgment: how therefore is it possible that sinful men should be just in the sight of such a wise and holy Being, upon the score of his own righteousness? *and mighty in strength:* he is the most mighty; he is the Almighty; he has a mighty arm and strong hand; and unless a man had a strong arm like him, his own right hand can never save him, or his own righteousness justify him; wherefore, to what purpose is it for a feeble man to contend and strive with him? and since he is not a man, as he is, how should they come together in judgment? and what a vain thing must it be to set a time for it, since, if we speak of strength, lo, he is strong? see ver. 19, 32. and ch. xl. 9—14. *who hath hardened* himself *against him, and hath prospered?* either by behaving proudly and insolently to him, as Pharaoh, Sennacherib, and others, by speaking hard words against him, as the Jews in the times of Malachi; and such hard speeches ungodly sinners utter against God, Christ, his Gospel, ordinances, people, ways, and worship, of which they will be convinced, and for which they will be condemned at the last judgment; and by bold and daring acts of sin, running upon the thick bosses of his buckler, giving themselves up to commit all uncleanness with greediness, and making a covenant with hell and an agreement with death, and so think themselves safe and secure at all events; but such never prospered and succeeded as they promised themselves, but came to ruin and destruction: or *had peace*[x], or *found quietness*, as Mr. Broughton: there is no peace to wicked men, true, solid peace, either here or hereafter; when they cry "Peace," or promise themselves much of it, destruction comes; and if God sets home the guilt of sin upon their consciences, the load of it is intolerable; it sinks them into despair, and what then will be the worm that dieth not?

Ver. 5. *Which removeth the mountains*, &c.] This and what follow are instances of the power of God, and are full proofs of his being mighty in strength; and may be understood, either literally, not only of what God is able to do if he will, but of what he has done; and history [y] furnishes us with instances of mountains being removed from one place to another; and Scheuchzer [z] makes mention of a village in Helvetia, called Plurium, which, in 1618, was covered with the sudden fall of a mountain, and swallowed up in the earth, with 1,800 inhabitants, and not the least trace of it to be seen any more; and in the sacred Scriptures is a prediction of the mount of Olives being removed from its place, one half to the north and the other to the south, Zech. xiv. 4. and Josephus[a] gives a relation much like it, as in fact; besides, Job may have respect to what had been done in his times, or before them, and particularly at the universal deluge, which covered the tops of the highest mountains and hills, and very probably washed away some from their places: or else it may be understood proverbially, of the Lord's doing things marvellous and surprising, and which are impossible and impracticable with men; see Matt. xvii. 20. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. or rather figuratively, of kingdoms and mighty kings, as the Targum, comparable to mountains for their height and strength, who yet are removed by God at his pleasure; see Zech. iv. 7. Rev. xvi. 20. *and they know not;* when they are removed, and how it is done; it is imperceptible; either the mountains are not sensible of it, or the inhabitants of the mountains, as Bar Tzemach; or men, the common sort of men, the multitude, as Gersom: R. Saadiah Gaon interprets it of removing the men of the mountains, and they know it not: *which overturneth them in his anger;* for the sins of men, which was the case of the old world: Mr. Broughton renders it, *that men cannot mark how he hath removed them out of their place in his anger.*

Ver. 6. *Which shaketh the earth out of her place,* &c.] Can do it, and will do it at the last day, when it shall be utterly broken down, clean dissolved, and reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be removed as a cottage, and which John in a vision saw flee away from the presence of him that sat upon the throne, Isa. xxiv. 19, 20. Rev. xx. 11. for this cannot be understood of earthquakes in common, which are only partial, and don't remove the earth out of its place,

[x] וישלם et pacem habuit, V. L. Paguinus, Montanus, Bolducius; & pace frueretur, Cocceius.

[y] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 83. Wernerus, Palmerius, Theophanes saurus, in Bolduc. in loc.

[z] Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 673.

[a] Antiqu. l. 9. c. 10. sect. 4.

only shake some parts of it; and this may also refer to the time of the flood, when the earth received some change and alteration in its situation, as Mr. Burnet in his Theory of the Earth observes; and the Apostle Peter suggests something of this kind, when he distinguishes the present earth from the former, which he says stood out of the water and in it, but the present earth not so, but is reserved for fire, 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6, 7. *and the pillars thereof tremble;* the centre or lower parts of it, see Psal. lxxv. 3.

Ver. 7. *Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not,* &c.] Either he could do it if he would, by a word speaking, as he ordered it to stand still in the times of Joshua, and caused the shadow to return ten degrees it had gone back in the dial of Ahaz, in the times of Hezekiah; or else the sense is, it rises not at any other time and place but when and where he commands it; or he commands it not to rise in the same place at one time of the year as at another, and it rises not; or this may be understood of eclipses, or of its being covered with clouds in tempestuous weather for a considerable time together, when it seems as if it was not risen: some think this respects the three-days' darkness in Egypt, when the Israelites were there, which was a little before, or about the time of Job; or rather it refers to the general flood, in the times of Noah, when it rained forty days and forty nights, during which time the sun appeared not, and so seemed as if it was not risen; see Amos viii. 9. Herodotus[b] relates, from the memoirs of the Egyptians, that the sun rose four times out of its usual course; twice it rose where it now sets, and twice it set where it now rises: *and sealeth up the stars;* either by the light of the sun in the day-time, which hides them that they are not visible, or by dark clouds and tempestuous weather in the night; such a season as that was in which the Apostle Paul and the mariners with him were, when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, Acts xxvii. 20. and so the Targum paraphrases it, *and* "sealeth up the stars with clouds;" this may also refer to the time of the flood, during the rain of forty days and nights, Gen. vii. 4—12. or to the annual motion of the sun through the ecliptic, which makes the point of the sun's rising and setting vary, and is the reason why some stars appear in summer and are sealed up in winter, and others that are seen in winter are not visible in summer; and so Cocceius interprets it.

Ver. 8. *Which alone spreadeth out the heavens,* &c.] The expanse, or what we commonly translate *firmament;* but has its name in the Hebrew language from its being expanded, spread, and stretched out, over the earth and all around it; and seems chiefly to design the ether or atmosphere, which is a fine thin matter and substance spread around us, and which is sometimes spread with clouds; this is said to be stretched out like a curtain and a tent to dwell in, tents being made of curtains spread out, Isa. xl. 22. and the allusion may be to a military tent, the pavilion of a general of an army, as Pineda observes, from whence Jehovah plays his artillery upon his enemies, thunder, lightning, hailstones, and coals of fire; see Psal. xviii. 11—14. this respects not so much the first creation, or spreading of the air or the heavens, as the continuance thereof; God continues to spread them, or to keep them spread, that they may not be rolled up as a scroll, or folded up as a garment, as they will be, Heb. i. 12. and this he does alone, without the help of any creature, angels or men; any piece of tapestry or carpet, that is large, is not easily spread alone; but what power must the vast expanse of the heavens require, to be spread alone and continued so? nothing less than infinite; see Isa. xliv. 24. some render it, *which boweth the heavens*[c], as the same word is rendered in Psal. xviii. 9. which he does when he fills them with clouds, so that they seem to hang low, and to be inclined towards the earth: *and treadeth upon the waves of the sea*[d]; which he did at the first creation, when the waters that covered the face of the earth were, by his order, collected into one place, and there shut up, and restrained from overflowing the earth; and which restraint, as it is an act of power over them, is designed by treading upon them, and a continued act may be the rather meant here; see Gen. i. 8, 9. Job xxxviii. 10, 11. Jer. v. 22. and when the waves of it are lifted up as high as they sometimes are, by strong and stormy winds, the Lord on high is mightier than they, he treads upon them and represses them; he rules their raging, stills their noise, and makes them smooth, calm, and quiet, Psal. lxv. 7. and lxxxix. 9. and xciii. 3, 4. this none but God can do: the Egyptian hieroglyphic of doing a thing impossible was a man's walking upon water[e]; the Heathens chose not to describe even their god of the sea, Neptune, by walking on it, as being too great for him, but by swimming[f]; of Christ's walking upon the sea, see Matt. xiv. 25. it may be rendered, *the high places of the sea;* the waves of it, when mounted to a great height by the wind; so Mr. Broughton, *the high waves of the sea,* see Psal. cvii. 25, 26. there is a copy, as the lesser Massorah observes, which reads, *upon the high places of the cloud*[g], see Isa. xiv. 14. and Gersom interprets these high places, of the heavens, and of God's giving rain from thence.

Ver. 9. *Which maketh Arcturus,* &c.] By which is meant not a single star, but a collection of stars, as Bar Tzemach and Ben Melech, a constellation; hence we read of Arcturus and his sons, ch. xxxviii. 32. Aben Ezra understands it of the seven stars, but these are thought to be meant by the Pleiades, after mentioned; this constellation is about the Arctic or northern pole, in the tail of the Bear, appears in the beginning of September, and brings stormy weather, when winter is at hand[h]: *Orion and Pleiades;* the former of these also is not a single star, but a constellation; by the help of a telescope no less than 2,000 are numbered, and in Hebrew it is called *Cesil;* hence the month *Cisleu* has its name, which answers to part of November and part of December, at which time this constellation is seen, and is attended with stormy

[b] Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 142.
[c] נטה שמים inclinat cœlum, Piscator.
[d] על במתי ים super excelsa maris, Pagninus, Montanus, &c. summitates maris, Tigurine version; celsos vertices maris, Schultens.
[e] Orus Apollo, apud Bolduc.
[f] Cicero de Natura Deorum, l. 2.
[g] Legitur & עב pro ים i. e. super excelsas nubes, Vatablus.
[h] Sophoclis Œdipus, Tyran. vers. 1147.

weather; hence Virgil calls it Nimbosus Orion[i]: and the latter are what we call the Seven Stars, sometimes by writers called Vergiliæ, because they appear in the spring; and have their name of Pleiades from sailing, because at this time of year mariners go out with their ships; though some say this constellation is not favourable to them, causing rains and tempests[k]; these three divide the whole year: *and the chambers of the south*: the stars in the southern hemisphere, about the Antarctic, or southern pole; and called *chambers*, as Aben Ezra observes, because hidden, and are not seen by those in the other hemisphere, as if they were in a chamber: now the making of these is rightly ascribed to God, who made all the stars, Gen. i. 16. though this may rather regard the continuance of them in their being, who calls them by name, brings out their host by number, directs their course, keeps them in their orbs, and preserves their influence.

Ver. 10. *Which doth great things past finding out*, &c.] In heaven and earth; great as to quantity and quality, not to be thoroughly searched out so as to tell their numbers, nor explain and express the nature of them to the full; even what he has done, and does in creation, providence, and grace: *yea, and wonders without number*; such as are amazing to men, who cannot account for them, and so many that they cannot number them. The same things are said by Eliphaz, ch. v. 9. where see the note; and which Job here repeats, to shew that he agreed with him, and was ready to own what was truth, whenever expressed by him or his friends, and especially such as made for the glory of the Divine Being.

Ver. 11. *Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not*, &c.] This is expressive of the invisibility of God; for though the angels in heaven always behold his face, and men, in the works of creation, may see his eternal power and Godhead, and other perfections of it displayed therein; and saints by faith have a comfortable and delightful view of him, of his countenance, his love, grace and mercy in his word and ordinances, and especially in the face and person of Christ, the image of the invisible God, and will in heaven most clearly see him as he is, in the greater display of his glory and his grace; yet his essence is invisible, not only not to be seen with corporeal eyes, but not to be comprehended in the mind: *he passeth on also, but I perceive him not*; this *going* and *passing on*, as ascribed to God, must be understood in consistence with his omnipresence; he cannot be thought to move from place to place who is everywhere, who fills heaven and earth with his presence, and there is no going from it: local motion cannot be said of him; but this respects the operations of his providence; he is continually working all around us, by supporting us in being, and supplying us with what we want, and so is near us, and yet we see him not: Job experienced the bounties of his providence, as well as the blessings of his grace, in the time of his prosperity, and now he felt the weight of his afflicting hand upon him: but yet, as to his essence, he could not see him: he was sensible that he was nigh him, and had a concern in all that befell him, but he could neither see nor comprehend him, nor account for his dealings with him: he had *passed by* him in his state of nature, and had looked graciously on him, and had said unto him, Live; he had *passed on* from him, and hid his face so that he could not see him, nor find him backward nor forward, on the right hand, nor on the left, where he used to work, see ch. xxiii. 3, 8, 9.

Ver. 12. *Behold, he taketh away*, &c.] There are some things God never takes away from his people; he never takes away his love from them, he always rests in that towards them, let them be in what condition they will; he never takes away his grace from them, when once bestowed on them, or wrought in them; he never takes away his special gifts of grace, particularly the unspeakable gift of his son Christ Jesus, which is that good part, when chosen, which shall not be taken away; nor any of the spiritual blessings wherewith they are blessed in Christ; these are irreversible and irrevocable: but temporal blessings he takes away at pleasure; so he had taken away the children, the servants of Job, his substance, wealth, and riches, and also his bodily health, to which he may have a particular respect; yea, when it pleases him, he takes a man out of the world, as the Targum and Gersom interpret it: *who can hinder him?* he does what he pleases in heaven and earth; his will is irresistible, his power is uncontrollable; there is no turning his mind, nor staying his hand, nor turning it back; when he works, none can let or hinder. Mr. Broughton translates it, *who shall make him restore*[l]? if a man takes away what he has no right to, he may be obliged by law to restore it; but whatever God takes away he has a right unto, be it relations and friends, health or wealth; if he pleases he can restore, and does; and as he did to Job, to whom he after gave twice as much as he had before; but then he is not obliged to do it, none can force him to it: *who will say unto him, what dost thou?* not one that knows what God is, or that knows himself a creature of his; no person will choose or dare to ask what God does, or why he does this and not another thing, or why this in the manner he does it; for he gives no account of his matters to the sons of men, nor is he obliged to it, and it would be insolent in them to require it, see ch. xxxiii. 13. Dan. iv. 35. this expresses his sovereignty.

Ver. 13. If *God will not withdraw his anger*, &c.] Or *God will not withdraw his anger*[m]; he is angry, or at least seems to be angry with his own people, in their apprehension, when he afflicts them and hides his face from them, or does not immediately appear to their relief and assistance; but this does not always last, he does not retain or keep anger for ever; but shews great mercies to them, and with everlasting kindness has mercy on them, by discovering his love to them, applying his pardoning grace and mercy, and comforting them with the consolations of his spirit; but then he is angry with the wicked every day,

[i] Æneid. l. 1. Vid. Horat. Carmin. l. 3. Ode 27. Epod. 15.

[k] ——— pleiadum choro
Scindente nubes. Horat. Carmin. l. 4. Ode 14.

[l] So Beza, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Junius & Tremellius, Coccejus.

[m] אלוה לא ישיב אפו Deus non revocabit furorem suum, Pagninus, Beza.

for their continual transgressions; and he never withdraws his anger from them, neither here nor hereafter, but punishes them with everlasting destruction, and casts them into everlasting fire, to which his wrath and anger are compared: the consequence of which is, *the proud helpers do stoop under him;* or *the helpers of pride*[n], or helpers of proud men; proud, wicked, and ungodly men, who combine together and help one another against God, his people, cause and interest; men of power, rule and government, as Aben Ezra explains it; civil magistrates, men in authority, who, instead of being terrors to evil-doers, encourage them, and help them forward in their wickedness; but though both those that help, and those that are holpen, may continue for a while, and be supported, yet they shall sooner or later fall under the mighty hand of God, his power and wrath, and be crushed by it. Some regard may be had either to the giants, the men of the old world, who filled the earth with violence, and were swept away with the flood; or rather to the builders of Babel, who helped one another to build a tower to make them a name, and secure themselves, and in opposition to God; but he being angry with them, made them desist, and they bowed under him. Some render it, *the helpers of Rahab;* that is, of Egypt[o], Rahab being a name of Egypt, Psal. lxxxvii. 4. Isa. li. 9. The devils are meant, whose sin was pride, and by which they fell, and which they have endeavoured to promote and cherish among men; but these proud spirits are cast out of heaven and into hell, where they are reserved in chains of darkness to the great judgment; and are obliged, whether they will or no, to stoop to the Lord, and even to the son of God in human nature, which their proud stomachs cannot well bear; but are forced to it, the anger of God lying upon them, and his wrath, which will never be withdrawn from them.

Ver. 14. *How much less shall I answer him,* &c.] Who is wise in heart, and mighty in strength, and has done and does the many things before related; who is invisible, passes by, and onwards insensibly; so that there is no knowing where to speak to him, or how to guard against him, since he can come on on every side, at an unawares, and unseen; and who is a sovereign Being, who can do, and does, whatever he pleases; and therefore there is no such thing as disputing any point with him, or calling him to an account for any thing done by him: and if the great men of the earth, proud and haughty tyrants, and those prouder spirits, if possible, the infernal principalities and powers, are obliged to bend and stoop to him; how should such a poor, weak, feeble creature as Job was, enter the lists with him, contend with God, and argue with him about his dispensations, or answer to any argument, objection, charge, or article exhibited against him? here Job speaks humbly and meanly of himself, as he in the whole context before speaks highly of God, between whom there was no comparison: and *choose out my words* to reason *with him?* suggesting, that should he pick out words the most fit and proper to be used, and put them together in the most exact order, and which had the greatest force of persuasion and strength of reasoning in them, yet they would be of no avail with God; these could have no influence upon him to turn his mind, or alter either his purposes or his providences; and therefore concluded it was best for him to be silent and make no reply; but if he said any thing, to do it in a supplicating way, as follows.

Ver. 15. *Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer,* &c.] This is not to be understood of the righteousness of his cause, that Job made no supposition of, but strongly asserted and determined to hold it fast as long as he lived; nor of his evangelic righteousness, the righteousness of faith he was acquainted with, even the righteousness of his living Redeemer, by which he knew he was, and should be, justified; and by which righteousness he could and did answer God, as every believer may, who, making mention of this righteousness, and of this only, such an one may plead the righteousness of Christ with God as his justifying one, and hold it up against all charges brought against him; yea, by presenting this to God by faith, he answers all the demands of the law of God, both with respect to the precepts and penalty of it, it being magnified and made honourable hereby, and all that the justice of God can require, and with which it is entirely satisfied; yea, this righteousness will answer to God for him in a time to come, in the last judgment: but Job speaks of his own legal and civil righteousness, as a good man, and a good magistrate; as the latter, he put on righteousness, and it clothed him; as the former, having grace, the root of the matter, in him, as he calls it, it taught him to live soberly, righteously, and godly; he was a man that feared God, and eschewed evil; and his sense is, that though he should so well behave in every respect, and so order his conversation aright before men that they could have nothing to lay to his charge, yet he would not bring such a righteousness before God, and pretend to answer him with it; for he knew that such a righteousness is no righteousness in the sight of God, in the eye of his law, and in the account of divine justice, being not only imperfect, but impure; not only rags, but filthy ones, attended with many sins, as well as imperfections; wherefore no good man will put his cause before God on such an issue, however he may before men; nay, Job seems to carry this point yet further, that though he had a sinless righteousness of his own, and were as righteous as Adam before his fall, or the holy angels in heaven, yet he would not insist upon such a righteousness before God, or pretend to answer him with it; for he knew that the inhabitants of the heavens, and so man in his paradise on earth, in his best estate, were not pure in his sight, but chargeable with folly and imperfection, in comparison of him: and when he says he could not *answer* him, his meaning is not that he would not answer to a question that was asked him, but that he would not answer him in a judicial way; that, if he should prefer a bill against him, he would not put in an answer to it, though he knew nothing by himself, and could not charge himself with any thing wrong in thought, word, or deed; yet if

[n] עזרי רהב adjutores superbiæ, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[o] So Jarchi.

God charged him with it, he would not reply against him, he would not contradict him, he would not answer again, or litigate the point with him, but give it up; because, though he might not know he had done any thing amiss, or there was imperfection in him, yet God, who was greater than his heart, and knows all things, is the heart-searching and rein-trying God, he knew better than he did, and therefore was determined to submit to him, and be set down by him what he was: but *I would make supplication to my Judge;* that is, to God, the Judge of the whole earth; and who is particularly the Judge of his own people, their Patron and Defender, their Judge and Lawgiver, who will save them; for though he is a just God, and a righteous Judge, yet a Saviour; and it is one of the privileges of his people that they can come to him, not only as the God of all grace, and as their God and Father in Christ, but to him as to God the Judge of all, Heb. xii. 23. and lay their case before him, and entreat his protection; and this Job chose to do rather than contend with him; for by *supplication* prayer is meant, as it frequently is in both Testaments; and it signifies such prayer as consists of petitions for grace and mercy, or for things to be bestowed in a way of grace and mercy; not according to merit, but mercy; not for works of righteousness done, but through the favour and good will of God; and which prayer is put up in an humble supplicant manner, acknowledging a man's unworthiness, that he is not deserving of the least of mercies, nor expects any on account of any worth or worthiness in him, or his services; and in such a way a man prevails more with God, and is most likely to succeed, than by contending with him in a judicial way. Jacob had power with God and prevailed, but it was by weeping and supplication, see Hos. xii. 4. so Mr. Broughton reads the words, "I "would crave pity of my Judge." Some render it, *my adversary* [p], the opposite party in a court of judicature, whom he would not contest with, but supplicate, and in the way make up matters with him. Job seems resolved to take such a method Christ advises to in civil cases, Matt. v. 24, 25.

Ver. 16. *If I had called, and he had answered me,* &c.] Mr. Broughton reads the words, *if I cry, will he answer me?* as if Job had some doubt upon his mind whether God would vouchsafe to answer him, though he should make his supplication to him, as he proposed; seeing he had so sorely afflicted him, and still continued his hand upon him; or the words may be rendered, *though I have called, and he has answered* [q], in times past. Job was a praying person, he had often prayed to God in his closet, and in his family, for himself, and for his children, and for his friends, and he had found God to be a God hearing and answering prayer, but seems to question whether he would answer him now, if he did pray to him: yet *would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my voice*, or *would hearken* [r], at this time, and under the present circumstances; or should he, the mercy would be so great, that he could hardly believe it; so sometimes through joy men can't believe what they hear and see, as the apostles, when Christ appeared to them after his resurrection; or as it was with the Jews returned from Babylon, they were like them that dream, they could scarcely tell whether their deliverance was a real fact, or whether they only dreamed of it, see Luke xxiv. 41. Psal. cxxvi. 1. so Job intimates, that should he pray to God, and be heard and delivered, it would be so astonishing and transporting, that at first he should not be able to give credit to it; or, however, he should not believe that it was for his prayers and supplications, for any worth and value, virtue and efficacy, there was in them, that he was heard; but it must be purely for his mercy's sake, for the sake of the mediation of Christ, and because these prayers were the breathings of his own spirit: or else the sense is, that though he had heard and answered him formerly, when he prayed in a supplicating way, yet if he should contend with him in a judicial way, and insist upon his own righteousness, and present his supplication to God on that account, he could never expect to be heard; and, indeed, he could not believe he should be heard on any account, so long as his present sufferings lasted; which seems to be the sense of what follows, where he gives his reasons for such belief, or rather unbelief.

Ver. 17. *For he breaketh me with a tempest,* &c.] Which rises suddenly, comes powerfully, and carries all before it irresistibly; hereby signifying the nature of his present sore afflictions, which came upon him at once, pressed him down, and utterly destroyed him, against which there was no standing: perhaps he may have some reference to the storm of wind that blew down the house, by which his children were destroyed. Schultens renders it, *a burning tempest* [s], such as is common in the eastern countries, which Thevenot [t] often makes mention of; which kills a man at once, and his flesh becomes as black as a coal, and comes off of his bones, and is plucked off by the hand that would lift him up; with which a man is broken to pieces indeed, to which Job may allude: *and multiplieth my wounds without cause;* referring, it may be, to the many boils and ulcers upon his body; though it may also respect the multiplicity of ways in which he had wounded or afflicted him, in his person, in his family, and in his substance, and which he says was done *without cause;* not without a cause or reason in God, who does nothing without one, though it may not be known to men; particularly in afflicting men, it is not without cause or reason; if he punishes men, it is for sin; if he rebukes and chastises his people, it is for their transgressions; to bring them to a sense of them, to humble them for them, to bring them off from them, or to prevent them, or purge them away, and to try their graces, wean them from the world, and fit them for himself: but Job's afflictions were without any such cause intimated by his friends; it was not hypocrisy, nor any notorious sin or sins he had been guilty of, and secretly lived and indulged himself in, as they imagined. Job here suggests his innocence, which he always insisted upon, and refers his afflic-

[p] למשפטי in jus me vocanti, Cocceius; ei qui mecum judicatur, i. e. parti meæ adversæ, Gussetius, p. 880.
[q] אם קראתי ויענני etiamsi clamavi & respondit mihi, Schmidt.
[r] כי יאזין quod exauditurus esset, Schmidt.
[s] בשערה in turbine ardenti, Schultens.
[t] Travels, par. 2. B. 1. c. 12. p. 54. B. 3. c. 5. p. 135.

tions to the sovereign will of God, and to some hidden cause in his own breast, unknown to himself and others: however, so long as he dealt with him after this manner, he could not believe his prayers were heard by him.

Ver. 18. *He will not suffer me to take my breath*, &c.] Which some think refers to Job's disease, which was either an asthma, or a quinsy in his throat, which occasioned great difficulty in breathing: I should rather think the allusion is to the hot burning winds in those countries before mentioned, which sometimes blew so strongly as almost to take away a man's breath; so the above traveller[u] reports, that between Suez and Cairo (in Egypt) they had for a day's time and more so hot a wind, that they were forced to turn their backs to it, to take a little breath. The design of Job is to shew, that his afflictions were continued, and were without any intervals; they were repeated so fast, and came so thick upon him, one after another, that he had no breathing-time; the import of the phrase is the same with that in ch. vii. 19. *but filleth me with bitterness*; to the full, to satiety, to loathing, as a man may be with a bitter potion, with wormwood-drink, and water of gall, with bitter afflictions comparable to such, whereby Job's life was imbittered to him, see Jer. ix. 15. Lam. iii. 15, 19.

Ver. 19. If I speak *of strength*, lo, he is *strong*, &c.] Or think of it, or betake myself to that, and propose to carry my point by mere force, as some men do by dint of power and authority they are possessed of; alas! there is nothing to be done this way; I am a poor, weak, feeble creature in body, mind, and estate; I am not able to contend with so powerful an antagonist on any account, in any way: God is strong, he is the *most strong*[w], as some render it; he is mighty, is the Almighty; the weakness of God is stronger than men; there is no disputing with God upon the foot of strength: *and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?* If I think and propose to put things upon the foot of justice, to have the cause between us issued in that way, I cannot expect to succeed by right, any more than by might; he is so strictly just and holy, that no righteousness and holiness of mine can stand before him; he is God, and I a man, and therefore not fit to come together in judgment; and he a pure and holy Being, just and true, and without iniquity, and I a sinful polluted creature; and besides, there is none superior to him, that I can appeal unto, none that can appoint a place, or fix a time, for the hearing of the cause between us, or that can preside in judgment and determine the matter in controversy; nay, there is not one among the creatures that can be a daysman, an arbiter or umpire; yea not one that can be so much as employed as council, that can take the cause in hand, and plead it, and be a patron for me, and defender of me; so that, let me take what course I will, I am sure to be nonsuited and worsted, see Jer. xlix. 19.

Ver. 20. *If I justify myself*, &c.] Seek for justification by his own righteousness, trust in himself that he was righteous, say that he was so, and pronounce himself a righteous man, what would it signify? *mine own mouth shall condemn me*; the words of it being sinful, vain, idle, and frothy; and if a man is to be justified and condemned by his words, he may be sure of the latter: indeed, *if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man*, James iii. 2. but let a man be as careful as he can, and keep ever such a guard upon his lips, such is the imperfection of human nature, that, though a Moses, he will speak unadvisedly with his lips, at one time or another, and in many things will offend; which would be his condemnation, if there was no other way to secure from it; nay, for a sinful man to justify himself, or to say that he is a righteous man by his own righteousness, and insist upon this before God, if he is tried upon it he must be condemned; yea, saying he is so is a falsehood, abominable to God, and enough to condemn him; and besides, a man that knows himself, as Job did, must be conscious of much sin within him, however externally righteous he may be before men; so that, should he say he was righteous, his conscience would speak, or cause his mouth to speak and contradict and condemn him: if I say, *I am perfect*, not in an evangelical sense, as he was; but in a legal sense, so as to be free from sin, which no man that is perfect in a Gospel sense is; as Noah, Jacob, David, and others, who were so, yet not without sin; if therefore a man should assert this, he would not say that which was right, but what was perverse, as might be proved: *it shall also prove me perverse*; to be a wicked man; either *he*, God, shall prove, or *it*, his mouth, as in the preceding clause; for to say this is to tell a lie, which to do is perverseness, see 1 John i. 8.

Ver. 21. Though I were *perfect*, &c.] Really and truly so, not conscious of any sin in thought, word, or deed; this is only a case supposed: *yet would I not know my soul*; I would not own myself to be so before God; I would not insist upon such perfection in his presence, as what would justify me before him; since I am sensible the highest perfection of a creature is imperfection when compared with him: or the sense may be, should I say I were *perfect, I should not know my own soul*; I should plainly appear to be ignorant of myself, as all perfectionists are; they don't know their own souls, the plague of their hearts, the evil of their thoughts, the vanity of their minds; they don't take notice of these things, or don't look upon them as sinful; they know not the nature of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it: *I would despise my life*; even if ever so innocent, perfect, and just; his meaning is, that he would not insist upon the continuance of it on that account; he had no such value for it, such a love of life as to contend with God upon the foot of justice about it; nor did he think it worth asking for, so mean an opinion had he entertained of it, see ch. vii. 16.

Ver. 22. *This* is *one thing*, &c.] Or *one thing* there *is*[x], in the world, as Jarchi adds; or *one measure*, as the Targum, to good and bad men; one event alike to the righteous, and to the wicked, Eccl. ix. 2. so that, as others render it, *it is all one*[y], whether a man is righteous and perfect, or whether he is not, he is

[u] Travels, par. 1. B. 2. c. 34. p. 177.
[w] אמיץ robustissimus est, V. L.

[x] אחת היא unum est, Munster, Mercerus, Schmidt.
[y] Perinde est, Coccejus.

equally liable to be afflicted and distressed: and *this is one thing*, very *singular* [z], amazing and astonishing, and very unaccountable; but so it is, and which he differed from his three friends about; as to the justice of God, he agreed with them in that; yea, he believed he was righteous in whatever he did, and even in this, which was so strange and surprising, though he could not account for it: and *this is uniform*, as Mr. Broughton translates it; either God acts uniformly in what he does, treating all men alike, good and bad men; or Job was uniform in his sentiments, he was all of a piece, steady and constant, retaining the same sense of things, from which he had not departed, nor could he depart: *therefore I said it:* with the greatest confidence and assurance, because he believed it, and would say it again, seeing no reason at all to alter his judgment; the thing was quite clear to him, of which he had, at least as he thought, unquestionable evidence; and the thing he has respect to is as follows: *he destroyeth the perfect and the wicked;* this is thought by some to be a very bad expression, bordering on blasphemy, and contrary to the nature and perfections of God, and to the methods of his providence, Gen. xviii. 23—25. and that Job speaks in the person of one destitute of the grace of God: but nothing is more certain than that this was the real sentiment of his mind, his firm belief, nor could he be persuaded to the contrary; indeed it may be understood in a good sense: by a *perfect* man we are to understand a truly good man, one that has received the grace of God in truth, and is perfectly justified and pardoned through the blood and righteousness of Christ; and by a *wicked* man one that is under the influence of his lusts, is abandoned to them, and never easy but whilst he is serving them, which he is continually doing. Now the destruction of these is not to be interpreted of everlasting destruction; this indeed will be the case of wicked men, but not of perfect and good men: God by his grace has made a difference between them in this world, and so he will in the next; the one will go into everlasting punishment, the other into everlasting life, and will never come together in the same place or state; nor will the perfect man be destroyed at all in such sense; the grace of God within him, and the righteousness of Christ upon him, will eternally secure him from everlasting wrath and ruin: but it is meant of temporal destruction; sometimes indeed a remarkable distinction is made between the one and the other in a time of general calamity, as Noah, a perfect man, was saved, when the world of the ungodly were destroyed by water; and Lot, a righteous man, when Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed by fire; but frequently they fall together in the same common distress; good and bad men, among the Jews, were alike carried captive into Babylon, signified by Jeremiah's good and bad figs; of good men, Ezekiel, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, are instances; though indeed it is on different accounts, and with different views, that the one and the other are destroyed with a temporal destruction, in their persons, their health, their families, or in their estates; such calamities upon good men are not as punishments for their sins, as on the wicked, but as fatherly chastisements, and for the trial of their graces, for their spiritual and eternal good, and that they might not be condemned with the world. Job's view in saying this is to observe, that a man's state Godward is not to be judged of by his outward circumstances, whether he is a good man or a bad man, since they may both be in the same afflictions and distress, and which he opposes to the sentiments and sayings of Eliphaz and Bildad, ch. iv. 7. and viii. 20.

Ver. 23. *If the scourge slay suddenly*, &c.] Not Satan, as Jarchi and Bar Tzemach; but any sore calamity which surrounds a man, lashes, cuts, and distresses him, as a whip or scourge; such as any of God's sore judgments, the sword, famine, pestilence, or evil beasts, which sometimes come suddenly, unawares, unthought of, and unexpected; and are sometimes only chastisements in love, the scourgings of a father, though generally in wrath and hot displeasure, and are an overflowing scourge, which carry all before them; and therefore some restrain it to wicked men, as the Septuagint version; and some understand it as if they were more mildly and gently dealt with, by being suddenly and at once slain with such a scourge, in their persons, families, and substance, while others have their afflictions protracted, and linger long under them, as in the next clause: *he will laugh at the trial of the innocent;* not that are free from sin entirely; for there are none such, no, not new-born infants; though they may be comparatively so, yet they are not in an absolute sense, being conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity: besides, here it means adult persons, good men, that are truly gracious, sincere, upright, harmless in their lives and conversations, whose afflictions are *trials* of their faith and patience, and other graces; and when God is said to *laugh* at them, who seems to be designed here, this must be understood consistent with his pity to his people, his sympathy with them under all their afflictions, he not willingly afflicting or grieving the children of men; nor can it be thought that he has them in derision and contempt, or laughs at their calamities, or in reality, as he does at wicked men; but that he carries it so oftentimes, in the dispensations of his providence, as if he made no difference between them, but mocked at the one as well as the other; seemingly giving no heed to their cries; not hastening to their help and deliverance, but lengthening out their troubles for the trial of their graces; and so indeed is greatly delighted with the exercise of them under them, and with seeing them bear them with so much patience, courage, and greatness of mind and submission to his will. Some interpret this of a wicked man laughing at the calamities of the righteous, as the Ammonites and Edomites rejoiced at the destruction of the Jews, the church's enemy at her fall, and as the Papists will at the witnesses being slain; but the former sense seems best; rather the scourge itself laughs at the trial of the innocent; so Schultens.

Ver. 24. *The earth is given into the hands of the wicked*, &c.] Either the wicked one, Satan, as Jarchi and Bar Tzemach, who is the god of this world; or

[z] Singulare enimvero id! Schultens.

some wicked tyrant, as Nimrod, or some other known by Job in his time, to whom he may have respect; or wicked men in general, who for the most part have the greatest share of the earth, and earthly things, and of power, dominion, and authority in it; and this they have of God, the powers that be are ordained by him, and therefore to be obeyed; and what any have of the earth, and the fulness of it, they have it from him, whose it is, and who has a right to dispose of it, and therefore being given by him, they have a proper right unto it; but then it is only the things of this world which are given them; they have their portion here, and that is their all; wherefore, as the giving of these is no proof of a man's goodness, so the taking of them away is no evidence of his wickedness; love or hatred are not to be known by these things; this is Job's scope and drift in this and the preceding verse: *he covereth the face of the judges thereof;* not Satan, who blinds the minds of such, that they should not understand justice, and do it, as the above Jewish writers interpret it; nor the wicked man that is possessed of riches and wealth, power and authority, who by his substance bribes the judges, and blinds their eyes, or by his power and authority awes them, keeps them from executing true judgment, or discourages persons fit for such an office, and will not advance them, but lets them lie in, and covers them with, obscurity; or such who are honest and faithful, and are not to be bribed and browbeaten, these he either removes from their post, and covers their faces with shame, or takes them away by death, condemns and executes them as malefactors; it being usual in former times, as well as in ours, to cover the faces of such as are executed: but rather this is to be understood of God, who delivers the earth into the hands of the wicked, suffers them to have the rule over it, and permits such things to be done, as already observed; and besides, gives up the judges of the earth to judicial blindness, so that they cannot discern what is right and just, and do it, see Isa. xxix. 10. *if not, where* and *who is he?* if it is not so as I say, where is the man, and who is he, that can disprove me, and make me a liar? as Aben Ezra; let him come forth and appear, and confute me, and teach me otherwise if he can; or name the place of his abode, and say who he is; or if God does not do this, give the earth into the hands of wicked men, and cover the faces of the judges of it, and suffer wicked men to prevail, and the causes of good men to be subverted, the one to flourish, and the other to be crushed; who does do it? where is the man that has done or can do it? certain it is, that it is done; and who but that God that superintends all things, sits in the heavens, and does whatsoever he pleases, can do such things as these? or could they be done without his will and permission? by such mediums Job proves his assertion, that God destroys the perfect and the wicked; and therefore, by the face of things in providence, no judgment is to be had of a man's character, good or bad, and then instances in himself in the following verses.

Ver. 25. *Now my days are swifter than a post,* &c.] Or *than a runner* [a] in a race, in order to obtain the prize; or than one that rides post, or runs on foot to carry a message, such as were Cushi and Ahimaaz; and such are generally swift of foot, or ride on swift horses, who are so employed; and yet Job says his days are swifter, or passed away more swiftly than such; meaning either his days in general; or rather particularly his prosperous days, as Mr. Broughton interprets it; these no sooner came but they were gone: *they flee away;* like a shadow, or a dream, or a tale that is told: *they see no good;* or he saw, perceived, or enjoyed no good in them; not but that he did see and enjoy much good, even much temporal good, which is what is intended; but this was no sooner had than it was taken away, that it was as if it had never been; the evil days of trouble and sorrow, in which he had no pleasure, came so quick upon him.

Ver. 26. *They are passed away as the swift ships,* &c.] Those that are lightest built, and run swiftest. Bar Tzemach thinks such vessels as are rowed with oars are meant, which may be called *ships of will* or *desire* [b], as the words may be rendered, because they may be rowed at pleasure, and be carried to any place where and when a man thinks fit; whereas those that are not depend upon the wind, and that must be waited for; or they design such ships that are so swift in their motion, that they arrive to the haven as soon as men can well wish for and desire. Some render it *pirate ships,* or *ships of enmity* [c]; such as are designed for spoil and plunder, and which are light ones, not loaded with goods, and therefore move swiftly: the Targum is, "ships burdened with precious fruits;" and the Vulgate Latin version is, "ships carrying "apples:" now ships loaded with such sort of goods, with perishing commodities, are obliged to make their port as soon as possible. Some leave the word untranslated, and call them *ships of Ebeh* [d]; which, according to Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and others, is either the name of a place, or of a river in Arabia, which ran with a rapid stream, and in which ships were carried with great celerity. Bolducius relates from a traveller of his acquaintance, who finished his travels in 1584, that he saw such a river about Damascus, not far from the sepulchre of Job; but that must be the river Chrysorrhoas, now called Barrady; but there were two rivers of this name Ebeh; one near Cufa, and another in Wasith, a country of Babylon, as Golius observes [e]. Others take the word to have the signification of reed or papyrus, which grew on the banks of the Nile, and of which ships were made, see Isa. xviii. 1. and render the words *ships of reeds* or *of papyrus* [f], and which, being light, were very swift: *as the eagle* that *hasteth to the prey;* the eagle is the swiftest of birds, and therefore persons and things exceeding swift are compared unto them, see Hab. i. 8.

[a] מני ־ רץ cursore, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.

[b] אניות אבה navibus desiderii, Mercerus, Drusius, Schmidt; so Ben Gersom.

[c] Naves inimicitiarum, h. e. piraticæ, vel hostiles; as some in Drusius; so Broughton.

[d] Navibus Ebeh, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Bolducius, Codurcus.

[e] Lexic. Arab. p. 9.

[f] Naves arundinis, Michaelis; navibus papyraceis, Schultens, Ikenius, in ib.

Lam. iv. 19. and it flies the most swiftly when being hungry, and in sight of its prey, and is nearest to it, and flaps upon it, which is the thing referred to, and so may be rendered, *that flies upon the prey*[g]. Job uses these metaphors, which are the most apposite, to shew how fleeting his days of prosperity were, and how soon gone: and a climax may be observed in the words; a runner, though he runs swiftly, a ship moves faster than he, and an eagle, just about to seize its prey, flies swifter than that.

Ver. 27. *If I say, I will forget my complaint*, &c.] The cause of it, the loss of his children, servants, substance, and health, and endeavour to think no more of these things, and cease complaining about them, and attempt to bury them in oblivion, and change his note: *I will leave off my heaviness;* his melancholy thoughts, words, airs, and looks; or *forsake my face*[h], put on another countenance, a more gay and cheerful one; the Jewish commentators generally interpret it, *my anger*, either at the dispensations of Providence, or at his friends: *and comfort* myself; that things were not worse with him than they were; or *strengthen*[i] himself, as the word is rendered in Amos v. 9. against his fears, and troubles, and dejection of mind, determining to take heart, and be of good courage, and not sink, and succumb, and faint under his burdens: none but God, Father, Son, and Spirit, can give comfort to distressed ones, whether on temporal or spiritual accounts; but good men may make use of means for comfort, such as hearing the word, reading the Scriptures, prayer, meditation, and conversation with good men.

Ver. 28. *I am afraid of all my sorrows*, &c.] That they would return upon him, and surround him, and overwhelm him, so that he should not be able to stand up against them, or under them; that they would increase and continue with him, and so he should never be released from them: *I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent:* a sudden apostrophe to God as near him; the meaning is not, that he was confident that God would not justify him but condemn him in a spiritual sense; Job did not despair of his everlasting salvation, he knew and believed in his living Redeemer; he knew he should be acquitted and justified by his righteousness, and not be condemned with the world; but he was certain of this, as he thought that God would neither *cleanse*[k] him, as some render the word, from the worms his flesh was clad with, and from the filthy boils and ulcers he was covered with; nor clear him so as that he should appear to be innocent in the sight and judgment of his friends; but go on to treat him as if he was a guilty person, by continuing his afflictions on him, even unto death; he had no hope of being freed from them, and so of being cleared from the imputation of his friends, who judged of him by his outward circumstances.

Ver. 29. If *I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?*] If he was that wicked person, that hypocrite, Bildad and his other friends took him to be, it was in vain for him to make his supplications to God, as they advised him; so Gersom gives the sense of the words; since God hears not sinners, such as live in sin, regard iniquity in their hearts, and practise it in their lives, at least secretly, as it was suggested Job did; if he was such an one, it must be all lost labour to pray to God to shew favour to him, and deliver him out of his troubles, since he might reasonably expect he would shut his eyes and stop his ears at such a man, and regard not his cries; seeking to him must be in vain; prayer may be fitly enough expressed by labour, it is a striving and wrestling with God, and especially when it is constant, importunate, and fervent: but rather the sense is, that if he was a wicked man in the account of God, or was dealt with as one; if God would not hold him innocent, as he asserts in the latter part of the preceding verse, then it was a vain thing to labour the point in the vindication of himself; since he could never think of succeeding against God, so wise and powerful, so holy, just, and pure. The word *if* is not in the original text, and may be left out, and the words be rendered, *I am wicked*[l]; not in any notorious manner, as having lived a scandalous life, or been guilty of some gross enormities, as his friends insinuated, but in common with other men; he was born a sinner, had been a transgressor from the womb, and though he was renewed and sanctified by the spirit of God, yet sin dwelt in him, and through the infirmity of the flesh he was daily sinning in thought, word, or deed; nor did he expect it would be otherwise with him whilst in this world; yea, it was impossible for him to be without sin, as Bar Tzemach observes to be the sense of the phrase; and therefore if God would not clear him, or hold him innocent, unless he was entirely free from sin, as it was labouring in vain to attain to such perfection, so it must be to no purpose, and is what he chiefly intends, to attempt to vindicate himself before God: or *I shall be wicked*, or *ungodly*[m]; I shall be treated as such not only by his friends, who would reckon him a very wicked man so long as those afflictions continued on him, let him say what he would; but by the Lord himself, who he believed would never release him from them as long as he lived, which in the eye of men would be a tacit condemnation of him; so the Targum, "I shall be condemned," and therefore it was labour in vain, striving against the stream, to go about to vindicate himself; nor was it possible that he could make himself out so clear and pure and perfect, that such an holy Being as God was could find no fault in him, in whose sight the heavens, and the inhabitants of them, were not clean; this is further evinced in the following words.

Ver. 30. *If I wash myself with snow-water*, &c.] As it came from heaven, or flowed from the mountains covered with snow, as Lebanon, see Jer. xviii. 14. or was kept in vessels for such use, as being judged the best for such a purpose; so it was used by the ancients[n], as being what whitens the skin, and

[g] יעוש על אכל involans in escam, Junius & Tremellius; involat in escam, Piscator, Schultens.

[h] אעזבה פני relinquam facies meas, Montanus, Bolducius, Schmidt.

[i] אבליגה confirmabo vel roborabo cor meum, Mercerus; so R. R.

[k] כי לא תנקני quod non mundabis me, Montanus, Bolducius, Beza.

[l] אנכי ארשע impius sum, V. L. Pagninus; so Schmidt.

[m] Ego impius ero, Montanus, Mercerus, Bolducius; ego reus ero, Codurcus; equidem improbus ero, Schultens.

[n] Discubuimus, pueris aquam nivalem in manus infundentibus, Petronius in Satyr.

strengthens the parts by contracting the fibres, and hindering perspiration; it signifies, in a figurative sense, that let him take what methods he would to cleanse himself from sin, they were all in vain, his iniquity would be seen, and remain marked before God; and indeed there is nothing that a man can do that will make him pure and clean in the sight of an holy God; this is not to be done by ceremonial ablutions, such as might be in use in Job's time, before the law of Moses was given, and to which he may have some reference; these only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, or only externally, but could not purify the heart, so as to have no more conscience of sin; nor by moral duties, not by repentance, as Sephorno; a fountain, a flood, an ocean of tears of humiliation and repentance, would not wash away sin; if, instead of ten thousand rivers of oil, so many rivers of brinish tears could be produced, they would be of no avail to cleanse the sinner; nor any works of righteousness done by man, for these themselves need washing in the blood of the Lamb; for nothing short of the blood of Christ, and the grace of God, can do it: *and make my hands never so clean;* the hands are what men work with, Eccl. ix. 10. and so may design good works, which are sometimes called clean hands; see Psal. xxiv. 6. compared with Psal. xv. 1, 2. and may be said to be so when they are done well, from a pure heart, and faith unfeigned, without selfish and sordid views, with a single eye to the glory of God; which is doing them as well, and making the hands as clean, as well can be; yet these are of no avail with respect to justification before God, and acceptance with him, or with regard to salvation, which is all of grace, and not of works, be they what they will; some render the words, *and cleanse my hands with soap*[*], which cleanses them best of any thing, see Jer. ii. 22.

Ver. 31. *Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch,* &c.] In the filthy ditch of sin, the pit wherein is no water, the horrible pit, the mire and clay, in which all unregenerate men are, and to which hypocrites return, as the swine to its wallowing in the mire; and in which impurity self-righteous persons are, and are sooner or later made to appear, notwithstanding all their outward righteousness, holiness, purity, and perfection they boast of; and though Job was neither of these, not an unregenerate man, nor an hypocrite, nor a self-righteous person; yet he knew that, in comparison of the perfect purity and holiness of God, he should appear exceedingly impure; and that God would treat him as such, and hold him out to the view of others as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things, by continuing his afflictions, from whence it would be concluded that he was the most impure person; and indeed by the ditch may be meant the ditch of afflictions, as Sephorno, either his present ones continued, his filthy ulcers and scabs, with which his body was covered all over, or new afflictions he would bring him into, where he would sink in deep mire, there being no standing, Psal. lxix. 2. some understand this of the grave, the ditch or pit of corruption, into which he should be cast, and there putrefy and rot: but the other senses seem best: *and mine own clothes shall abhor me;* not his clothes in a literal sense; either whilst living, his filthy ulcers being such, that were his clothes sensible of them, they would loathe and abhor to touch him, and cover him; or when dead, his sepulchre-garments, his shroud, or winding-sheet, would disdain to cover such a filthy body, overspread with worms and dust; or as Vatablus paraphrases it, clothes don't become a dead body; or as Mr. Broughton, "when I go naked to the grave, as "though my clothes loathed me:" but the words are rather to be understood figuratively, either of some of his friends that were as near and as close to him as his clothes, or had been, but now were estranged from him, and loathed and abhorred him, see ch. xix. 13—19. or better, of his best works of righteousness, which he put on as a robe, ch. xxix. 14. and which are a covering to the saints before men, and are ornamental to them, though not justifying in the sight of God; and indeed in themselves, and compared with the holy law, and holy nature of God, are imperfect and impure; and if God was to enter into judgment with men, they would be so far from justifying them in his sight, or rendering them acceptable to him, that they would cause them to be abhorred by him, as all self-righteousness and self-righteous persons are, see Prov. xxi. 27. Luke xvi. 14. and xviii. 14. yea, even the best works of men are but dung in the judgment of a good man himself, what then must they be in the account of God? Phil. iii. 8. Job here, and in the preceding and following verses, has most exalted ideas of the purity, holiness, and majesty of God, so that no creature, nor creature-holiness, be they ever so perfect, can stand before him, or be pure in his sight.

Ver. 32. *For he is not a man, as I am, &c.*] For though the parts and members of an human body are sometimes ascribed to him, yet these are to be understood by an anthropopathy, speaking after the manner of men, there being something in him, which in a figurative sense answers to these; otherwise we are not to conceive of any corporeal shape in him, or that there is any likeness to which he is to be compared: he is a spirit infinite, immortal, immense, invisible, pure and holy, just and true, and without iniquity; whereas Job was but a man, a finite, feeble, mortal creature, and a sinful one; and therefore there being such a vast disparity between them, it was in vain to litigate a point with him, to plead his cause before him, or attempt to vindicate his innocence; the potsherds may strive and contend with the potsherds of the earth their equals, but not with God their Creator, who is an overmatch for them; he sees impurity where man sees it not, and can bring a charge against him, and support it, where he thought there was none, and therefore it is a vain thing to enter the lists with him: that I *should answer him;* not to questions put by him, but in a judicial way to charges and accusations he should exhibit; no man in this sense can answer him, for one of a thousand he may bring, and men are chargeable with; wherefore Job once and again determines he would not pretend to answer him, as he knew he could not, see ver. 3, 14, 15. and we *should come together in judgment;* in any court of ju-

[*] בבר Stocgmate, Codurcus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt; so the Targum, and Mr. Broughton.

dicature, before any judge, to have the cause between us heard, and tried, and determined; for in what court of judicature can he be convened into? or what judge is there above him, before whom he can be summoned? or is capable of judging and determining the cause between us? there is the high court of heaven, where we must all appear, and the judgment-seat of Christ, before which we must all stand; and God is the judge of all, to whom we must come, and by whose sentence we must be determined; but there is no court, no judge, no judgment superior to him and his; there is no annulling his sentence, or making an appeal from him to another; there is no coming together at all, and much less *alike* [p], as some render it, or upon equal terms; the difference between him and his creatures being so vastly great.

Ver. 33. *Neither is there any daysman betwixt us,* &c.] Or *one that reproves* [q]; who upon hearing a cause reproves him that is found guilty, or is blameworthy, or has done injury to another; but there is no such person to be found, among angels or men, capable of this, supposing, as if Job should say, I should appear to be the injured person; or there is no *umpire* or *arbitrator* [r], to whom the case between us can be referred; for, as Bar Tzemach observes, he that stands in such a character between two parties must be both more wise and more mighty than they; but there is none among all beings wiser and mightier than God: *that might lay his hand upon us both;* and restrain them from using any violence to one another, as contending persons are apt to do; and compromise matters, settle and adjust things in difference between them, so as to do justice to both, and make both parties easy, and make peace between them. Herodotus [s] makes mention of a custom among the Arabians, "when they enter into covenants and agreements with each other, another man stands in the midst of them both, and with a sharp stone cuts the inside of the hands of the covenanters near the larger fingers; and then takes a piece out of each of their garments, and anoints with the blood seven stones that lie between them; and whilst he is doing this calls upon a deity, and when finished the covenant-maker goes with his friends to an host or citizen, if the affair is transacted with a citizen; and the friends reckon it a righteous thing to keep the covenant." To which, or some such custom, Job may be thought to allude. Now, whereas Christ is the daysman, umpire and mediator between God and men, who has interposed between them, and has undertaken to manage affairs relating to both; in things pertaining to God, the glory of his justice, and the honour of his law, and to made reconciliation for the sins of men, and to make peace for them with God by the blood of his cross; which he has completely done, being every way qualified for it, inasmuch as he partakes of both natures, and is God and man in one person, and so could put his hand on both, and make both one; or bring them who were at variance to an entire agreement with each other, upon such a bottom, as even the strict justice of God cannot object unto. Now, I say, Job must not be understood as if he was ignorant of this, for he had knowledge of Christ as a Redeemer and Saviour, and so as the Mediator and Peacemaker; the Septuagint version renders it as a wish, *O that there was a mediator between us!* and so it may be considered as a prayer for Christ's incarnation, and that he would appear and do the work of a mediator he was appointed to, which Job plainly saw there was great need of; or, as others [t], *there is no daysman yet;* there will be one, but as yet he is not come; in due time he will, which Job had faith in and full assurance of: but there is no need of such versions and glosses: Job is here not speaking of the affair of salvation, about which he had no doubt, he knew his state was safe, and he had an interest in the living Redeemer and blessed Mediator; but of the present dispensation of Providence, and of the clearing of that up to the satisfaction of his friends, so that he might appear to be an innocent person; and since God did not think fit to change the scene, there was none to interpose on his behalf, and it was in vain for him to contend with God.

Ver. 34. *Let him take his rod away from me,* &c.] Not his government over him, of which the rod or sceptre is an ensign, Job did not want to be freed from that; but his rod of affliction, or stroke, as the Targum, the stroke of his hand, which, though a fatherly chastisement, lay heavy upon him, and sunk his spirits; so that he could not, whilst it was on him, reason so freely about things as he thought he could if it was removed, and for which he here prays: *and let not his fear terrify me;* not the fear of him as a father, which is not terrifying, but the fear of him as a judge; the terror of his majesty, the dread of his wrath and vengeance, the fearful apprehensions he had of him as a God of strict justice; that would by no means clear the guilty, yea, would not hold him innocent, though he was with respect to the charge of his friends; being now without those views of him as a God gracious and merciful; to these words Elihu seems to have respect, ch. xxxiii. 6, 7.

Ver. 35. *Then would I speak, and not fear him,* &c.] With a servile fear, though with reverence and godly fear; meaning either at the throne of grace, having liberty of access, boldness of spirit, and freedom of speech through Christ the Mediator, and in the view of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; for when the rod of his law and the terror of his justice are removed, and his grace and favour in Christ shewn, a believer can speak boldly and freely to God, and not be afraid before him: but rather Job's sense is, that were the rod of his anger taken off, and the dread of his majesty, which so awed him that he could not tell his case as it was, and use the arguments he might to advantage; he should speak without fear, and so as to defend himself, and make his cause to appear to be just; to this the Lord seems to refer in ch. xxxviii. 3. and xl. 7. being bold and daring expressions, for which Job blushed when made sensible of it, ch. xlii. 5, 6. *but* it is *not so with me;* there was no daysman between the Lord and him; the rod was not taken off

[p] יחדו pariter, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius.
[q] מוכיח arguens, Montanus, Bolducius, Drusius; redarguens, Vatablus, Mercerus.
[r] Arbiter, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schultens.
[s] Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 8.
[t] So some in Caryll.

his back, nor the dread and terror of the Almighty removed from him; and so could not speak in his own defence, as otherwise he might: or it was not so with him as his friends thought of him; he was not the wicked hypocritical man they took him to be, or as the afflictive dispensations of God made him to appear to be, according to their judgment of them: or the words may be rendered, *I am not so with myself*[u]; that is, he was not conscious to himself that he was such a person they judged him; or such were the troubles and afflictions that were upon him, that he was not himself, he was not *compos mentis*, and so not capable on that account, as well as others, of pleading his own cause: or *I am not right in* or *with myself*[w]; not in his right mind, being distracted with the terrors of God, and the arrows of the Almighty that stuck in him; or he was not righteous in himself; for though he was clear of hypocrisy he was charged with, he did not pretend to be without sin, or to have such a righteousness as would justify him before God; and therefore desires things might be put upon the foot of grace, and not of strict justice.

CHAP. X.

JOB here declares the greatness of his afflictions, which made him weary of his life, and could not help complaining; entreats the Lord not to condemn him, but shew him the reason of his thus dealing with him, ver. 1, 2. and expostulates with him about it, and suggests as if it was severe, and not easily reconciled to his perfections, when he knew he was not a wicked man, ver. 3—7. he puts him in mind of his formation and preservation of him, and after all destroyed him, ver. 8—12. and represents his case as very distressed; whether he was wicked or righteous it mattered not, his afflictions were increasing upon him, ver. 13—17. and all this he observes, in order to justify his eager desire after death, which he renews, ver. 18, 19. and entreats, since his days he had to live were but few, that God would give him some respite before he went into another state, which he describes, ver. 20, 21, 22.

Ver. 1. *My soul is weary of my life*, &c.] And yet nothing of a temporal blessing is more desirable than life; every man, generally speaking, is desirous of life, and of a long life too; soul and body are near and intimate companions, and are usually loth to part; but Job was weary of his life, willing to part with it, and longed to be rid of it; he *loathed* it, and so it may be here rendered[x], he would not live always, ch. vii. 15, 16. his *soul* was uneasy to dwell any longer in the earthly tabernacle of his body, it being so full of pains and sores; for this weariness was not through the guilt of sin pressing him sore, or through the horror of conscience arising from it, so that he could not bear to live, as Cain and Judas; nor through in-dwelling sin being a burden to him, and a longing desire to be rid of it, and to be perfectly holy, to be with Christ in heaven, as the Apostle Paul, and other saints, at certain times; or through uneasiness at the sins of others, as Isaac and Rebekah, Lot, David, Isaiah, and others; nor on the account of the temptations of Satan, his fiery darts, his buffetings and siftings, which are very distressing; but on account of his outward afflictions, which were so very hard and pressing, and the apprehension he had of the anger and wrath of God, he treating him, as he thought, very severely, and as his enemy, together with the ill usage of his friends. The Targum renders it, "my soul is cut off in my life;" or I am dying whilst I live; I live a dying life, being in such pain of body, and distress of mind; and so other versions[y]: *I will leave my complaint upon myself;* not that he would leave complaining, or lay it aside, though some[z] render it to this sense; rather give a loose to it, and indulge it, than attempt to ease himself, and give vent to his grief and sorrow by it; but it should be *upon himself,* a burden he would take upon himself, and not trouble others with it; he would not burden their ears with his complaints, but privately and secretly utter them to himself; for the word[a] used signifies *meditation,* private discourse with himself, a secret and inward *bemoaning* of his case; but he did not continue long in this mind, as appears by the following clause: or since I can do no other but complain; if there is any blame in it, I'll take it wholly upon myself; complain I must, let what will be the consequence of it; see ch. xiii. 13. though the phrase may be rendered, as it is sometimes, *within myself,* see Hos. xi. 8.[b]; and then the sense may be, shall I leave my inward moan within myself, and no longer contain? I'll give myself vent; and though I have been blamed for saying so much as I have, I'll say yet more: *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul;* as one whose life is made bitter, against whom God had wrote and said bitter things, and had brought bitter afflictions upon him, which had occasioned bitter complaints in him, as well as he had been bitterly used by his friends; and amidst all this bitterness he is determined to speak out his mind freely and fully; or to speak *of the bitterness*[c] of his soul, and declare, by words, what he in his mind and body endured.

Ver. 2. *I will say unto God, do not condemn me,* &c.] Not that he feared eternal condemnation; there is none to them that are in Christ, and believe in him as Job did; Christ's undertakings, sufferings, and death, secure his people from the condemnation of law and justice; nor, indeed, are the afflictions of God's people a

[u] לא כן אנכי עמדי non sic ego apud me, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Vatablus, Mercerus, Schmidt, Schultens.

[w] Quia non probus ego apud me, Boldicius; quod non sim rectus apud me, Cocceius.

[x] נקטה נפשי בחיי fastidit anima mea vitam meam, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[y] Excisa est anima mea in vita mea, Pagninus, Vatablus; so Ben Gersom & Ben Melech.

[z] So Junius & Tremellius.

[a] שיחי meditationem meam, Schindler, col. 1893. my sighing, Broughton.

[b] עלי intra me. Vid. Noldium, p. 701.

[c] במר in vel de amaritudine, Mercerus.

condemnation of them, but a fatherly chastisement, and are in order to prevent their being condemned with the world; yet they may look as if they were, in the eyes of the men of the world, and they as very wicked persons; and so the word may be rendered, *do not account me wicked*[d], or treat me as a wicked man, by continuing thine afflicting hand upon me; which, as long as it was on him, his friends would not believe but that he was a wicked man; wherefore, as God knew he was not such an one as they took him to be, he begs that he would not use him as such, that so the censure he lay under might be removed; and though he was condemned by them, he entreats that God would make it appear he was not condemned by him: and whereas he was not conscious to himself of any notorious wickedness done by him, which deserved such usage, he further prays, *shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.* Afflictions are the Lord's controversy with his people, a striving, a contending with them; which are sometimes so sharp, that were they continued long, the spirits would fail before him, and the souls that he has made: now there is always a cause or reason for them, which God has in his own breast, though it is not always known to man, at least not at first, or as soon as the controversy or contention is begun; when God afflicts, it is either for sin, to prevent it, or purge from it, or to bring his people to a sense of it, to repent of it, and forsake it, or to try their graces, and make them more partakers of his holiness; and when good men, as Job, are at a loss about this, not being conscious of any gross iniquity committed, or a course of sin continued in, it is lawful, and right, and commendable, to inquire the reason of it, and learn, if possible, the end, design, and use of such dispensations.

Ver. 3. Is it *good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?* &c.] This God does not approve of in others; he dehorts men from it; he threatens to punish those that do so, and to be a swift witness against them; he promises to arise to the help of the oppressed, and to be a refuge for them, and therefore will never do the same himself; it can never be pleasant to him, nor right and just in his sight, nor is it of any advantage to him. Job here suggests, that his afflictions were an oppression to him; and, indeed, no affliction is joyous, but grievous, and sometimes the hand of God presses hard and sore, but then there is no injury nor any injustice done, as the word[e] here used signifies; and he intimates also, as if God took some seeming delight and pleasure in thus oppressing him, and therefore expostulates with him about it, as if such conduct was not fit and becoming him, not agreeable to his perfections, and could afford neither pleasure nor profit. This, and what follows in this verse, are expostulations too bold and daring, and in which Job uses too much freedom with the Almighty, and in which he is not so modest as in the preceding verse: *that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?* which he tacitly insinuates he did. Job means himself, who, as to his body, and the several members of it, were the work of God's hands, curiously and wonderfully made by him, as is afterwards expressed; and as to his soul, and the powers and faculties of it, they were his make, who is the Father of spirits; and moreover, as a new man, he was made by him, was the workmanship of God, and a curious piece indeed, created after his image in righteousness and true holiness; and he was in every sense the work of his hands, or *the labour of his hands*[f]; wrought with great care and labour, even with the *palms of his hands*, as is the word[g] used; and could Job think that God *despised* such a work? he who, upon a survey of his works, said they were all very good; who forsakes not the work of his hands, nor despises the day of small things, could never do this; nor are afflictions to be interpreted in such a manner, as if God was indifferent unto, slighted and thought meanly of, what he himself has wrought; since these are so far from having such a meaning, that they flow from that great respect he has for his own work, and are for the good of it: *and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* either the counsel of the wicked one, Satan, who moved God to afflict him in the manner he had, or of the Sabeans and Chaldeans, who throve and prospered, notwithstanding the injury they had done him; or of his friends, who consulted to brand his character with hypocrisy; or, rather, of wicked men in general, on whose counsel God may be thought to *shine*, when it succeeds, and God seems to smile upon them in his providence, and they are in prosperous circumstances, and have what heart can wish, when good men are greatly afflicted; which sometimes has been a temptation, and greatly distressing, to the latter; see Psal. lxxiii. 2—14. Jer. xii. 1, 2. but this is not always the case; the counsel of the froward is sometimes carried headlong, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is made brutish, and that of Ahithophel was defeated by him; and whenever he seems to countenance it, it is to answer some ends of his glory.

Ver. 4. *Hast thou eyes of flesh?* &c.] God has eyes, but not fleshly ones; he has eyes of love, grace, and mercy, which are always upon his people for good, and are never withdrawn from them; and he has eyes of displeasure and wrath on sinful men, to destroy them; these are not made of flesh, or like the eyes of flesh and blood, or of men; fleshy eyes cannot see at any great distance, and only in one place at a time, and only one object after another; they cannot see in the dark, and what they are, and only outward objects; and in these they are sometimes deceived, and at length fail: but the eyes of God see all things, at the greatest distance; he looks down from heaven, and beholds all the children of men on earth, and all their actions; his eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good; he can see in the dark as well as in the light, the darkness and the light are both alike to him; he beholds not only outward actions and visible objects, but the hearts of men, and all that is in them; nor is he ever deceived, nor will his sight ever fail: though Job, perhaps, may mean carnal eyes; that is, evil

[d] אל תרשיעני neque judices me improbum, Vatablus; so Schultens.
[e] תעשק est opprimere vim injustam alicui facere, Schmidt.

[f] יגיע laborem, Paguinus, Montanus, Schultens, Michaelis.
[g] כפיך volarum tuarum, Montanus, Boldocius.

ones, as especially envious ones are: *is thine evil?* Matt. xx. 15. that is, envious; and it is as if Job should say, dost thou envy me my former prosperity and peace, that thou searchest so narrowly into my conduct to find iniquity in me, and take advantage against me? *or seest thou as man seeth?* look with hatred and envy, as one man does upon another: so seemed the dispensations of God towards Job, as if he did, as he suggests.

Ver. 5. Are *thy days as the days of man?* &c.] No, they are not: not so few; the days of the years of man's life in common are threescore years and ten; but a thousand years with the Lord are but as one day; his days are days not of time, but of eternity: nor so mutable, or he so mutable in them; man is of one mind to-day, and of another to-morrow; but the Lord is in one mind one day as another; he is the Lord that changes not; immutable in his nature, purposes, promises, and affections: but Job suggests as if his dispensations towards him shewed the contrary; one day smiling upon him, and heaping his favours on him, and the next frowning on him, and stripping him of all: but this was a wrong way of judging; for, though God may change the dispensations of his providence towards men, and particularly his own people, his nature changes not, nor does he change his will, his purposes, and designs, nor his love and affection: are *thy years as man's days?* as few as they, or fail like them? no, he is the same, and his years fail not, and has the same good will to his people in adverse as well as in prosperous dispensations of his providence. Some understand all this in such sense, in connexion with what follows, as if Job had observed, that since God was omniscient, and knew and saw all persons and things, his eyes not being like men's eyes, eyes of flesh; and since he was eternal, and wanted not for time, there was no need for him to take such methods as he did with him, through afflictive providences, to find out his sin; since, if he was guilty, it was at once known to him; nor need he be in such haste to do it, since his time was not short, as it is with an envious and ill-natured man, who is for losing no time to find out and take an advantage of him he bears an ill will unto.

Ver. 6. *That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?*] Narrowly examined every action of his life, to find something amiss in them; and took notice of every weakness and infirmity, and aggravated it, to make it appear as sinful as it could be, and watched every halting and failing, that he might have something against him as a reason why he afflicted him; dealing with him as if there was no Messiah, no Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, provided, appointed, and promised; and as if there was no forgiveness of sin, through him, for him: sin pardoned for his sake is covered, that when it is sought for it shall not be found; so that when it is not pardoned, or not thought to be so, it lies open, and upon inquiry to be found, charged, and punished for; see ch. vii. 21. this search and inquiry seems to have been made by afflictions; at least Job imagined that the design of God in them was to put him upon the rack, and bring him to a confession of sin, and in this way find an occasion against him: now such a method as this, Job thought, was unbecoming the greatness, majesty, and perfections of God; and was quite needless, since his eyes were not human nor shortsighted, that obliged him to pore and pry into things, but were omniscient, and could see at once whether there was any evil way in him or no; nor was he as men, short-lived, which obliged him to make use of his time while he had it, to get an advantage of another; and besides, such a method of acting seemed to him very extraordinary, when he full well knew he was an innocent person, as follows.

Ver. 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked,* &c.] Or *in*, or *upon thy knowledge*[a] it is *that I am not wicked;* it is a thing well known, quite clear, and manifest, without making such a search and inquiry: not that he thought himself without sin, and could appeal to the omniscience of God for the truth of that; for he had confessed before that he was a sinner, and wicked, as to his nature and birth, and the many infirmities of life; see ch. vii. 20. and ix. 29. but that he was not that wicked person, and an hypocrite, as his friends took him to be, and as might be concluded from the sore afflictions that were upon him; he did not live in sin, nor indulge himself in a vicious course of life; sin had not the dominion over him, and he had not secretly cherished any reigning iniquity, and lived in the commission of it: and for the truth of this he could appeal to the searcher of hearts; and yet he so closely pursued, and so strictly examined him, as if he suspected he was thus guilty: *and* there is *none that can deliver out of thine hand;* that is, out of his afflicting hand, until he please to release him from it himself; for this is not to be understood of deliverance from the avenging hand of justice, from hell and wrath, and everlasting destruction; for there is one that can and does deliver his people from sin and Satan; from the world, the law, its curses and condemnation, and from wrath to come; and so from the hands of justice, having made full satisfaction to it: but what Job observes that God knew was, that neither he himself, nor any angel, nor man, nor any creature, could take him out of his hand in which he was; and therefore suggests, not only that his condition was extremely bad, distressed, and miserable, but that there was no necessity for God to be so quick upon him, and so strict in his inquiry into him; nor of enclosing him about on all hands with afflictions, since there was no danger of his escaping from him, or of others assisting him in and facilitating such an attempt: and this he full well knew; for so the words are in connexion with the preceding: *and thou knowest* that *there is none,* &c.[b], as well as with what follows, as some think.

Ver. 8. *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about,* &c.] This and what follow are an illustration of, and an enlargement upon, the work of God's hands, made mention of in ver. 3. and suggest reasons why it should not be despised by him, as well as confirm what was just now said, that none could deliver him out of his hands; since his hands had made

[a] על דעתך in notitia tua est, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Beza; so Michaelis.

[b] So Bolducius, Drusius, Schmidt, Michaelis, and Bar Tzemach.

him, and therefore had such power over him as none else had: and the whole seems designed to move to pity and compassion of him; for not he himself, nor his parents, but God only had made him; he was his workmanship only, and a curious piece it was, which his hands of power and wisdom had nicely formed; for, though the Son and Spirit of God are not to be excluded from the formation of man, yet it seems a too great strain of the words to interpret *hands* of them, as some do; and much less are they to be understood literally of the hands of the Son of God appearing in an human form at the creation of man, since such an appearance is not certain; nor is Job speaking of the formation of the first man, but of himself: the first word[c], rendered *made*, has the signification of labour, trouble, grief, and care; and is used of God after the manner of men, who, when things are done well by them, take a great deal of pains, and are very solicitous and careful in doing them; and from hence is a word which is sometimes used for an idol, as Gersom observes, because much labour and skill are exercised to form it in the most curious and pleasing manner; many interpreters, as Aben Ezra observes, from the use of the word in the Arabic language, explain it of God's creating the body of man with nerves, by which it is bound, compacted, and strengthened[d]; and the latter word denotes the form and configuration of it, the beautiful order and proportion in which every part is set; and the whole is intended to observe the perfection of the human body, and the exquisite skill of the author of it; and what pity is it that it should be so marred and spoiled! and this is said to be made and fashioned *together*, or all at once; the several parts of it being in the seed, in the embryo, all together, though gradually formed or brought into order; or rather this denotes the unity and compactness of the several members of the body, which are set in their proper place, and joined and fitted together, by joints and bands, and by that which every joint supplieth: and this is done *round about*, on all sides, in every part; or, as Mr. Broughton renders it, *in every point;* the whole of it, and every member, even the most extreme and minute, are curiously formed and fashioned by the Lord; or rather, thine hands are *together round about me;* embracing, sustaining, and preserving him ever since he was made: *yet thou dost destroy me;* this body, so extremely well wrought, by boils or ulcers; or *swallow me*[e], as a lion, to which he compares him, ver. 16. or any other ravenous and large creature, see Lam. ii. 2, 5. some connect the words more agreeably to the accents, *yet thou dost destroy me together round about*[f]; or on every side, as in ch. xix. 10. having smitten him with boils from the crown of the head to the sole of the feet, and stripped him of his substance and his family all at once; and so it denotes utter destruction: some read the words interrogatively, *and wilt thou destroy or swallow me*[g]? after thou hast taken so much pains, and been at such labour and trouble, speaking after the manner of men, to make such a curious piece of work, and yet with one stroke destroy it and dash it in pieces, or swallow it up as a morsel at once.

Ver. 9. *Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay,* &c.] Not *of* the clay, though man was made originally of the dust of the earth, and the bodies of men are houses of clay, earthen vessels, and earthly tabernacles, but *as the clay;* either as the clay is wrought in the hand of the potter, and worked into what form, and made into what vessel he pleases, so are men in the hand of God, made by him in what form, and for what use and end he thinks fit; or rather this denotes not the likeness of the operation, but the likeness of the matter of the human body to clay; not for the impurity of it; for though man is in a state and condition comparable to the mire and clay, this he has brought himself into by sin, and not the Lord; he made man upright, but man has made himself sinful and polluted; but for the brittleness of it; as a vessel made of clay is brittle and easily broke to pieces, and cannot bear much weight, or any heavy stroke; so the body of man is weak and frail, and feeble; its strength is not the strength of stones, and its flesh brass, but clay: and this Job humbly entreats the Lord would *remember*, and that *now*[h]; immediately; and deal mildly and mercifully with him, since he was not able to bear the weight of his hand, which would soon crush him and break him to pieces; not that God forgets this, for he remembers man's frame and composition, that he is but dust; that he is flesh, and a wind or vapour that passes away: but he may seem to do so, when he sorely afflicts, and his hand lies heavy, and he does not remove it, but continues it, and rather increases the affliction; and therefore, as the Lord allows his people to put him in remembrance, Job here desires that he would shew himself, in his providential dealings with him, that he was mindful of his natural frailty and infirmity; see ch. vii. 12. Psal. lxxviii. 3. and lxxxix. 47. and ciii. 14. *and wilt thou bring me into dust again?* to the dust of death; to the original of which he was made; and that so soon, and at once; or, *and unto dust wilt return me?* as Mr. Broughton and others[i], according to the original sentence, *dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,* Gen. iii. 19. and which Job expected, and will be the case of all men, Eccl. xii. 7. and therefore he thought that this might suffice, that it was enough that he should die in a little while through the course of nature, and therefore desires he might have some respite and ease whilst he did live; he could not see there was any occasion to press him so hard, and follow him so close with afflictions one after another, or be so rough with him and quick upon him; since in a short time his brittle clay would break of itself, and he should drop into the dust and lie mouldering there, as it was of old decreed he should.

Ver. 10. *Hast thou not poured me out as milk,* &c.] Expressing, in modest terms, his conception from the seed of his parents, comparable to milk, from being a

[c] עצבוני elaboraverunt me, Tigurine version, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Cadurcus, Mercerus, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[d] Nervis colligarunt, Schultens.
[e] ותבלעני et deglutics me, Montanus, Bolducius; et tamen absorbeas me, Schmidt; absorbes me, Schultens, Michaelis.

[f] So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus, Cocceius.
[g] Absorbes me? Beza, Mariana.
[h] נא nunc, Drusius; so the Targum.
[i] תשיבני reducturus, Schmidt, Schultens; reduces me? V. L. Beza, Michaelis; redire facies me? Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius.

liquid, and for its colour: *and curdled me like cheese?* that of the female being mixed with, and heated by the male, is hardened like the curd of which a cheese is made, and begins to receive a form as that, and becomes an embryo: and naturalists [k] make use of the same expressions when speaking of these things; and in this way most interpreters carry the sense of the words; but Schultens observes that milk is an emblem of purity and holiness, see Lam. iv. 7. and so this may respect the original pure formation of man, who came out of his Maker's hands a pure, holy, and upright creature, made after his image and in his likeness, created in righteousness and holiness, and so, like milk, pure and white; or rather the regeneration and sanctification of Job personally, and which might be very early, as in Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and others; or however, he was filled and adorned with the gifts and graces of the spirit of God, was washed and cleansed, and sanctified and justified; and had his conversation in the world in all simplicity and godly sincerity, being preserved from gross enormities in life; was a man that feared God and eschewed evil, and had not only the form of godliness, but the power of it; and was established and confirmed in and by the grace of God, and was strong in the exercise of it; and from hence he argues with God, should such a vessel of grace, whom he had made so pure and holy, and had so consolidated and strengthened in a spiritual and religious way, be crushed and destroyed at once?

Ver. 11. *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, &c.*] The bones with flesh, which is the under garment, and the flesh with skin, which is the upper; which is artificially composed of curious little arteries, veins, nerves, and glands, through which the blood continually circulates, and through innumerable pores, and transpires, of which pores 125,000 may be covered with a small grain of sand [l], amazing! Timæus Locrus [m] calls them invisible little mouths; see Ezek. xxxvii. 6. the order of generation seems to be observed; after the semen is hardened and consolidated, the inward parts are formed, and then the outward parts, the flesh and skin, to protect and defend them; and so are compared to clothes which are without a man, and put about him; Porphyry [n] calls the body the clothing of the soul; see 2 Cor. v. 4. the spiritual clothing of Job was the righteousness of his living Redeemer, who was to partake of the same flesh and blood with him, and stand on the earth in the fulness of time, and work out and bring in a righteousness for him, consisting of his obedience in life in the days of his flesh, and of his sufferings and death, or blood, by which he and every believer are justified before God; and with which being clothed, shall not be found naked: *and hast fenced me with bones and sinews;* the bones are said by philosophers [o] to be the fences of the marrow, and the flesh the covering of them; the bones are the strength and stability of the human body; the sinews or nerves bind and hold the several parts of it together, and are of great use for its strength and motion: the bones, some of them are as pillars to support it, as those of the legs and thighs; and others are of use to act for it, offensively and defensively, as those of the hands and arms; and others are a cover and fence of the inward parts, as the ribs: Gussetius [p] seems inclined, could he have found an instance of the word being used for making a tent, which it has the signification of, to have rendered the words, "with bones and sinews, thou hast given me "the form of a tabernacle; or, thou hast made me to "be a tent;" so the human body is called a tabernacle, 1 Cor. v. 1. and 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. the skin and flesh being like vails or curtains, which cover; the bones are in the room of stakes, and the nerves instead of cords, the breast and belly a cavity: in a spiritual sense, a believer's strength lies in the grace of Christ, in the Lord, and in the power of his might; his defence is the whole armour of God provided for him, particularly the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the breastplate of righteousness, with which he is fenced and protected from every spiritual enemy; and will God suffer such an one to be destroyed, whom he hath taken such care of, both in a natural and spiritual manner?

Ver. 12. *Thou hast granted me life and favour, &c.*] Or *lives* [q]; natural life; both in the womb, where and when he was quickened, and at his birth, when he was brought into the world, and began to live in it; the rational soul may be intended, by which he lived; which, when created and infused into man, and united to his body, he becomes a living man; it is the presence of that which causes life, and the absence or removal of that which causes death; and this is a *grant* or gift from God, who gives to all his creatures life and breath, and all things; see Job xxxiii. 4. Acts xvii. 25. and is a *favour* also; a mercy, the chief of mercies; it is more than meat; yea, all a man has he will give for his life: besides this, Job had a spiritual life, a principle of it implanted in him; God had quickened him when dead in trespasses and sins; the spirit of life from Christ had entered into him, and he was become a living spiritual man: this likewise was a *grant* from God, a free-grace gift of his; it is he that gives the living water, and gives it freely, or it would not be grace; for it is a *favour* which flows from the free grace and good will of God; it is owing to the great love wherewith he loves men that he quickens them; his time is a time of love, and so of life; and eternal life is the consequent of this, and is inseparably connected with it; and Job had an interest in it, a right unto it, and a meetness for it; he had knowledge of it, faith in it, and hope of enjoying it, and knew that after death he should live this life; see ch. xix. 26, 27. and this is a gift of God through Christ, owing to his good pleasure, the fruit of his favour and loving-kindness: though by *favour* may be meant something distinct from life; either the care of him in the womb, and the taking of him out from thence, which are sometimes observed as singular mercies and favours; see Psal. xxii. 9. and lxxi. 6. or the beauty and comeliness of his body, such as was on Moses,

[k] Sic semen maris dicitur πιτυα, Aristot. de Gen. Animal. l. 1. c. 20. coagulum. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 15. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 3. c. 16.
[l] Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 681.
[m] De Anima Mundi, p. 18.
[n] De Antro Nymph.
[o] Timæus Locrus, ib. p. 15.
[p] Ebr. Comment. p. 555, 556.
[q] חיים vitas, Montanus, Bolducius.

David, and others; see Prov. xxxi. 30. or rather it intends in general all the temporal blessings of life, food and raiment, every thing necessary for the comfort and support of life; and which are all mercies and favours, and what men are undeserving of; and especially spiritual blessings, or the blessings of grace; and the word here used is often used for grace and mercy, and may signify the several graces of the Spirit bestowed in regeneration, as faith, hope, love, &c. which are all the gifts of God, and the effects of his favour and good will; as also the blessings of justifying, pardoning, and adopting grace; all which Job was favoured with, as well as with supplies of grace from time to time, and the fresh discoveries of the favour and loving-kindness of God to him, which is better than life: *and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit;* kept him alive, in a natural sense, while in the womb, as Jarchi, where he was in a wonderful manner nourished; and when he came out from thence, exposed to many difficulties and dangers, and during his helpless and infant state, and amidst a variety of troubles throughout the whole of his life thitherto; and which was owing to God's visitation of him in a way of mercy every morning; and which was no other than his providence or daily care of him, and concern for him; and so Mr. Broughton renders it *thy providence* [r], and so some others: likewise he preserved his soul or spirit in a spiritual sense, in Christ Jesus, in whose hands he put him; he hid his life in him, and bound it up in the bundle of life with him; he kept him by his power as in a garrison, and preserved him safe to his kingdom and glory; and this is to be ascribed to his visitation of him in a way of grace, through the redemption of Christ, and the effectual vocation of the blessed Spirit, and the constant supplies of grace vouchsafed from time to time; the Targum is, *thy remembrance;* for it is owing to God's remembrance of his people that he visits them, either in providence or grace; and when he visits them with his providence, or with his gracious presence and protection, it is plain he remembers them: now since God had favoured him with such blessings of nature, providence, and grace, he reasons with him about his present circumstances; that, after all this, surely he would not destroy him and cut him off; at least he knew not how well to reconcile past favours with such hard and severe usage as he thought he met with from him.

Ver. 13. *And these* things *thou hast hid in thine heart,* &c.] Meaning, either the mercies and favours he had indulged him with; these he seemed to conceal and suppress the memory of, as if they had never been, by a different conduct and behaviour; or rather, these he had laid up in his mind and memory, and had full knowledge and remembrance of; though he dealt with him in the manner he did, he could not forget his former favours to him, which, when compared with his present dealings, were very unlike: or, it may be best to understand these things of his afflictions and troubles, which, notwithstanding his being the work of his hand so curiously formed, and notwithstanding all his temporal and spiritual mercies, he had in his heart purposed, and decreed in his mind, and laid up in his treasures, in order to be brought forth in due time, and to exercise him with; these were the things he had appointed for him, and many such things were with him, as it follows: *I know that this is with thee;* either that he was not ignorant and forgetful of what he had done in a kind way; or rather, that he had this in his mind, and it was an eternal purpose of his to afflict him in the manner he had done: some connect these words with the following verse, as if the sense was, these are what thou hast hid in thine heart, and this is what I know is with thee, *if I sin,* &c [s].

Ver. 14. *If I sin, then thou markest me,* &c.] Or *observest me* [t]; that is, he took notice of his sins, strictly inquired into them and all the circumstances of them, watched the motions and progress of them, and carefully laid them up, in order to bring them out against him another day, and afflict or punish him for them; or he set a watch about him, *kept* him *in* [u], and enclosed him on every side with affliction, as if he was in a watch or prison, as Gersom; or, *wilt thou keep me* [w]? that is, in such close confinement: Gussetius [x] renders it, *if I have offered a sacrifice for sin,* as the word is sometimes used; signifying, that though he should, as no doubt he did, offer sacrifice for himself, as it is certain he did for his children, yet even that was not regarded by the Lord; he still marked and observed him and his sins, and would not forgive him, or absolve him from his sins, as follows; see ch. vii. 12. *and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity;* clear him of it, and discharge him from it; pronounce him innocent, or pardon him; but, on the contrary, hold him guilty, and deal with him as such in a rigorous way; or wilt not *cleanse* or purify me, as the Targum and others [y], but let me continue, or treat me as an impure person, not fit for communion or converse.

Ver. 15. *If I be wicked, woe is me,* &c.] In this world, and to all eternity; afflictions will abide me here, and everlasting wrath hereafter: these are the woes that belong to a wicked man; that is, a profane and abandoned sinner, that lives in sin, and gives up himself to all manner of wickedness; the Targum is, " destruction to me from the great judgment;" utter ruin is my portion, as it is of all wicked and unrighteous persons, Isa. iii. 11. *and* if *I be righteous,* yet *will I not lift up my head;* live a holy life and conversation, be righteous in the sight of men, and behave so as not to know any thing by himself, nor to be conscious of living in any known sin; yet he could not take any comfort from it, or have any pleasure in it, or speak peace to himself on account of it, or glory in it and make his boast of it; or lift up his head before God with boldness and confidence, who is so pure and holy, and his eyes so quick in discerning the sins of men: a good man derives his peace and comfort, not from his own righteousness, but from the righteousness of Christ, and puts his confidence in that only; he blushes,

[r] פקדתך providentia tua, Tigurine version, Munster, Michaelis.
[s] So Coccejus, Schmidt.
[t] שמרתני observasti me, Beza, Mercerus; tum observas me, Schmidt.
[u] Custodisti me, Drusius.

[w] Custodies me, Vatablus.
[x] Ebr. Comment. p. 923.
[y] תנקני mundabis, Mercerus; mundes, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius; purges me, Junius & Tremellius.

and is ashamed of his own; and cannot, nay, *dare not lift up* his *head*, as Mr. Broughton, the Tigurine version, and others render it, through shame, being sensible that nothing of his own can stand before an holy God, or give him joy, peace, and pleasure there; the Targum adds, *before the ungodly*; but this a man may do before men, when he cannot before God: I am *full of confusion*; being in such a dilemma; let him be what he would, he was sure to have affliction, sorrow, and distress, so that he knew not what to say or do; or *reproach*[y], which he was loaded with by his friends, and was occasioned by his afflictions, they judging from thence that he was a wicked man, and justly punished for his sins; the word used signifies a burning heat, such as a man feels in his breast, and which flushes in his face, when he is filled with anger or with shame: *therefore see thou mine affliction*; not with his eye of omniscience, that he knew he did, but with an eye of pity and compassion, and deliver him from it; or, *I am full with seeing mine affliction*, as Jarchi; or, I am one *that sees affliction*[z]; that has an experience of it; sees it all around me, and nothing else, Lam. iii. 1. am a *spectator*[a] of it, as some render it; but not a mere spectator, but one that has a sensible feeling of it: some take this and the former clause both to be an address to God, and render them, *be satisfied with confusion, and behold my affliction*, as Broughton and others[b]; let the present calamity and confusion I am in be sufficient; let no more be laid upon me; be content with what has been done, and pity me, and do not lay thine hand heavier upon me, and add to my afflictions, as he thought he did, by what follows.

Ver. 16. *For it increaseth*, &c.] That is, the affliction increaseth; which is a reason why pity should be shewn him, seeing his troubles instead of abating were growing upon him; he had as much, or more, than he could well bear, and yet more was added to it; so that he was an object of compassion: or, *it lifteth itself up*[c]; these proud waves of affliction rise, swell, and lift themselves on high, and threaten to overwhelm and utterly destroy; some render it as a wish, *oh, that it increased*[d]; that it would come to its height, and quickly and at once put an end to this miserable life of mine: Job's affliction was a lingering one, it proceeded slowly; he wished it would make more haste, and become stronger, and soon dispatch him; see ch. vi. 9. *thou huntest me as a fierce lion*; as the ramping shakal, as Mr. Broughton; the lion rampant, that is hungry, fierce, and ravenous, that pursues its prey with great eagerness, and never leaves till it comes up to it, when it seizes and devours it at once; or *it*, the affliction, *hunteth me*, pursues me closely, and will not leave, but threatens destruction to me; or rather, *thou*, that is God, who is often in Scripture compared to a lion, particularly when afflicting, or about to afflict the sons of men; see Isa. xxxviii. 13. Hos. v. 14. and xiii. 7, 8. some[e] interpret the words, as if Job was compared to a lion hunted by men, at which darts were cast, for which nets were prepared, and pits were dug: according to this sense Job was dealt with as if, in the time of his prosperity, he had been like a fierce and cruel lion, preying upon and oppressing others; now the Lord was taking methods with him, both to restrain him from hurting others, and to chastise him for what he had done to them: but it would be much better to consider this in a light more agreeable to Job's character as a good man, a righteous one, who is as bold as a lion, and fears nothing, Prov. xxviii. 1. and such an one was Job; and in his prosperity lifted up his head and walked boldly, and consequently not fearing the frowns of men, nor the malice of Satan; but now this lion was hunted by the Lord himself, and compassed with his net, ch. xix. 6. and to this sense is the version of Schultens, connecting the words with the preceding clause, *him therefore, who walked high as a lion, thou humblest*; he who before carried his head high, being afraid of none, is now hunted down, and lies low enough, prostrate and distressed: *and again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me*; or, *thou returnest*[f] *and shewest*, &c. after he had afflicted him in one way, he returned and afflicted him in another; and he not only repeated his afflictions, but devised new ways of afflicting him, uncommon ones, such as raised admiration in all beholders, as things rare and uncommon do: Job's afflictions were surprising ones; to be stripped at once of his substance, servants, children, and health; and it might be more wonderful to some, that God, so gracious and merciful as he is, should afflict in such a severe and rigorous manner; and especially that he should afflict so good a man, one so just and upright as Job was, in such a way: and it was even marvellous to Job himself, who was at a loss to account for it, not being conscious to himself of any gross enormity he had committed, or of a sinful course of life, or of any one sin he had indulged to, wherefore God should come forth *against*[g] him as an enemy, in so terrible a manner: so some render the particle.

Ver. 17. *Thou renewest thy witnesses against me*, &c.] Not the devils, as some, nor Job's friends, as others; but rather afflictions, which were daily renewed, and frequently repeated, new troubles coming continually one upon another; which were brought as fresh witnesses against him, which made the suit tiresome to him, the trial to last the longer, which he wished was at end, that the decisive sentence might be pronounced and executed, and he be dispatched at once; but instead of that the affair was protracted by bringing in one witness after another, or one affliction upon the back of another, which were brought as witnesses *before him*[h], as some render it; either to accuse him, and convince of sin, or as proofs of God's indigna-

[y] קלון contumeliis, Tigurine version; ignominia, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Vatablus, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis.

[z] וראה עניי et videns afflictionem, Beza, Vatablus, Mercerus, Piscator.

[a] Et spectator adflictionis meæ, Schultens.

[b] Satiare ignominia, Junius & Tremellius.

[c] ויגאה attollit sese, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Mercerus.

[d] So Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Bolducius.

[e] So Jarchi and Nachmanides; to which sense the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions incline.

[f] ותשב & reverteris, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Vatablus, Mercerus; so Beza.

[g] בי adversum me, Beza; contra me, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius.

[h] נגדי coram me, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Mercerus, Schmidt, Schultens.

tion against him, as in the next clause; or they were witnesses against him with the profane world, and even with his friends, who from hence concluded he must have been, and was, a wicked man, that had so many and such great afflictions laid upon him, and these continued and repeated; of which they judged these were full and sufficient proofs and testimonies. Schultens renders it, *thy incursions*, and interprets it of instruments of hunting, as nets and the like, to which afflictions may be compared: *and increasest thine indignation upon me;* the tokens of it, by increasing afflictions, and the sense of it in his mind; for from his afflictions, and the increase of them, he judged of the indignation of God upon him, or *against him*[b], and the increase of it; as these were daily renewed, and were greater and greater, so was the sense he had of the wrath and displeasure of God against him; see ch. vi. 4. *changes and war are against me;* or *with me*, or *upon me*[c]; by changes are meant the various afflictive providences which attended him, which were repeated, or succeeded one another in their turns; great changes he had undergone in his estate and substance, from the greatest man in the east now become the poorest; in his family, his servants and children being destroyed; in his body, being covered with boils; and in his mind, being filled with a sense of God's displeasure, and under the hidings of his face: and *war* was against him on every side, not only the law in his members was warring against the law of his mind, his corruptions working powerfully under his afflictions; and he was conflicting with Satan, and his principalities and powers; but even his friends were at war with him, yea, God himself, in his opinion, counted and treated him as an enemy. Job was in a warfare-state, and his afflictions came upon him like troops, and charged him one after another; or his afflictions were like an *army*[d], as the word may be rendered, many and numerous; and these were either repeated, or new ones succeeded others; different afflictions in their turns came upon him, and particularly an army of worms were continually running to and fro upon him; see ch. vii. 5. the word is rendered an *appointed time*, ch. vii. 1. and so some take it here, and may signify that all the changes and vicissitudes in life he passed through, the various afflictions that came upon him, were at the set and appointed time, as well as there was an appointed time for him on earth, until his last change came.

Ver. 18. *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* &c.] Into this world; this act is rightly ascribed by Job to the Lord, as it is by David, Psal. xxii. 9. and lxxi. 6. which kind act of God Job complains of, and wishes it had never been, seeing his life was now so miserable and uncomfortable; here he returns to his former complaints, wishes, and expostulations, expressed with so much vehemence and passion in ver. 3. and for which his friends blamed him, and endeavoured to convince him of his error in so doing; but it does not appear that their arguments carried any force in them with him, or had any effect upon him; he still continues in the same mind, and by repeating justifies what he had said; and thought he had sufficient reason to wish he had never been born, that he had died in the womb, since his afflictions were so very great and increasing, and since God pursued him as a fierce lion; and, according to his sense of things, his indignation against him appeared more and more, and his life was a continued succession of trouble and distress: *and that I had given up the ghost:* that is, in the womb, and had never been brought out of it, at least alive; or it may be rendered not as a wish, but as an affirmation, *I should have given up the ghost;* or, *so* or *then I should have expired*[e]; if such care had not been taken of me, if God had not been so officious to me as to take me out of my mother's womb at the proper time, I should have died in it, and that would have been my grave; and which would have been more eligible than to come into the world, and live such a miserable life as I now live: *and no eye had seen me;* no eye would have seen him, had he not been taken out of the womb; or however if he had died directly, would not have seen him alive; and an abortive or still-born child few see, or care to see; and had he been such an one, he had never been seen in the circumstances he now was; and by this he suggests, that he was now such a shocking sight as was not fit to be seen by men, and which would have been prevented had he died in the womb.

Ver. 19. *I should have been as though I had not been*, &c.] For though it cannot be said absolutely of such an one, an abortive or untimely birth, that it is a nonentity, or never existed; yet comparatively it is as if it never had a being; it being seen by none or very few, it having had no name, nor any conversation among men; but at once buried, and buried in forgetfulness, as if no such one had ever been; see Eccles. vi. 3, 4, 5. This Job wished for, for so some render it, *oh, that I had been as though I had never been*[f]; and then he would have never been involved in such troubles he was, he would have been free from all his afflictions and distresses, and never have had any experience of the sorrows that now surrounded him: *I should have been carried from the womb to the grave;* if he had not been brought out of it, the womb had been his grave, as in Jer. xx. 17. or if he had died in it, and had been still-born, he would quickly have been carried to his grave; he would have seen and known nothing of life and of the world, and the things in it; and particularly of the troubles that attend mortals here: his passage in it and through it would have been very short, or none at all, no longer than from the womb to the grave; and so should never have known what sorrow was, or such afflictions he now endured; such an one being in his esteem happier than he; see Eccl. iv. 3.

Ver. 20. Are *not my days few?* &c.] They are so, the days of every man are but few; see ch. xiv. 1. Psal.

[b] עמדי adversus me, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schultens; so Vatablus.

[c] עמי mecum, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Mercerus, Schmidt; apud me, Beza, Piscator, Cocceius.

[d] צבא militia, Montanus, Bolducius; exercitus, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus, Schmidt, Schultens.

[e] אגוע expirabo, Montanus; expirassem, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.

[f] So Vatablus, Piscator, and some in Mercerus.

&c. 10. the remainder of Job's days were but few; considering the course of nature, and especially the sore afflictions he had on him, it could not be thought his days on earth were many; in all likelihood, according to human probability, he had but a few days to live: *or are not my days a small little thing*[g]? it is as an hand's breadth, as nothing before God, Psal. xxxix. 5. *cease then:* that is, from afflicting him; since he had so short a time to live, he requests there might be some intermission of his trouble; that he might have some intervals of comfort and refreshment, that not all his days, which were so few, should be spent in grief and sorrow: some connect this with the preceding clause, and which is most agreeable to the accents, *shall not the fewness of my days cease*[h]? I have but a few days, and these few days will soon cease; therefore give me some respite from my afflictions; and so the Targum, "are not my days swift and ceasing?" and *let me alone;* don't follow me with afflictions, or disturb and distress me with them; but take off thine hand, that I may have some rest and ease; see ch. vii. 10. or *put from me;* thine anger, as Kimchi, or thine army, as Junius and Tremellius; or thy camp, as Cocceius; that is, decamp from me, remove thy troops, the changes and war that are against me, by which I am besieged, surrounded, and straitened; let me be delivered from them: *that I may take comfort a little;* that he might have some breathing-time, some respite from his troubles, some refreshment to his spirit, some reviving to his fainting soul, some renewing of strength, before he departed this life; see Psal. xxxix. 13. so Aben Ezra and Gersom render it: *that I may be strengthened;* or that his heart might gather strength.

Ver. 21. *Before I go* whence *I shall not return,* &c.] Before he went out of the world, the way of all flesh, to the grave, his long home, from whence there is no return to this world, and to the business and affairs of it; to a man's house, his family and his friends, to converse with them as before, there will be no return until the resurrection, which Job does not here deny, as some have thought; it was a doctrine he well understood, and strongly asserts in ch. xix. 26, 27. but this must be understood in the same sense as in ch. vii. 9, 10. even *to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death;* which describes not the state of the damned, as some Popish interpreters carry it; for Job had no thought nor fear of such a state; but the grave, which is called *a land,* or country, it being large and spacious, and full of inhabitants; a land of *darkness,* a very dark one, where the body separated from the soul is deprived of all light; where the sun, moon, and stars, are never seen; nor is there the least crevice that light can enter in at, or be seen by those that dwell in those shades, which are *the shadow of death* itself; deadly shades, thick and gross ones, the darkest shades, where death itself is, or dead men are, destitute of light and life; where no pleasure, comfort, and conversation, can be had; and therefore a land in itself most undesirable.

Ver. 22. *A land of darkness, as darkness itself,* &c.] Not merely like it, but truly so; as gross thick darkness, like that of Egypt, that might be felt; even blackness of darkness, which is as dark as it possibly can be; not only dark, but darkness, extremely dark: *and of the shadow of death;* which is repeated for the illustration and confirmation of it, as having in it all kind of darkness, and that to the greatest degree: *without any order,* or *orders*[i]; or vicissitudes and successions of day and night, summer and winter, heat and cold, wet and dry; or revolutions of sun, moon, and stars, or of the constellations, as Aben Ezra; and whither persons go without any order, either of age, sex, or station; sometimes a young man, sometimes an old man, and the one before the other; sometimes a man, sometimes a woman; sometimes a king, prince, and nobleman, and sometimes a peasant; sometimes a rich man, and sometimes a poor man; no order is observed, but as death seizes them they are brought and laid in the grave, and there is no order there; the bones and dust of one and the other in a short time are mixed together, and there is no knowing to whom they belong, only by the omniscient God: *and where the light is as darkness;* were there any thing in the grave that could with any propriety be called light, even that is nothing but darkness; darkness and light are the same thing there: or when *it shineth it is darkness*[k]; that is, when the sun shines brightest here, as at noon-day, it is entire darkness in the grave; no light is discerned there, the rays of the sun cannot penetrate there; and could they, there is no visive faculty in the dead to receive them; all darkness is in those secret places.

CHAP. XI.

IN this chapter Zophar the Naamathite, Job's third friend, attacks him, and that with great acrimony and severity, and with much indecency; he charges him not only with loquacity, and vain babbling, but with lying, and with scoffing at God, and good men, ver. 1, 2, 3. which he attempts to support by some things Job had said, misrepresented by him, ver. 4. and wishes that God would take him in hand, and convince him of the wisdom of the divine proceedings with him, and of his lenity and mercy to him, ver. 5, 6. and then discourses of the unsearchableness of God in his counsels, and conduct; of his sovereignty, and of his power, and of the vanity and folly of men, ver. 7—12. and as his friends before him, having insinuated that Job was guilty of some heinous sin, or sins, and especially of hypocrisy, advises him to repentance and

[g] הלא מעט ימי nonne parum dies mei? Montanus, Bolducius, Schmidt; paucum quid, Vatablus, Beza, Mercerus.

[h] An non parum, vel paucitas dierum meorum cessabit? Cocceius; annon pauxillulum dierum meorum deficiet? Schultens.

[i] ולא סדרים & non ordines, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Mercerus; sine ordinibus, Cocceius, Schmidt.

[k] ותפע splendet, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

reformation, and then it would be well with him; and he should enjoy much comfort, peace, and safety, even to old age, ver. 13—19. and concludes it should go ill with the wicked man and the hypocrite, such as he suggests Job was, ver. 20.

Ver. 1. *Then answered Zophar the Naamathite,* &c.] The third of Job's friends, that came to visit him, ch. ii. 11. see the note there; and who perhaps might be the youngest, since his turn was to speak last; and he appears to have less modesty and prudence, and more fire and heat in him, than his other friends; though he might be the more irritated by observing, that their arguments were baffled by Job, and had no manner of effect on him, to cause him to recede from his first sentiments and conduct: *and said;* as follows.

Ver. 2. *Should not the multitude of words be answered?* &c.] Zophar insinuates, that Job was a mere babbler, a talkative man, that had words, but no matter; said a great deal, but there was nothing in what he said; that his words were but wind, yea, in effect that he was a fool, who is commonly full of words, and is known by the multitude of them; and whereas he might think to bear down all before him in this way, and to discourage persons from giving him an answer; this Zophar suggests should not be the case, nor would he be deterred hereby from giving one, which he now undertook: some supply it, as Bar Tzemach, *should not a man of a multitude of words*[s], &c. a verbose man, a dealer in many words, and nothing else, should not he be *answered?* if he uses nothing but words, and there's no argument in them, they seem not to deserve an answer, unless it be to shew the emptiness of them, expose a man's folly, and pull down his pride and vanity: *and should a man full of talk be justified?* or *a man of lips*[t], an eloquent man, or one that affects to be so; a man of a fine speech, who artfully colours things, and makes a shew of wisdom and truth, when there are neither in what he says; is such a man to be justified? he would seem to be in his own eyes at least, if not in the eyes of others, if not answered; he would be thought to have carried his point, to have had the better of the argument, and to have got the victory by dint of words and power of oratory; for this is not to be understood of justification before God; for as no man is heard and accepted by him for his *much speaking*, as was the opinion of the Heathens, so neither are any justified on account of their many words, any more than their many works; since, in a multitude of words there are often not only much folly and weakness, but vanities and sins, Prov. x. 19. Eccl. v. 7. there is indeed a sense in which a man is justified by his words, Matt. xii. 37. when he confesses Christ, and professes to be justified by his righteousness, and believes in that, and pleads it as his justifying righteousness; he is justified by that righteousness; which is contained in the confession and profession of his faith; but this is not here meant.

Ver. 3. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?* &c.] By which he means, either lies in common, untruths wilfully told, which are sins of a scandalous nature, which good men will not dare to commit knowingly; and to give a man, especially such a man, the lie, is very indecent; and to charge a man falsely with it is very injurious: or else doctrinal ones, errors in judgment, falsehoods concerning God and things divine; which not only are not of the truth, for no lie is of the truth, but are against it; and indeed where the case is notorious in either sense, men should not be silent, or be as men deaf and dumb, as the word[u] signifies, as if they did not hear the lies told them, or were unconcerned about them, or connived at them: David would not suffer a liar to be near him, nor dwell in his house, Psal. ci. 7. a common liar ought to be reproved and rejected; and doctrinal liars and lies should be opposed and resisted; truth should be contended for, and nothing be done against it, but every thing for it: it is criminal to be silent at either sort of lies; nor should the bold and blustering manner in which they are told frighten men from a detection of them, which perhaps is what may be hinted at here[w]; some render the words[x], *should thine iniquity frighten men?* they are not so strong and nervous as to appear unanswerable, and deter men from undertaking a reply unto them: *and, when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?* here Job is represented as a mocker of God, which is inferred from ch. x. 3. and at his friends, and the arguments they used, and the advice they gave, which is concluded from his words in ch. vi. 25, 26. and as one hardened, who was not, and could not be made ashamed of what he had said against either, by any thing that had been offered for his reproof and conviction: to make a mock of God, or a jest of divine things, or scoff at good men, is very bad; indeed it is the character of the worst of men; and such should be made ashamed, if possible, by exposing their sin and folly; and if not here, they will be covered with shame hereafter, when they shall appear before God, the Judge of all, who will not be mocked, and shall see the saints at the right hand of Christ, whom they have jeered and scoffed at: but this was not Job's true character; he was no mocker of God nor of good men; in this he was wronged and injured, and had nothing of this sort to be made ashamed of.

Ver. 4. *For thou hast said,* &c.] What follows is produced to support the charge, especially of lying, which seems to be founded on what he had said in ch. vi. 10, 30. *my doctrine* is *pure:* free from error, unadulterated, unmixed, not blended with Heathenish principles and human doctrines; but tending to purity of heart and life, as every word of God, and doctrine that comes from him, is pure, yea, very pure, like silver purified seven times; and such was Job's doctrine which he *received* from God, *took*[y] up and professed, taught and delivered to others, so far as was agreeable to the will of God, and the revelation he had then made: and it appears that Job had very clear and sublime notions of God, of his being and perfections, of

[s] הרב דברים an abundans verbis, Beza; an multus verbis, Mercerus, so Kimchi & Ben Melech; and most Hebrew writers take רב for an adjective.

[t] איש שפתים vir labiorum, Montanus, Beza, Drusius, Vatablus, Mercerus, Bolducius, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[u] So Ben Melech.

[w] בדיך jactantias tuas, Cocceius.

[x] Tuane argumenta mortales consternabunt? Codurcus.

[y] לקחי doctrina aut oratio mea & sententia mente accepta, Michaelis; so Cocceius; id quid ab aliis acceptum, Drusius.

his works of nature, providence, and grace; of Christ his living Redeemer, of redemption and justification by him, and of the resurrection of the dead; and had purer and better notions of divine things than his friends had, and spoke righter things of God than they did, God himself being witness, ch. xlii. 7, 8. some interpret this of the purity of his life and conversation: he is further charged with saying: *and I am clean in thine eyes;* speaking to God, as Jarchi observes; and indeed so he was, and every believer is, in an evangelic sense; as to the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness, is without sin, and cannot commit it; and as washed from all sin in the blood of Christ, and as clothed with his righteousness, in which the saints are faultless before the throne, and are unblamable and irreprovable in the sight of God: but Zophar's meaning is, that Job had asserted that he was entirely free from sin in himself, was wholly without it, and did not commit any; and had appealed to God, as knowing it to be true; and which he seems to have grounded on what he had said, ch. x. 7. through a mistake of his sense; which was not that he was free from sin entirely, but from any gross notorious sin, or from a wicked course of living, and particularly from the sin of hypocrisy, his friends suggested he was guilty of; otherwise he confesses himself a sinner, and prays for the pardon of his sins, and disclaims perfection in himself; see ch. vii. 20, 21. and ix. 20, 30, 31. and indeed there is no creature in itself clean in the sight of God, either angels or men; every man is naturally unclean; no good man is without sin, without the being, in-dwelling, and commission of it; nor will any truly gracious man say he is; he knows otherwise, and acknowledges it; he that says he is must be an ignorant man, or a vain and pharisaical man; yea, must not say the truth: some have suspected the first part of the words to be Job's, *and I am clean;* and the other Zophar's explaining them; that is, *in thine eyes* [z]; in his own apprehension, as if he had a high and conceited opinion of himself.

Ver. 5. *But O that God would speak,* &c.] To Job, and stop his mouth, so full of words; convict him of his lies, reprove him for his mocks and scoffs, and make him ashamed of them; refute his false doctrine and oppose it, and shew him his folly and vanity in imagining it to be pure, and in conceiting himself to be free from sin, and even in the sight of God himself: Zophar seems by this wish to suggest, that what his friends had as yet spoke had had no effect upon Job, and signified nothing; and that he despaired of bringing him to any true sense of himself and his case, but that God only could do it; and therefore he entreats he would take him in hand, and speak unto him; as he had by his providences in afflicting him, so by his spirit in teaching and instructing him; and he adds: *and open his lips against thee;* or rather, *with thee,* or *to thee* [a]; converse with thee; speak out his mind freely; disclose the secrets of his wisdom, as in the next verse, and that for thy good; fully convince thee of thy sins, mistakes, and follies: for, notwithstanding all the heat and warmth of Zophar's spirit, yet, being a good man, as it cannot be thought he should wilfully and knowingly slander Job, and put a false gloss on his words, so neither could he desire any hurt or injury to be done him, or that God would deal with him as an enemy; only convince and reprove him for his sin, and justify himself and his own conduct, which he imagined Job had arraigned.

Ver. 6. *And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom,* &c.] Either of sound doctrine, in opposition to his own doctrine he had such a vain opinion of; and then he would see, as he thought, that it was not so pure as he imagined it to be: the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, are the wisdom of God, the produce of it, and in which it is displayed; as in the doctrines of election to grace and glory, of redemption by Christ, of justification by his righteousness, and pardon by his blood; by which all the divine perfections are glorified, the justice and holiness of God, as well as his grace and mercy: and there are *secrets* or mysteries in this wisdom of God, 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7. Matt. xiii. 11. or mysterious doctrines, which, though revealed, yet the modus, or manner of them, is not to be searched out and understood; such is the trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the union of the two natures in Christ, the saint's union to God and communion with him, the resurrection of the dead, *&c.* and these and such like them are only shewn by the Lord; men cannot come at them of themselves, by their own natural reason and understanding; it is God that reveals them, in his word, and by his spirit, and gives his people an increasing knowledge of them, 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. Psal. xxv. 14. and cxix. 18. or it may be rather the secrets of the wisdom of Divine Providence, in the government of the world, and the ordering of all things in it according to the counsel of God, may be here meant; there is a great display of the wisdom of God in Providence, and there are secrets in it indiscoverable by creatures; his ways are past finding out, they are in the deep waters, and his footsteps are not known, nor to be traced; though sometimes he makes his judgments manifest, and his mind in them; and what he does now, which men know not, he shews them hereafter; especially his own people, and particularly when in the sanctuary of the Lord, and in the way of their duty, when every thing appears right and beautiful they before were ready to complain of; see Rom. xi. 33. and then it is seen: *that* they are *double to that which is!* or to *wisdom* [b]; as the word is rendered in Prov. ii. 7. that is, to human wisdom; and then the sense is, that the secrets of divine wisdom displayed, whether in the doctrines of grace or in the methods of Providence, being shewn and made manifest, would appear to be *double;* that is, vastly, yea, infinitely to exceed the wisdom of men; and that these, which men are apt to arraign as weak and wrong, are the effects of the highest wisdom, or they then appear so *to a man of wisdom* [c]; so the supply may be made, as is in Mic. vi. 9. or else the sense is, were Job let in to the secret wisdom of God more, and into the purity and holiness

[z] Vid. Schultens in loc.

[a] עמך μετα σου, Sept. tecum, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Vatablus, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis; tibi, V. L. ad te, Piscator.

[b] לתושיה sapientiæ, de Dieu, Schmidt, Michaelis; so the Targum.

[c] Viro sapientiæ, Drusius.

of his law, which some understand by *that which is*, or *wisdom*, and render it *according to the law*[d]; and see what that requires, and how much short he comes of it, and what and how many were his transgressions and violations of it; it then would be plain to him, that the punishment that God, in wisdom, and according to his righteous law, might inflict upon him, would be double; or, greatly, yea, infinitely exceed those afflictions he was now exercised with, and therefore he had no reason to complain; to which agrees what follows: *know therefore that God exacteth of thee* less *than thine iniquities* deserve; or punishes, afflicts, or chastises, less than the deserts of sin; see Ezra ix. 13. some render it, *God exacteth of thee* something *of thine iniquity*; so Junius and Tremellius; according to which version the sense is, that sins are debts, and these many; and that payment of part of the debt of punishment for them is only required, which is not truth; for, though there is a debt of punishment due to justice for sin, yet it is not part of it only that is required of the sinner, but the whole, if any; for indeed no part of it is exacted of God's people, since the whole has been exacted of Christ, and he has answered and paid the whole debt, and blotted out the hand-writing against them; wherefore the word used has rather the signification of forgetfulness, and may be rendered, either *God hath caused*, or *suffered thee to forget* part *of thine iniquity*[e]; or thou couldest never say that thou wert clean in his eye, and free from sin; or, *God* himself has *forgot* part *of thine iniquity*[f]; in that he has afflicted thee so mildly, and with so much lenity; or, *hath forgotten thee for thine iniquity*[g]; forsook him, hid his face from him, laid his hand on him, and sorely chastised him, so that he seemed to be forgotten by him, or he to forget to be gracious to him; all which were owing to his sins, these were the causes of it; or, *will condemn thee for thine iniquity*[h].

Ver. 7. *Canst thou by searching find out God?*] God is not to be found out by human search; that there is a God may be found out by inquiring into the book of nature, by considering the creatures that are made, who all proclaim some first cause or maker of them, who is God; but then it cannot be found out what God is, his nature, being, and perfections: an Heathen philosopher[i], being asked by a certain king what God was, required a day to give in his answer; when that was up he desired a second, and still went on asking more; and being demanded the reason of his dilatoriness, replied, the more he had considered the question, the more obscure it was to him: *the world by wisdom*, or the wiser part of the Heathen world, *knew not God*: though they knew there was one, they knew not who and what he was; and therefore in some places altars were erected to the unknown God: and though some of the perfections of God may be investigated from the works of nature, such as the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, Rom. i. 19, 20. yet not all his perfections, such as his grace, mercy, *&c.* proclaimed and displayed in Christ; nor indeed his counsels, purposes, and decrees, which lie in his eternal mind, are the thoughts of his heart, the deep things of God, which none but the Spirit of God searches, knows, and reveals; and since Zophar's request was, that God should shew to Job *the secrets of wisdom*, these may be meant here, either evangelical wisdom, the wisdom of God in a mystery hid in his heart from everlasting, and the mysterious truths and doctrines of it, things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of; these are not to be found out by human search, but are by the revelation of God; or else the reasons of the proceedings of God in Providence, which are out of the reach of men, dark, intricate, mysterious, unsearchable, and past finding out: *canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* to the uttermost of his nature and perfections; all his attributes, the last of them, and the extremity thereof: that God is perfect and entire, wanting nothing, and is possessed of all perfections, may be found out, or otherwise he would not be God; but his essence and attributes, being infinite, can never be traced and comprehended by finite minds; there are some perfections of God we have no idea of, but are lost in confusion and amazement as soon as we think of them and reason about them, as his eternity and immensity particularly; for, when we have rolled over in our minds millions and millions of ages, we are as far off from eternity as when we began; and when we have pervaded all worlds, and every space and place, we have got no further into immensity than at first; we are confounded when we think of a Being without beginning and without bounds, unoriginated, and unlimited; yea, even it is but a small part of the works of God in creation that is known by men, or of God in and by them; nay, by divine revelation, which gives the clearest and most enlarged view of him, whereby he has proclaimed his name, a God gracious and merciful, *&c.* yet it is only his back parts that are shewn, not his face; it is only through a glass, darkly, we now see; indeed, in the other world, we shall see him face to face, and as he is, yet then never comprehend his essence: and, after all, it is only in Christ that God is to be found, to saving purposes; in him is the most glorious display of him; being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; and not only all his perfections are in him, as a divine Person, but they are glorified by him as Mediator; every step in salvation is taken in Christ, and every blessing of grace comes through him; what of the divine Presence and communion with God is enjoyed is by him; and he will be the medium of the enjoyment of God, and of all the glory and happiness of the saints in the world to come.

Ver. 8. It is *as high as heaven; what canst thou do?* &c.] Or, is *higher than the heavens*[k]; either the wisdom of God and the secrets of it; the perfection of his

[d] Secundum legem vel ordinationem, Vatablus.

[e] כי ישה לך אלוה מעונך obliviscі facit te Deus, aliquid de iniquitate tua, some in Mercer. so Gersom & Ben Melech, & Gussetius, p. 540.

[f] Quod obliviscatur tibi Deus ab iniquitate tua, Piscator; Vid. Gusset. ib.

[g] Quod oblitus tui est propter iniquitatem tuam, Pagninus, Mercerus.

[h] So some in Ben Melech.

[i] Simonides, apud Cicero. de Nat. Deor. l. 1.

[k] גבהי שמים altior est altissimis cœlis, Junius & Tremellius.

wisdom, by which he has made the heavens; or evangelical wisdom, hid in his heart, and which the highest of creatures, the angels, come at the knowledge of only by revelation; and therefore, what can man do to find it out, unless God reveals it? or wisdom displayed in dark providences, which can never be accounted for until the judgments of God are made manifest: or else, *he* that is *God*, as the Vulgate Latin version, is *higher than the heavens;* the heaven is his throne on which he sits, and therefore he must be higher than that; the heavens, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain him; he fills up the infinite space beyond them; how is it possible therefore to find him out, to comprehend him? *deeper than hell; what canst thou know?* meaning, neither the grave nor the place of the damned, for both which *Sheol* is sometimes used, but the centre or lowest part of the earth; there is a depth in God, in his essence, in his thoughts, in his wisdom, displayed in nature, providence, and grace, that is unfathomable; we can know nothing of it but what he is pleased to make known; see Psal. xcii. 5. Rom. xi. 33. the Targum of the verse is, "in the height of "heaven, what canst thou do? in the law, which is "deeper than hell, what canst thou know?"

Ver. 9. *The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.*] Length is generally ascribed to the earth, and width to the sea; the ends of the earth are used for a great distance, and the sea is called the great and wide sea; see[k] Psal. lxxii. 1. and civ. 25. but God and his perfections, particularly his wisdom and understanding, are infinite, Psal. cxlvii. 5. and will admit of no dimensions; as his love, so his wisdom, has an height which cannot be reached, a depth that cannot be fathomed, and a length and breadth immeasurable; see Eph. iii. 18. from hence it appears that God is omniscient, omnipresent, and incomprehensible; and since he is to be found in Christ, and in him only, it is in vain for us to seek for him elsewhere: next the sovereignty of God is discoursed of.

Ver. 10. *If he cut off*, &c.] The horns, power, dominion, and authority of the wicked; or the spirits of princes, or kingdoms and states, whole nations, as he did the seven nations of Canaan; or families, as Job's, his servants, and his children; or particular persons, by diseases, or by judgments, by famine, sword, and pestilence; there is none can hinder him; he'll do what he pleases: or, as others render it, *if he changes*[l]; if he makes revolutions in governments, changes in families, and in the estates of men, as in Job's; or changes men's countenances by death, and sends them out of time into eternity, there is no opposing him: or, *if he passes through*[m], as the word is sometimes used; see Isa. viii. 8. if he comes out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth, and goes through a kingdom and nation, making or suffering to be made devastations everywhere, as he went through the land of Egypt and smote all the first-born in it, there is no stopping him: or, *if he passes on*[n], or *from* hence, or goes away; see 1 Sam. xi. 3. or departs from a people or particular person, even his own people, and hides his face from them, and is long, at least as they think, before he returns; who can behold him, or find him out, or cause him to shew himself? see Job xxiii. 3, 8, 9. and xxxiv. 29. or, *if he subverts*[o] and overturns things, or should reduce the world and all things in it to a chaos, as at the deluge, or as he overturned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, or should set on fire the whole course of nature, and burn up the whole world and all in it, and reduce it to ashes, as he will; there is none can stay his hand, and obstruct him in his designs and measures: *and shut up;* should he do so; shut up in a civil sense, either in a prison, as Gersom, or in the hands of an enemy, by giving them unto them, to be enclosed and straitened by them, there is none can deliver; Psal. xxxi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 30. or to shut them up as he did Noah in the ark, by protecting them by his power and providence, and so appear to be on their side, and for them; who then can be against them? or what does it signify if any are, if the Lord shuts them up and keeps them close? or in a spiritual sense, if he concludes men in sin, and shuts them up in unbelief, and under the law; who but himself can set them free? or, if good men are shut up in their frames, and straitened in their souls, that they cannot come forth in the lively exercise of grace, and free discharge of duty; there is no opening for them till he pleases, Isa. lxxxviii. 8. Job xii. 14. *or gather together, then who can hinder him?* either gathers them into one place, in a civil sense; or in a gracious manner, with great mercies and everlasting kindness to himself, to have communion with him; to his son, to participate of the blessings of his grace, and to his church and people, to enjoy all spiritual privileges with them; or, gathers men at and by death; see ch. xxxiv. 14, 15. and as he will gather them at the last day, even all nations, before him, the tares, and burn them and his wheat, and put them into his garner; and when he does any and every of these things, who can hinder him or turn him back from doing what he pleases: Job says much the same in ch. ix. 12. the Targum is, "if "he passes through and shuts up the heavens with "clouds, and gathers armies, who can turn him "back?"

Ver. 11. *For he knoweth vain men*, &c.] Or, *men of vanity*[p], as all men are; men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree a lie, and they are both lighter than vanity, Psal. lxii. 9. and the Lord knows them, and knows them to be so; he knows all men, and all that is in them; he knows the vanity of their minds, and the vain thoughts that are in them; all their vain and idle words, and their vain lives and conversations; and therefore it is no wonder he does the above things at his pleasure: *he seeth wickedness also;* the wickedness of their hearts and lives, their secret and open wickedness, their wicked thoughts, words, and actions; or, *men of wickedness;* even wicked men;

[k] Quid oceano longius inveniri potest, Cicero. Orat. 36.

[l] יחלוף אם si permutet propric, Mercerus, Heb. si mutabit locum, Piscator.

[m] Si transmeabit, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; si pervadat, Cocceius; si transiverit, Michaelis.

[n] Si abierit, Schmidt.

[o] Si subverterit omnia, V. L.

[p] מתי שוא homines vanitatis, Vatablus, Drusius, Bolducius, Mercerus, Schmidt, Michaelis.

they are all seen by him; nothing is or can be hid from him; he is God omniscient, the searcher of the hearts and trier of the reins of the children of men: *will he not then consider* it? so as to punish or correct for it? he will: or, *he does not consider*[q]; he seems as if he did not; as if he took no notice of wicked men, and of their wickedness, because he does not immediately punish or correct for it; or, he has no need to take any time to consider thereof, he sees and knows at once what it is, and what men are: Gersom reads this clause in connexion with the former; *he sees* the men *of wickedness*, and him who does *not consider* the ways of the Lord; or, the man does not consider that God sees him; so Ben Melech.

Ver. 12. *For vain man would be wise*, &c.] Or *hollow*[r], empty man; empty of all that is good, though full of all unrighteousness; without God, the knowledge, love, and fear of him; without Christ, the knowledge of him, faith in him, and love to him; destitute of the Spirit, and of his grace, having no good thing in him: yet such a man *would be wise;* not desirous of true wisdom, but would be thought to be wise; he conceits himself that he is very wise, and he would fain have others think so of him; or is, or *may*, or *will be wise*[s]; may be made wise by the chastisements of God through afflictions, being sanctified to him by the grace of God; though he is a vain man, and also is what is after said of him; afflicting dispensations are sometimes teaching ones, and in the school of afflictions many useful lessons are learnt, whereby men become wiser; see Psal. xciv. 12. though some understand the word in a very different sense, and interpret it bold, audacious, proud, and haughty; man takes heart[t], and lifts up himself against God, stretches out his hand, and hardens his heart against him: *though man be born* like *a wild ass's colt;* foolish and stupid, without understanding of divine and spiritual things; given to lust and wantonness, to serve divers lusts and pleasures; not subject to the yoke of the law of God, stubborn, refractory, and untameable, but by the grace of God; the ass, and especially the wild ass, and the colt of one, being a very stupid creature, and a very lustful and wanton one, chooses to be free, will not bear the yoke, but ranges about in desert places; see Job xxxix. 5. Jer. ii. 23, 24. some render the words, *and a wild ass's colt is*, or *may be born a man*[u]; that is, one that is by his first birth, and by his life and conversation, like a wild ass's colt, is or may be born again, and be made a new man, as Jarchi also interprets it, and so become a wise, knowing, and good man, which is a great truth; but whether the truth in this text, is not so clear: the Targum seems to incline this way; "a refractory youth that grows wise shall become a "great man."

Ver. 13. *If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.*] In this and the following verses Zophar proceeds to give some advice to Job; which, if taken, would issue in his future happiness, but otherwise it would be ill with him; he advises him to pray to God with an heart prepared for such service; so some render the last clause in the imperative, *stretch out thine hands*[w] *towards him;* that is, towards God; for, though not expressed, is implied, whose immensity, sovereignty, and omniscience, Zophar had been discoursing of; and, though stretching out the hands is sometimes a gesture of persons in distress and mournful circumstances, thereby signifying their grief and sorrow, and of others in great danger, in order to lay up any thing for safety; and of conquered persons resigning themselves up into the hands of the conqueror; and of such who are desirous of being in friendship, alliance, and association with others; yet it is also sometimes used as for the whole of religious worship, Psal. xliv. 20. so particularly for prayer, Psal. lxxxviii. 9. and this was what all Job's friends advised him to, to humble himself before God, to pray for the forgiveness of his sins, and for the removal of his afflictions, and deliverance from them; see ch. v. 8. and viii. 5, 6. in order to which it is proper the *heart* should be *prepared;* as it is requisite it should be to every good work by the grace of God, so to this: and then may it be said to be prepared for such service, when the spirit of God is given as a spirit of grace and supplication, whereby the heart is impressed with a sense of its wants, and so knows what to pray for; and arguments and fit words are put into the mind and mouth, and it knows how to pray as it should; and is enabled to approach the throne of grace with sincerity, fervency, and in the exercise of faith, being sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Jesus, and resigned to the divine will, in all its petitions it is directed to make: now this is the work of God, to prepare the heart; the preparation of the heart, as well as the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord; he is prayed to for it, and it is affirmed he will do it, Prov. xvi. 1. 1 Chron. xxix. 18. Psal. x. 17. but it is here represented as if it was man's act, which is said not to suggest any power in man to do it of himself; at least this is not the evangelic sense of such phrases; for Zophar might be of a more legal spirit, and not so thoroughly acquainted with the evangelic style; but this might be said, to shew the necessity of such a preparation, and to stir up to a concern for it, and to expect and look for it from and by the grace of God.

Ver. 14. *If iniquity be in thine hand*, &c.] For, as the heart must be prepared for the stretching out of the hand in prayer to God, so it is not any hand that is to be stretched out or lifted up unto God; not hands full of blood, or defiled with sin, but holy hands; see Isa. i. 15. 1 Tim. ii. 8. it is not said, if iniquity be in thine heart, or on thy conscience, *put it far away;* for sin cannot be put away out of the heart, it will have a place there as long as we live; though it should not be regarded, cherished, and nourished there; if so, God will not hear prayer, Psal. lxvi. 18. and nothing can put away or remove afar off guilt from the conscience but the blood of Jesus; which, being sprinkled, purifies the heart and purges the conscience from dead works; but it is said, if it is *in thine hand*, which is the instrument of action, and may signify the commis-

[q] ולא יתבונן & non considerat, Cocceius; & non advertit, Schmidt.
[r] נבוב concavus, Montanus; cavus, Drusius; vacuus, Pagninus, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Michaelis.
[s] ילבב fiat vel fit cordatus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Broughton, Beza.
[t] In superbiam erigitur, V. L. audaciam sumit, Schmidt.
[u] Pullus onager homo nascitur, Cocceius, Schmidt; nascatur, Schultens.
[w] Expande ad eum manus tuas, De Dieu.

sion of sin, and a series and course of sinning, which Job's friends suspected he was privately guilty of; and therefore advise him to leave off such a sinful course, and abstain from all appearance of evil, and live a holy and godly conversation: *and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles;* in any room or apartment of his house; some restrain this, and iniquity in the former clause, to ill-gotten goods, obtained by rapine and oppression, which he is advised to restore to those that had been injured by him; but there is no need to limit it to any sin: besides, *wickedness* may be put for wicked men, and the sense be, that, as he should not indulge to any iniquity himself, so neither should he suffer wicked men to dwell in his house, but make a general reformation in himself and in his family.

Ver. 15. *For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot,* &c.] Either before men, being in all good conscience, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless, exercising a conscience void of offence towards God and men; and so be able to say as Samuel did, *whose ass have I taken?* &c. 1 Sam. xii. 3. or rather before God, as in ch. xxi. 26. using an holy boldness and an humble confidence with him at the throne of grace, in the view of the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of his living Redeemer he had knowledge of, as every true believer may; who, though he is not without spot in himself, yet, being washed in the blood of Christ, and clothed in his righteousness, he is all fair, and without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and may stand before the throne without fault, and appear before God, and in his sight, unblamable and irreprovable: *yea, thou shalt be steadfast;* firm and solid, rooted and grounded in the love of God; having a firm persuasion of interest in it, and that nothing shall separate from it; being built on the foundation of Christ, and established in the exercise of faith on him; the affections being steady towards him, and fixedly set on divine and heavenly things; continuing steadfast in the doctrines of grace, and not carried about with strange doctrines, or every wind of doctrine; as well as constant and immovable in the work of the Lord, always employed in his service, and doing his will, from which nothing can move; not reproach, affliction, and persecution; and to be thus steady and fixed is a great privilege: *and shalt not fear:* evil tidings of evil times; of wars and rumours of wars, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, and other judgments; of changes and revolutions in kingdoms and states, or of what is coming upon the world, according to promise and prophecy, the heart being fixed and well established, trusting in the Lord; nor be afraid of evil men or devils, or any enemies whatever, nor of death, the king of terrors, that being one of the believer's blessings, and a friend of his; nor of hell and damnation, or the second death, or wrath to come; from all which the saints are secure.

Ver. 16. *Because thou shalt forget thy misery,* &c.] Former afflictions and distresses; having an abundance of prosperity and happiness, and long continued; and so, in process of time, the miseries and distresses before endured are forgotten; thus it was with Joseph in his advanced state, and therefore he called one of his sons Manasseh, Gen. xli. 51. and as it is with convinced and converted persons and believers in Christ, who, under first convictions and awakenings, are filled with sorrow and distress, on a view of their miserable estate by nature; but when Christ is revealed to them as their Saviour and Redeemer, and the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, and they have faith and hope in Jesus, and a comfortable view of heaven and happiness, and eternal life, by him, they forget their spiritual poverty, and remember their misery no more, unless it be to magnify the riches of the grace of God; see Prov. xxxi. 6. 7. and *remember* it *as waters* that *pass away;* either the waters of the stream in a river, which, when gone, are seen and remembered no more; or as waters occasioned by floods in the winter-season, which when over, and summer is come, are gone and are no more discerned; and as they pass from the places where they were, so from the minds of men: or it may be respect is had to the waters of Noah's flood, which, according to the divine promise and oath, should no more go over the earth; and being past and gone, and no fear or danger of their returning, are forgotten.

Ver. 17. *And* thine *age shall be clearer than the noon-day,* &c.] That is, the remainder of his days; the latter part of his life, which was yet to come, should be no more attended with the darkness of adversity; but the light of prosperity should shine upon him, and exceed the light of the sun at noon-day: the phrase is expressive of the wonderful change there should be in his state and circumstances; see Isa. lviii. 10. *thou shalt shine forth;* like the rising sun, or as when it breaks forth out of a cloud; in a temporal sense, it may be understood of his enjoying health, wealth, and friends, the candle of the Lord shining upon him, as in days past; and in a spiritual sense, of his being favoured with the light of God's countenance, the Sun of righteousness rising upon him, with healing in his wings; the graces of the Spirit being brightened, and in lively exercise, and a large share of spiritual light and knowledge being given: the word used has a contrary sense, and signifies darkness and obscurity, and may be rendered *although thou art,* or hast been, or mayest *be dark* [x]; under dark and afflictive providences, as he had been, and still was; and in darkness of soul, under the hidings of God's face: yet *thou shalt be as the morning;* whose light breaks forth suddenly, and makes every thing gay and cheerful; especially a morning without clouds, when it is bright and clear, and is increasing more and more: by this metaphor is signified, that Job would at once emerge out of his darkness, afflictions, and trouble, and have abundance of joy and comfort, which would be increasing in every sense; see Prov. iv. 18.

Ver. 18. *And thou shalt be secure,* &c.] From coming into like darkness, difficulties, and distress again, and from every evil and enemy; nothing shall come nigh to disturb and hurt, nothing to be feared from any quarter, all around: or *shalt be confident* [y]; have a strong faith and full assurance of it, in the love

[x] תעפה tenebresces, Montanus, Drusius, Mercerus; to the same sense, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens; so Ben Melech.

[y] ובטחת & confides, Mercerus, Piscator, Schmidt; & habebis fiduciam, V. L.

of God, in the living Redeemer, and in the promises which respect the life that now is, and that which is to come: *because there is hope:* of the mercy of God, of salvation by Christ, and of eternal glory and happiness, as well as of a continuance of outward prosperity; faith and hope mutually assist each other; faith is the substance of things hoped for, and hope of better and future things on a good foundation encourages faith and confidence: *yea, thou shalt dig* about thee; to let in stakes for the pitching and fixing of tents to dwell in, and for more commodious pasturage; or for wells of water, for the supply both of the family and the flocks; or rather, for ditches and trenches to secure from thieves and robbers, or for drains to carry off floods of water: and *thou shalt take thy rest in safety;* lie down on the bed and sleep in the night-season in peace and quietness, having nothing to fear; being well intrenched, and secure from depredations and inundations; and, more especially, being hedged about and protected by the power and providence of God; see Psal. iii. 5. and iv. 8. the Targum is, "thou shalt prepare a grave, and lie down, and "sleep secure."

Ver. 19. *Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make* thee *afraid*, &c.] Either lie down on his bed, as before, or by his flocks, and where they lie down, and none should disturb him or them; not thieves and robbers, such as the Chaldeans and Sabeans had been to him, nor lions, bears, and wolves: *yea, many shall make suit unto thee;* make their supplications, present their requests and petitions for relief under necessitous circumstances, or for protection from the injuries and insults of others; as the poor and needy, the widow and fatherless, had done to him in times past, when in his prosperity, and when he was a friend unto them, and the father of them; see Prov. xix. 6. or, *the great ones*[z] *shall make suit to thee;* to have his favour and friendship, his counsel and advice, his company and conversation; he should be applied unto and courted by men of all sorts, which would be no small honour to him; see Psal. xlv. 12.

Ver. 20. *But the eyes of the wicked shall fail*, &c.] Either through grief and envy at Job's prosperity, and with looking for his fall into troubles again; or rather through expectation of good things for themselves, and for deliverance out of trouble, but all in vain; see Lam. iv. 17. *and they shall not escape;* afflictions and calamities in this life, nor the righteous judgment, nor wrath to come: or, *refuge shall perish from them*[a]; there will be none to betake themselves unto for safety; in vain will they seek it from men; refuge will fail them, and no man care for them; and in vain will they fly to rocks and mountains to fall upon them: *and their hope* shall be as *the giving up of the ghost;* it is with them as when a man is just expiring, and it is all over with him, and there is no hope of his reviving; so the hope of wicked men is a dying hope, a lost hope; it is not hope, but despair; their hope is gone, and they are lost and undone; and if they retain their hope in life, when they come to die they have none; though the righteous has hope in his death, their hope dies with them, if not before them: or, *their hope is the giving up of the ghost*[b]; all they have to hope and wish for is death, to relieve them from their present troubles and agonies they are in; and sometimes are left amidst their guilt, despair, and horror, to destroy themselves: now Zophar by all this would suggsst, that should not Job take his advice, he would appear to be such a wicked man, whose eyes would fail for his own help, and would not escape the judgments of God here and hereafter, and would die without hope, in black despair; or at least without any hope that would be of any avail.

CHAP. XII.

IN this and the two following chapters Job makes answer to Zophar's discourse in the former; who having represented him as an ignorant man, he resents it, and begins his defence with a biting sarcasm on him and his friends, as being self-conceited, and having an high opinion of their own wisdom, as if none had any but themselves, ver. 1, 2. and puts in his claim for a share with them, as being not at all inferior to them, ver. 3. and then refutes their notions, that it always goes well with good men, and ill with bad men; whereas the reverse is the truth, ver. 4—6. and which they might learn from the brute creatures; or he sends them to them, to observe to them, that the best things they had knowledge of concerning God and his providence, and of his wisdom therein, were common notions that every one had, and might be learned from beasts, birds, and fishes; particularly, that all things in the whole universe are made by God, and sustained by him, and are under his direction, and at his disposal, ver. 7—10. and such things might as easily be searched, examined, and judged of, as sounds are tried by the ear, and food by the mouth, ver. 11. and seeing it is usual among men, at least it may be expected that men in years should have a considerable share of wisdom and knowledge, it might be strongly inferred from thence, without any difficulty, that the most perfect and consummate wisdom was in God, ver. 12, 13. whence he passes on to discourse most admirably and excellently of the wisdom and power of God in the dispensations of his providence, in a variety of instances; which shews his knowledge of his perfections, ways, and works, was not inferior to that of his friends, ver. 14—25.

Ver. 1. *And Job answered and said.*] In reply to Zophar, and in defence of himself, what is recorded in this and the two following chapters.

Ver. 2. *No doubt but ye* are *the people*, &c.] Which is said not seriously, meaning that they were but of

[z] רבים magnates, Vatablus, Bolducius.

[a] ומנוס אבד מנהם et refugium peribit ab eis, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius; perfugium, Junius & Tremellius; effugium, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.

[b] Spes vel expectatio eorum est, vel erit efflatio animæ, Mercerus, Cocceius.

the common people, that are generally ignorant, and have but little knowledge, at least of things sublime, especially in matters of religion; wherefore, though they took upon them to be his teachers, and dictators to him, and censors of him, they were not above the rank, but in the class of people of low and mean understandings; see John vii. 49. this sense indeed agrees with what is after said, *who knoweth not such things as these?* but since Job compares himself with them, and asserts he is not inferior to them, it supposes them to have a degree of knowledge and understanding of things somewhat above the common people; wherefore these words are to be taken ironically, exposing their vanity and self-conceit: *ye are the people;* the only, and all the people in the world of importance and consequence for good sense and wisdom; the only wise and knowing folk, the men of reason and understanding; all the rest are but fools and asses, or like the wild ass's colt, as Zophar had said, and which Job took as pointing to him; so the word in the Arabic language[c] signifies the more excellent and better sort of people; or, ye are the only people of God, his covenant people, his servants; that are made acquainted with the secrets of wisdom, as none else are: *and wisdom shall die with you;* you have all the wisdom of the world, and when you die it will be all gone; there will be none left in the world: thus he represents them as monopolizers and engrossers of wisdom and knowledge, full of it in their conceit, allowing none to have any share with them: and by all this he not only upbraids them with their vanity and self-conceit, but puts them in mind, that, as wise as they were, they must die; and that, though their wisdom with respect to them, or any use they could make of it in the grave, where there is none, would die too; or that their wisdom was but the wisdom of the world, which comes to nought; yet there would be wisdom still in the world, and that which is true, which God makes known to men, even the wisdom of God in a mystery, the wisdom hid in himself; and who has the residue of the Spirit and his gifts to instruct men in it, and qualify them to be teachers of others; by which means, though men, even the best of men, die, yet the word of God, the means of true wisdom and knowledge, will always abide.

Ver. 3. *But I have understanding as well as you,* &c.] A natural understanding, or an understanding of natural things, which distinguishes a man from a brute; and a spiritual understanding, an understanding enlightened by the spirit of God, which is naturally dark as to divine things; but he had an understanding given him, to know himself, his state and condition by nature; to know God, his love and grace to men, and, as his covenant-God, to know Christ his living Redeemer, who should stand on the earth in the latter day, both to be his Redeemer and his Judge; to know his interest in him, and in the blessings of grace and glory by him: or, *I have an heart as well as you*[d]; a wise and an understanding one; a new heart, and a right spirit; an heart to fear and serve the Lord, a sincere and upright one, and devoid of hypocrisy and deceit; and as good an one as theirs: *I am not inferior unto you;* he was indeed as to estate and substance, being now reduced; though he had been, in that sense, the greatest man in all the east; but in wisdom and knowledge, in gifts and grace: thus a modest man, when oppressed and insulted by the speeches of overbearing men, may be obliged and see it necessary to say some things of himself, in his own vindication, which he otherwise would not; see 2 Cor. xi. 16. and xii. 11. or, *I am not falling before you;* or *by you*[e]; as one intimidated, conquered, and yielding; I stand my ground, and will not give way or submit to you, or allow you to have the superiority of me: or, *I am falling* no more *than you:* they took him for an apostate from God, and the fear of him, and the true religion he had professed, which Job denies; he held fast his integrity; and though he was fallen into calamities and afflictions, he was not fallen from God; from his fear of him, faith in him, and love and obedience to him; he was a holy, good man, a persevering saint; and though he had slips and falls in common with good men, yet fell not finally and totally, or was an apostate from the faith: *yea, who knoweth not such things as these?* or, *with whom are not as these*[f]? the things you have been discoursing of, which you would fain have pass for the secrets of wisdom, deep and mysterious things, hid from vulgar eyes, which none have and know but yourselves, are common things, what every one is possessed of, and understands as well as you; that there is a God that has made the world, and governs it; that he himself is unsearchable, infinite and incomprehensible; a sovereign Being that does according to his will and pleasure, and sees and knows all things, and does all things well and wisely, and according to the counsel of his will: though some think Job has reference not to what Zophar had been discoursing concerning the infinity and wisdom of God, but to the thing or things in dispute between them, or to the assertions of his friends; that it is always well with good men, and ill with bad men, or that wicked men only are punished and afflicted, and particularly what Zophar concluded his speech with, ver. 20. Now these were vulgar notions, which the common people had taken up, and were vulgar errors, as he proves in the following verses, by giving instances of good men being afflicted, and of bad men being in prosperity.

Ver. 4. *I am* as *one mocked of his neighbour,* &c.] That is, according to Sephorno, if I knew not, or denied those things you have been speaking of concerning God, his immensity, sovereignty, and wisdom, I should be derided by all my friends and acquaintance; but rather the sense is, Job instances in himself as a proof that good men are afflicted by God in this life; he was once in a very prosperous condition, when he was caressed by all, but now was fallen into such low and miserable circumstances as to be the scorn and contempt of his friends and neighbours; and even his being mocked was no small part of his afflictions; to endure cruel mockings has been the common lot of

[c] Golii Lex. Ar. Col. 1743. Vid. Lud. Capell. in loc.

[d] גם לי לבב כמוכם etiam mihi cor sicut vobis, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens; so Broughton.

[e] לא נפל אנכי מכם non cadens ego a vobis, Montanus, Vatablus, Bolducius, Beza, Mercerus, Michaelis; præ vobis, Schmidt.

[f] ואת מי אין כמו אלה & cum quo non sicut hæc? Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Mercerus; and to the same sense Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schultens.

good men in all ages, and is reckoned one part of their distresses and sufferings for righteousness-sake, Heb. xi. 36. and to be mocked by a neighbour, or a *friend*[g], as it may be rendered, greatly aggravates the affliction, see Psal. lv. 12, 13. which was Job's case; his friends that came to comfort him mocked at him, at least so he understood them, and interpreted what they said unto him, see ch. xvi. 20. and what made it still the heavier to bear, he was mocked by such a neighbour or friend, *who calleth upon God, and he answereth him*; he was mocked at not by profane men only, but by a professor of religion, one that made it his constant business to pray to God, and by the prosperity he was in, and the good things he enjoyed, he seems to be answered; or rather Job means himself who was mocked, and so this is introduced to aggravate the sin of his friends, as well as to prove his point, and also to throw off a charge that had been brought against him. It was an aggravation of their sin in mocking him, that he was a praying man; one that made a conscience of daily calling upon God for the constant supplies of life, for his gracious presence, for help in time of need, for discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy, and for deliverance out of his troubles; and who had in many instances received answers of prayer from God; and this being his character, and this the constant work and business of his life, and being heard and answered of God in times past, shewed him to be a good man, and yet an afflicted one; and this also served to wipe off the reproach, and remove the charge which they tacitly insinuated, and sometimes spoke out, that he restrained prayer before God; but he was so far from it, that the scornful usage of his friends made him ply the throne of grace the more frequently, see ch. xviii. 20. and from this single instance of himself he passes on to consider it as a general case, as what usually befalls good and gracious men: *the just upright man is laughed to scorn*; or *the just perfect man*[h]; that is, perfectly just; no man is so of himself; none of Adam's posterity, are righteous, no, not one; nor is any man truly just, perfectly righteous in himself, but in Christ; and even such a man does not do good without sinning; only the man Christ Jesus is righteous in such sense; but then all that are made righteous, by the imputation of his righteousness to them, are perfectly justified from all things, and are become the spirits of just men made perfect and complete in him: the character here designs such who are really righteous, truly gracious, are upright in heart, sincere souls, who have the truth of grace in them, and walk uprightly; these become a prey, a laughing-stock to wicked men, as Noah, Lot, and others, before the times of Job, had been, which he may have respect unto.

Ver. 5. *He that is ready to slip with* his *feet*, &c.] Not into sin, though this is often the case of good men, but into calamities and afflictions; and Job means himself, and every just upright man in the like circumstances: or he that is *prepared* or *destined* to be among them, that *totter* and stagger in their *feet*[i]; that can't stand upon their feet, but fall to the ground; which may describe man in declining and distressing circumstances; or that is appointed to be the laughing-stock of such as are unstable in the word and ways of God; double-minded men, hypocrites, and formal professors, that totter and stagger at every thing they meet with disagreeable to the flesh: with such, a poor afflicted saint is laughed to scorn; he is as *a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease*; who are in affluent circumstances, enjoy great prosperity, live in plenty, and are not in trouble as others; their hearts are at ease: now with such, poor good men are had in great contempt; they are despised at heart, in the thoughts of such persons, if they don't in words express it; they are like a lamp just going out, which is neglected, and looked upon as useless; or like a torch burnt to the end, when it is thrown away; and thus it is with men, whilst the lamp of prosperity burns clear and bright, they are valued and had in esteem, but when their lamp becomes dim, and is almost, or quite extinguished, they are despised, see Psal. cxxxiii. 3, 4. some apply this to Christ, who was a lamp or light, a great one, but despised of men, and even as a light; they loved darkness rather than light; and especially by the Pharisees, who were at ease, settled on their lees, that trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others; and this is true of Gospel ministers, though bright and burning lights, and even of every good man, in whom the true light of grace, and of the Gospel, shines, and especially when under afflictive circumstances. Some, instead of a *lamp despised*, read, *for* or *because of calamity despised*[k]; so Aben Ezra, which conveys the same sense, that an afflicted man is despised for his affliction; and this being the case of good men confutes the notion of Job's friends, that it always goes well with such; and their other notion of its going ill with bad men is refuted in the following verse.

Ver. 6. *The tabernacles of robbers prosper*, &c.] Such as the Chaldeans and Sabeans, who had robbed Job of his substance, and filled their houses with the spoils of others, and lived in the greatest fulness and prosperity, and whom he might have in his view; and the like is what has been since observed by good men, and has been a trial and temptation to them, not knowing well how to reconcile this to the justice and wisdom of God in providence, yet so it is, a fact that cannot be denied, see Psal. lxxiii. 2, 3, 12. Jer. xii. 1, 2. *and they that provoke God are secure*; all sin is abominable to God, contrary to his nature, will, and law, and so provoking; yet there are some sins that are more provoking than others, as idolatry, blasphemy, murder, theft, robbery, rapine, and oppression, and the like, as well as attended with more aggravating circumstances; and yet many who are guilty of such enormous crimes, and God-provoking iniquities, are *secure*, live in the greatest tranquillity and safety, free from the incursions, invasions, and insults of others: *their houses*, as Job elsewhere says, *are safe from fear*,

[g] לרעהו amico suo, Pagninus, Mercerus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Broughton.

[h] צדיק תמים justus perfectus, Pagninus, Montanus; justus absolutus, Mercerus; so Broughton.

[i] נכון למועדי רגל destinatus vacillantibus pede, Schmidt; so Michaelis.

[k] לפיד בוז ad calamitatem contumelia, Cocceius; ad infortunium vilis habetur, Gussetius, p. 674.

ch. xxi. 9. *into whose hand God bringeth* abundantly; an abundance of the good things of this world, who have as much or more than heart can wish; whose belly is filled with hid treasure, whose grounds and fields bring forth plentifully, that they have no room to bestow their fruits; this, as it is an aggravation of their sin in provoking the God of their mercies, who is so liberal and bountiful to them, so it is the more full and express for the point in hand Job is confuting. Some, as Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom, understand this of idol-makers and idol-worshippers, and render the words, *who makes a god with his hand*, or *carries a god in his hand*[l], and worships it; which others interpret of his doing what he will with God, having him, as it were, in his hand, or reckoning his hands his god, and thinks to do what he pleases[m].

Ver. 7. *But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee*, &c.] And so the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, in this and the following verse; from those instructions may be learned, of instances taken, and examples given, which may illustrate and confirm the same things that had been treated of: either what had been just now confuted, that it is always well with good men, and ill with bad men; the reverse of which had been affirmed and proved, that good men are afflicted, and wicked men prosper; something like to which may be seen in the creatures, and learned of them; thus those creatures that are the most harmless and innocent, and most useful and beneficial, are a prey to others, as sheep and lambs to lions, wolves, and bears, whilst they range about forests, fields, and plains, fearless and unmolested; and doves and turtles to hawks and vultures; and the lesser fish to the greater, by whom they are devoured, see Hab. i. 13, 14. and moreover, these creatures which are most useful and profitable, or are for pleasure and delight, fall more to the share of wicked men than good men; when droves of cattle and flocks of sheep are observed, and the question is put, to whom do they belong? the answer for the most part must be given, to such and such wicked men; and if the gold and silver, and other valuable things the earth produces, should be inquired about whose they are, it must be said, that they are, generally speaking, the property of the men of the world, the profane part of it; or if the fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea, could speak, when asked the question, whose food they commonly were? the answer would be, of the carnal, sensual, and voluptuous men: or rather this may refer to what Job first takes notice of in this answer of his, that his friends represented what they said as uncommon things, deep mysteries, and out of the reach of the vulgar, and which did not fall under common observation; whereas Job suggests he was as well acquainted with them as they were, yea, they were such that almost every body knew; nay, they might be learnt from the creatures, to which Job here sends them for instruction; the beasts, birds, and fishes, all proclaim that they did not make themselves, nor did their fellow-creatures, but some first cause, who is God; that they are sustained, supported, and provided for by him, and are governed, directed, and disposed of as he pleases, and so furnishes out documents of his sovereignty, wisdom, power, and providence: *and the fowls of the air, and they will tell thee*; the same things; that God made them, and that they are dependent on him, and are fed and cared for by him, see Matt. vi. 26.

Ver. 8. *Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee*, &c.] Or ask *a sprig of the earth*[n], any shrub, or tree, or whatsoever grows out of it, and they will all unite in this doctrine, that they are raised and preserved by the power of God, and are so many instances of his wisdom, power, and goodness: *and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee*; as mute as they are, they'll proclaim this truth, that God is the mighty Maker and wise Disposer of them.

Ver. 9. *Who knoweth not in all these*, &c.] Or *by* or *from all these*[o] creatures; what man is there so stupid and senseless, that does not discern, or cannot learn, even from irrational caeatures, the above things, even what Zophar had discoursed concerning God and his perfections, his power, wisdom and providence? for, by the things that are made, the invisible things of God are clearly seen and understood, even his eternal power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20. particularly it may be known by these, and who is it that does not know thereby, *that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?* made this visible world, and all things in it, to which Job then pointed as it were with his finger, meaning the heavens, earth, and sea, and all that in them are, which were all created by him: hence he is called the Former and Maker of all things; and which are all the works of his hand, that is, of his power, which is meant by his hand, that being the instrument of action. This is the only place where the word Jehovah is used in this book by the disputants.

Ver. 10. *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing*, &c.] Of every animal, of every brute creature, as distinct from man, in the next clause: the life of every one of them is from him, and it is continued by him as long as he pleases, nor can it be taken away without his leave; two sparrows, which are not worth more than a farthing, not one of them falls to the ground, or dies without the knowledge and will of God, Matt. x. 29. of the soul or spirit of beasts, see Eccl. iii. 21. *and the breath of all mankind*: the breath of man is originally from God, he at first breathed into man the breath of life; and though this is in his nostrils, which makes him of little account, yet it would not continue there long, was it not in the hand, and under the care and providence of God; the breath of a king, as well as the heart of a king, is in the hand of the Lord: the breath of that great monarch Belshazzar, king of Babylon, was in the hand of God, Dan. v. 23. and so is the breath of every peasant; and as when he takes away the breath of other creatures, they die and return to the dust; such is the case of man when God takes away his breath; all our times are in his hand, to be born, to live and die, all is at his dis-

[l] הביא אלוה בידו quique deum portant *vel* portat in manu sua, Tigurine version, Munster; so Bolducius, De Dieu, Schultens.

[m] Schmidt, &c.

[n] שיח לארץ virgultum terræ, Pagninus, Schmidt; so Drusius and Michaelis.

[o] בכל אלה ex omnibus istis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt, Schultens, Michaelis; per omnia hæc, Coccecius; so Broughton.

pose: or *the spirit of all the flesh of men*[p], or of all men's flesh; his rational soul, as distinguished from his flesh or body, this is from God, supported in its being by him, and ever will be, being immortal, and will never die.

Ver. 11. *Doth not the ear try words?* &c.] Articulate sounds; and the mind by them judges whether what is expressed and designed by them is right or wrong, true or false, to be received or rejected; so such that have spiritual ears to hear, try the words of God and men, the wholesome words of Christ, and those of false teachers, which eat as a canker; and by their spiritual judgment can distinguish between the one and the other, discern those that differ, and approve those that are excellent, by bringing them to the standard of the word, the balance of the sanctuary, the Scriptures of truth: *and the mouth taste his meat?* and judge of it, whether good or bad, or savoury or unsavoury, and so receive or reject it: thus such who have their taste changed, and relish spiritual things, can distinguish between the meat that perishes, and that which endures to everlasting life, even Christ, whose flesh is meat indeed; and those that have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and to whose taste the fruits of Christ and the doctrines of grace are sweet; these will desire the sincere milk of the word, and that strong meat in it, which belongs to discerning and experienced souls; and will feed by faith upon the pure word of the Gospel, and mix it with it, and reject all others. Job by this would signify, that the things his friends had been discoursing of, and which they thought were such deep and wonderful things, were as easy to be searched and found out, tried and judged of, as sounds by the ear, or food by the taste; and it may be also that hereby he suggests, that his doctrine, if it was impartially examined and tried by proper judges, it would appear as plain as any thing tried by the ear, or tasted by the mouth. Some think that Job intends by this, that from the senses of hearing and tasting in men might be inferred the omniscience of God, his knowledge of all things, and his quick discernment of men, and their actions, since *he that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall not he see?* Psal. xciv. 9. Some versions read the whole, *doth not the ear try words, as the mouth tastes his meat*[q]? as in ch. xxxiv. 3. Saadiah Gaon connects these words with the following, *as the ear tries words*, &c. *so with the ancient is wisdom.*

Ver. 12. *With the ancient is wisdom*, &c.] Meaning not himself, who was not very ancient; though some think Eliphaz so understood him; hence those words of his, in ch. xv. 9, 10. rather, as others, Job tacitly wishes that some ancient man, with whom wisdom was, would undertake to examine the affair between him and his friends, and judge of it, and decide the point; or, as others, he has respect to Bildad's advice to search the fathers, and learn their sentiments, and be determined by them; to which he replies, that though it will be allowed that wisdom is with them, for the most part, yet their judgment of things is no further to be regarded than as it agrees with the wisdom of God, and the revelation he has made of his will; though it seems best of all to consider these words as an adagy or proverbial sentence generally agreed to, that it often is, as it might be expected it should, though it is not always, that men well advanced in years are wise; that as they have lived long in the world, they have learned much by observation and experience, and have attained to a considerable share of wisdom and knowledge in things, natural, civil, and religious: *and in length of days is understanding*: the understandings of men are improved and enriched, and well stored with useful science, having had the opportunity of much reading, hearing, and conversation; by this Job would suggest, that if his friends had more knowledge of hidden and recondite things, beyond common people, which yet they had not, it was not so wonderful, since they were aged men, and had lived long in the world; or rather it may be that this is mentioned, to observe that from hence, seeing it is so among men, that ancient men have, or it may be expected they should have, a considerable share of wisdom and understanding; it may be most easily and strongly concluded, that God, who is the Ancient of days, has the most perfect and consummate wisdom and knowledge, which is asserted in the following verse.

Ver. 13. *With him is wisdom and strength*, &c.] Not with the ancient and long-lived man, but with God, who has made the whole universe, and in whose hand and at whose dispose all creatures are, ver. 9, 10. with him wisdom is originally, essentially, and underivatively, as the fountain and fulness of it; he is the only and all-wise God; his wisdom is displayed in making the world, and all things in it, in the beautiful manner they are set, and in their subserviency to each other; in all the dispensations of his providence, having all a *bathos*, a depth of wisdom and knowledge in them, being all according to the counsel of his will; and in the work of redemption and salvation by Christ, in which he has abounded in all wisdom and prudence; in finding out and appointing a Redeemer, mighty and strong, equal to the work; in contriving and bringing it about, in such a manner as to glorify all his perfections; hence the Gospel, which is the publication of this grace, is called the wisdom of God: and with him is wisdom to communicate to his people, to direct them how to behave under every providence, in every station of life, in the church, and in the world, see Jam. i. 5. and he has *strength*, which he has shewn in making the world out of nothing, in upholding it, and all things in it in being, in executing his designs, decrees, and purposes, in fulfilling his promises, and in supporting and strengthening his people, under all their trials and exercises, to withstand every enemy, and perform every duty; ancient men, though they may increase in wisdom, they decline in strength, but God has both, in infinite perfection: *he hath counsel and understanding*; his decrees and purposes, wisely formed within himself, are his counsels of old, and which are truly and punctually performed in time; his plan of peace, reconciliation,

[p] רוח כל בשר איש spiritus omnis carnis viri? Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt, Schultens, Michaelis.

[q] Vatablus, Drusius, Junius et Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus, Coccejus, Schultens; so Broughton.

and salvation by Christ, may, with propriety, be called the counsel of peace between them both; and the Gospel, and the several doctrines of it, are the whole counsel of God, and so are the ordinances of it; and besides these, by which he counsels and advises his people, he has counsel with him, and which he gives unto them by his spirit, for which they bless his name; and so even did Christ as man and Mediator, Psal. xvi. 7. he has counsel to give, and does give in things temporal, relating to the common affairs of life, and in things concerning the good and welfare of immortal souls; all which comes from him who is *wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working*, Isa. xxviii. 29. and he has an *understanding* that is infinite and unsearchable; he has an understanding of himself, his nature, perfections, and persons of all his creatures, and of all things past, present, and to come; the same things are said of Christ, the wisdom of God, Prov. viii. 14. Job, having observed these things of God, passes on to discourse most admirably and excellently of the power and wisdom of God in various instances, especially in the dispensations of his providence, by which he appears to have known the secrets of wisdom, and not so ignorant as represented by Zophar.

Ver. 14. *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again*, &c.] Which some restrain to the tower of Babel; but though the builders of it were obliged to desist from building, it does not appear that it was broken down, but seems to have continued many ages after: others more probably refer it to the destruction of Sodom, as Sephorno, which was an utter destruction, a perpetual desolation, and that city never was rebuilt to this day; and the same may be observed of many other cities that have had their foundations razed up, and have never been rebuilt, Thebes, Tyre, &c. and as will be the case of Rome, or the great city of Babylon, when once destroyed; yea, this has been true of kingdoms and states, such as Jeremiah was to root out, pull down, and destroy; that is, by prophesying of their destruction, as the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, and others, whose names and nations are no more, see Jer. i. 10. and xxv. 27. and the four monarchies broken down and destroyed, and made as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, by the kingdom of Christ, Dan. ii. 35, 44. and may be exemplified in particular persons and families; in Job and his family, the Lord broke him with breach upon breach; he broke him in his estate and substance; he broke down the hedge about him, and exposed him to thieves and robbers that plundered him of his substance; he broke down his family, that had been so largely and happily built up, by taking away his children by death; and he broke his constitution by diseases, afflictions, and sorrows, to which Job may have here respect, when he at this time never expected to have his losses in his substance, and in his family, and in his health, repaired, as they were; nor could it have been done without the will and pleasure of God; and oftentimes, when such breaches are made, there is no reparation; a man's wealth, and health, and family, are never built up again: *he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening*; if he shut up a man in a prison, there's no opening the doors of it to let out unless he pleases; whether it be the prison of sin, in which all are concluded, in the fetters and with the cords of which they are held, and will continue, unless those shackles are broken off by powerful and efficacious grace, and the Lord proclaims liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, and gives it; or whether it be the prison of the law, in which sinners are shut up, and held as condemned malefactors; there is no deliverance from it but by Christ, who has redeemed his people from the curse and condemnation of it; and by his Spirit, as a spirit of adoption, who delivers them from the bondage of it, and makes them free indeed; or whether it be the prison of afflictions, straits, and difficulties in life, with which even good men are surrounded, being bound in fetters, and holden in cords of affliction; there is no opening for them, or getting out of them, unless the Lord breaks their bands asunder, and brings them out of darkness and distress, as out of prison-houses, and so opens and makes a way for their escape; or whether he shuts them up, and they are so straitened in their souls that they cannot come forth in the free exercise of grace, and discharge of duty, as it was with Heman, when he said, *I am shut up, and I cannot come forth*; and as it was with David, when he prayed, *bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name*; see Psal. lxxxviii. 8. and cxlii. 7. there is no opening for them till the spirit of the Lord opens their hearts and their graces, and brings them forth into exercise; and *where he is there is liberty*; or if he shuts up a man in the grave, as the Targum paraphrases it, brings him to the house appointed for all living, and locks him up in it; there can be no opening for him till the resurrection-morn, when Christ, who has the keys of hell and death, will unlock the graves, and the dead shall come forth, as Lazarus did at his call: or if *he shuts upon a man*[z], as the words may be rendered; shuts the gates of heaven upon a man, as the door into the marriage-chamber of the Lamb will be shut upon and against the foolish virgins, as well as profane sinners, there can be no opening, cry as long as they will; and as God shut the door of Eden, or the earthly paradise, against Adam, when he drove him out, to which Sephorno refers this passage; or if the Lord shuts up a man in hell, there is no opening, no way of escape from thence. We read of *spirits in prison*, which is to be understood not of the limbus or purgatory of the Papists, but of hell; and these *spirits* are the disobedient in the times of Noah, who dying, or being swept away with the flood, were cast into hell, where they have lain ever since, and will lie unto the judgment of the great day; between the place of the damned, and of the happy, in Abraham's bosom, is a great gulph, that there is no passing from one to the other, which is the immutable and unalterable decree of God, which has fixed the everlasting states of men.

Ver. 15. *Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up*, &c.] Or *lays a restraint in* or *on the waters*[a];

[z] על איש super virum, Montanus, Mercerus, Bolducius; super viro, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[a] יעצר במים detinebit in aquis, Montanus, Bolducius; si contineat, vel cohibeat, q. d. imperium exerceat in aquas, Michaelis.

either in the ocean, as he did at the creation, when he gathered the waters that were upon the face of the earth into one place, and restrained them there, even in the decreed place he broke up for them, called the sea, and set bars and doors to keep them within bounds, whereby the places they left became dry, and the dry land appeared, called earth; and so at the time of the flood, when the waters which covered the earth, and drowned the world, were called off again, the face of it was dry, and so it remains, the waters of the great ocean being restrained from overflowing it; and also when God rebukes the sea, and smites the waves of it, or withholds the ebbing and flowing of the tides, brooks and rivers of water dry up; see Nahum i. 4. Zech. x. 11. or else this may be understood of God's withholding and restraining the waters in the clouds, and not suffering them to let down rain on the earth; when not only brooks dry up, as the brook Cherith did, where Elijah abode for some time, but the fruits of the earth, trees, plants, and herbs dry up, wither, and die; see 1 Kings xvii. 7. Joel i. 19, 20. and this is an emblem in a spiritual sense of God's withholding the word and ordinances, the waters of the sanctuary, the means of grace, and of fruitfulness; which when he does, the consequence of it is barrenness and unfruitfulness in kingdoms, cities, towns, families, and particular persons; and of his withholding the communications of his grace, often compared to water in Scripture, even from his people; the effect of which is, that they are in withering circumstances, the things that revive seem ready to die, though they shall not; love waxes cold, faith is ready to fail, and hope and strength seem perishing from the Lord: *he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth*: as at the time of the flood, when the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and such vast quantities of water issued out as overflowed the whole world, by which it was overturned; and as the Apostle Peter says, *perished*, 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6. though this is also true of inundations that may have been since, which though not universal as that, yet so far as they have reached have overturned all in their way, and carried off the fruits of the earth, the habitations of men, and men themselves; whole countries, cities, and towns, have been carried away by the waters of the sea, or sunk into it, particularly all that space where now is the Atlantic sea, as Pliny[1], from Plato, relates. It is well when the grace of God flows, and overflows, and superabounds abounding sin, and overpowers and overcomes carnal, earthly, and sensual lusts, and reigns where sin did, and teaches to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to mortify the members on the earth.

Ver. 16. *With him is strength and wisdom*, &c.] Which is repeated from ver. 13. though different words are used, but expressive of the same things; of the greatest strength, might, and power of God, as the above instances shew, and of his most consummate, solid, and substantial wisdom, as appears by what follows: *the deceived and the deceiver are his*: the wisdom, knowledge, sagacity, and penetration into affairs, which the one has not, and the other has, are from him; he withholds them from the one, who are simple and void of understanding, and so are easily imposed upon and deceived, and he gives them to others, who make an ill use of them, and deceive their fellow-creatures. Some are deceivers in civil things, in the business and affairs of life, who circumvent, trick, cheat, and defraud their neighbours in buying and selling, using deceitful weights and measures, and by many other artful methods; others are deceivers in religious affairs, such are false teachers, deceitful workers, that lie in wait to deceive; their intention is to deceive, they do it knowingly, and on purpose; they walk in craftiness, and handle the word of God deceitfully; there were many of these in the times of the apostles that had then entered into the world, but never more than now; the great impostor and deceiver of all is Satan, to whom Jarchi restrains the words, who beguiled Eve, and indeed deceives the whole world, Rev. xii. 9. Multitudes are deceived by him, as well as by his emissaries, false teachers, and by their own hearts' lusts; and even God's elect themselves, whilst in a state of unregeneracy, bear this character of *deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures*, Tit. iii. 3. Now these are *his*, the Lord's; which Mr. Broughton interprets, *from him, by him*, and *for him*; the wit, wisdom, subtlety, and sagacity of deceivers, are from him; gifts of nature, in themselves good, bestowed on them by him; the ill use they make of it is from themselves, and owing to the vitiosity of their nature; nay, it is not only by his permission, but according to his ordination and will, that there are such persons in the world: in some cases they appear not only to have leave or permission, but an order to seduce, as to the lying spirit sent forth to seduce Ahab, 2 Kings xxii. 20—25. yea, the princes of Noph being deceived, and they seducing Egypt, it is ascribed to the Lord's mingling a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, Isa. xix. 13, 14. nay, when a prophet is deceived, God himself is said to deceive that prophet, Ezek. xiv. 9. so much is there of the permissive and efficacious will of God in this matter; not that he is the author of error and deceit, or infuses these into men, only the orderer, disposer, and overruler of these things to some purposes of his; he has power over them, and counterworks them when he pleases; he can and does restrain them, and stops them, that they shall proceed no further than he wills; false teachers would, if possible, deceive the very elect, but they cannot, and the reason is, God hinders them; Satan can go on no longer deceiving the world than it is the pleasure of God; a notorious instance of hindering and restraining him may be seen in Rev. xx. 3, 8. and all the deceptions that are suffered to be among men, they are all wisely ordered and overruled to good purposes, so as to issue well; the deception of our first parents was suffered and willed, that the grace of God might be displayed in the salvation of men; errors and heresies are, and must be, for the trial and discovery of sound believers, that they which are approved might be manifest; and men that like not to retain God in their knowledge reject both the light of na-

[1] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 90, 92.

ture and revelation, are left in righteous judgment to a reprobate mind, to give heed to seducing spirits, and are given up to strong delusions to believe a lie, that they might be damned, see 1 Cor. xi. 19. Rom. i. 28. 2 Thess. ii. 10—12. Now all this shews the infinite and consummate wisdom of God; it is brought to prove, not only that he *knows* deceivers, and all their arts and tricks; through which men are deceived by them, as Aben Ezra interprets it, and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it; but he is the fountain of all that wisdom and knowledge in them, superior to others, which they abuse, nor can they use it without his leave; and he can and does counterwork them, and restrains them as he pleases, and makes all to work for and issue in his own glory.

Ver. 17. *He leadeth counsellors away spoiled*, &c.] Such who have the greatest share of knowledge and wisdom in civil things, and are capable of giving advice to others, and are very useful in commonwealths, in cities, towns, and neighbourhoods; wherefore it is a judgment on a people when such are removed, Isa. iii. 3. these God can spoil at once of all their wisdom and knowledge, and render them unfit to give advice and counsel to others; or he can confound their schemes, disappoint their devices, carry their counsel headlong, and make it of none effect, and so spoil them of their ends and views, and of their fame, credit, and reputation: *and maketh the judges fools*: men of great parts, abilities, and capacities, whereby they are qualified to sit upon the bench, preside in courts of judicature, and judge in all matters of controversy that come before them; and it is a happiness to a country to have such persons, as it is a judgment to have them removed, see Isa. iii. 2. yet God can take away the wisdom of such men, deprive them of their natural abilities, and so infatuate them, that they shall not be able to understand a cause, but pass a foolish sentence, to their own shame and disgrace, as well as to the injury of others; see Isa. xl. 23.

Ver. 18. *He looseth the bonds of kings*, &c.] Not with which they themselves may be bound, being taken prisoners, or being so before made kings, and brought from thence to reign, as in Eccl. iv. 14. but that which they bind on their subjects, a yoke of bondage, tyranny, and oppression; so that to loose their bond is to loose their subjects from it, and free them from their arbitrary and despotic power, and from the burdens they lay upon them: unless rather it should be understood of loosing their girdles, as an emblem of their government, ungirding them, or unkinging them, stripping them of their royal power and authority, called a *loosing of their loins*, Isa. xlv. 1. and this power God has over such great personages, as to set up kings, and remove them at his pleasure, Dan. ii. 21. which shews that strength and power, as well as wisdom, are with him; this may respect Chedorlaomer casting off the yoke of Nimrod, and the kings of Canaan casting off the yoke of Chedorlaomer, and being loosed from it, Gen. xiv. 1, 4. *and girdeth their loins with a girdle*; not with a royal girdle, as an ensign of government; see Isa. xi. 5. and xxii. 21. which he looses, and strips them of, but another instead of that; he girds them with the girdle of a servant or traveller; the allusion being to the custom in those eastern countries, where they wore long garments, for servants to gird them up, when they waited on their masters, or when men went long journeys, see Luke xvii. 7, 8. and so may signify that kings sometimes become servants, or go into captivity, and there be used as such, as they sometimes are; the Vulgate Latin version is, *he girds their reins with a rope*.

Ver. 19. *He leadeth princes away spoiled*, &c.] Of their principalities and dominions, of their wealth and riches, and of their honour and glory; or *priests* [v], as some choose to render the word, against whom God has indignation for their sins, and leads them into captivity with others; so the Septuagint version, *he leads the priests captives*: for no office, ever so sacred, can protect wicked men, see Lam. ii. 6. Jer. xiv. 18. and from these sometimes the law perishes, and they are spoiled of their wisdom and knowledge, and made unfit to instruct the people, and so of their credit and reputation among them. Sephorno interprets it of the priests spoiled of their prophesying, they prophesying false things to kings: *and overthroweth the mighty*; the mighty angels from heaven when they sinned, and mighty men on earth, kings and princes, whom he puts down from their seats of majesty and grandeur. Sephorno interprets this of kings, whose ways are perverted, by being led by false prophets, as Ahab was. Some [w] understand this of ecclesiastical men, mighty in word and doctrine, well grounded in theology, yet their wisdom being taken away from them, they turn aside into wicked paths, practices, and principles, and fall from their steadfastness in truth and holiness.

Ver. 20. *He removeth away the speech of the trusty*, &c.] Speech is proper to mankind, and a benefit unto them, whereby they can converse together, and communicate their minds to each other; this is the gift of God, he gives to men in common the faculty of speaking; to some the tongue of the learned to speak divers tongues, either in an ordinary or in an extraordinary manner; and he that gives can take away; he that made man's mouth or lip can make it speechless, as he does at death; when he takes away man's breath, he takes away his speech; the state of the dead is a state of silence; and sometimes he does it whilst living, by striking dumb, as he did Zechariah the father of John the Baptist; and even without so doing, as in the builders of Babel, he took away the speech they had, and gave them another; and sometimes he suffers not men to speak what they would, but what is contrary to their inclinations and desires, as in Balaam, who would willingly have cursed Israel, but could not. Now that God should take away by any means the speech of liars, and faithless persons, as Ananias and Sapphira, by striking them dead; and of false teachers, deceivers, and bold blasphemers of God, and of his Son, and of the blessed Spirit, whose mouths ought to be stopped, is no wonder; but it seems strange that

[v] כהנים sacerdotes, V. L. Montanus, Tigurine version, Bolducius, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.

[w] Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.

he should remove the speech of *trusty* or *faithful*[x] men, that speak the truth, and are to be credited and believed; and as the preceding words are understood of ecclesiastic persons, these may be continued concerning them; and the character agrees with ministers of the word, who are intrusted with the rich treasure of it; that is put in earthen vessels, and committed to the trust of faithful men; who appear to be such when they speak the word faithfully, declare the whole counsel of God, and keep back nothing profitable to men; when they speak plainly, without ambiguity, and sincerely, without mixing or adulterating it; and are faithful as to God, who has appointed them, and put them into the ministry, so to the souls of men under their care: now God sometimes takes away the speech of these, not by changing their voice, or ordering them, instead of the gracious promises of the Gospel, to deliver out the menaces and threatenings of the law; but either by commanding them to be dumb and silent, and speak no more to an incorrigible and rebellious people; as Ezekiel was bid to prophesy no more to the house of Israel, and the apostles to preach no more to the Jews; or by suffering them to be silenced by the edicts of wicked princes, and their violent persecutions of them, so that the teachers of men are removed into corners, and not to be seen or heard; and also by death, when their faces are no more seen, and their speech no more heard. Some, both Jewish and Christian interpreters, derive the word here used from the root נאם, to *speak*, and render it *speakers* or *orators*[y]; so Mr. Broughton translates the words, *he bereaveth the orators of lip;* he takes away their eloquence from them, deprives them of their speaking well, and strips them of their natural and acquired abilities, by which they have become good speakers; and such who use their talents well in this way are beneficial to a commonwealth, and it is a loss when they are removed, or their speech removed from them, see Isa. iii. 3. *and taketh away the understanding of the aged;* or *elders*[z], as Mr. Broughton, either in age or office; elders in age, with whom understanding, reason, judgment, counsel, and wisdom, by all which the word is interpreted, may be thought to be, and it is expected they should, and oftentimes are, though not always; yet all this God can take away, and does when he pleases, and they become like children in understanding; through the infirmities of old age their memories fail them, their reason is impaired, their understanding and judgment are weakened, and they become unfit to give advice themselves, and are easily imposed on, and drawn aside by others, as may be observed in Solomon, the wisest of men, when he was grown old. This is to be understood of the natural understanding in things natural and civil, but not of the spiritual understanding, which is never taken away, but rather increased in old age; the true light of grace shines more and more unto the perfect day; it is a gift of God without repentance, which he never revokes and removes: it may intend the natural *taste*[a], as the word may be rendered; this is often and generally taken away from the aged, as in old Barzillai, who could not taste what he ate and drank, as to distinguish and relish it, 2 Sam. xix. 35. but not the spiritual taste, of the Lord as gracious, of the good word of God, and the fruits of divine grace; the taste and savour of which remain with the people of God in old age; or this may design men in office, either civil magistrates, called senators, the elders of the people, judges, and counsellors, who instead of being taught more wisdom, which their offices require, sometimes become infatuated, their understanding of civil things is taken away from them, their wise counsels become brutish, and they like children; or ecclesiastic persons, elders of churches, who, having talents for public usefulness, either neglect them, or make an ill use of them, and therefore are taken away from them; their right arm is dried up, and their right eye darkened, Matt. xxv. 28, 29. Zech. xi. 17.

Ver. 21. *He poureth contempt upon princes,* &c.] Not on good princes, such as rule in righteousness, and decree judgment and govern their subjects according to good laws, in a mild and gentle manner, and answer to their name of free, liberal, beneficent and munificent. These, as there is an honour due unto them, it is the will of God they should have it; much less are princes, in a figurative sense, meant, good men, the children of God, who are born of him the King of kings, and so princes in all the earth; but, in a literal sense, bad princes, that oppress their subjects, and rule them with rigour, and persecute good men; such as rose up against Christ, as Herod and Pontius Pilate; persecutors of the saints, as the Roman emperors, and the antichristian princes in the papacy; these God sometimes brings into contempt with their subjects, deposes them from their government, reduces them to a mean, abject, and servile state; or they die a shameful death, as Herod was eaten with worms, and many of the Heathen emperors died miserable deaths; and the vials of God's wrath will be poured out upon all the antichristian states, and their princes: pouring denotes the abundance of shame they are put to, as if they were clothed and covered with it, it being plentifully poured out like water, or as water was poured upon them, which is sometimes done by way of contempt, see Psal. cvii. 40. *and weakeneth the strength of the mighty:* the strength of men, hale and robust, by sending one disease or another upon them, which takes it away from them; or by *the mighty* are meant men in power and authority; kings, as the Targum paraphrases it, mighty monarchs, whose strength lies in their wealth and riches, in their fortresses and powerful armies; all which God can deprive them of in an instant, and make them as weak as other men. Some render it, *and looseneth the girdle of the mighty*[b], the same as loosening the loins of kings, Isa. xiv. 1. ungirding them, and taking away their power and authority

[x] לנאמנים veracibus, Paguinus, Montanus, Vatablus, Schultens; fidis, Mercerus, Piscator; fidelibus, Bolducius.

[y] Dicendi peritis, Beza; eloquentibus, Junius & Tremellius; so Kimchi, Ramban, Ben Gersom, Ben Melech, Sephorno.

[z] וזקנים seniorum, Cocceius, Michaelis; senatorum, Schultens.

[a] טעם gustum, Drusius, Schultens.

[b] ומזיח אפיקים רפה & zonam potentium laxat, Tigurine version, Piscator, Beza, Schmidt; so Jarchi, Ben Gersom, Bar Tzemach, & Ben Melech.

from them, rendering them unfit for business, or unable to keep their posts and defend their kingdom.

Ver. 22. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness, &c.*] The deep things of God, his own deep things which lie in his heart, wrapped up in darkness impenetrable to creatures, and which could never be known unless he had discovered them; such as the thoughts of his heart, which are very deep, Psal. xcii. 5. the deep things of God, which the Spirit of God only knows, searches, and reveals, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. even his thoughts of peace, and good things for his people, which are many and precious, are known to himself, and made known to them, or otherwise must have remained in darkness, and out of their reach, being as high as the heavens are from the earth; the decrees and purposes of God, which he hath purposed in himself, are deep things in his own breast, and lie concealed in darkness there, until discovered by the accomplishment of them; such as his decrees of election in Christ, redemption by him, and effectual vocation by his grace; all which are revealed and made known by the execution of them: the love of God to his people, which lay hid in his heart from everlasting; this is discovered by the gift and mission of his Son; in the regeneration and quickening of his people, and of which he makes still larger discoveries to them in the course of their lives: likewise the mysteries of the Gospel, unknown to natural men, even the wise and prudent, only known to such to whom it is given to know them, to whom they are revealed by the Father of Christ, and by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; respecting the persons in the Godhead, the grace of each person, the incarnation of Christ, the union of the two natures in him, redemption and justification by him, regeneration by the Spirit of God, union to Christ, and communion with him, and conformity to him in soul and body, now and hereafter: likewise the secrets of his providence, in which there is a great depth of his wisdom and knowledge, and is in great obscurity; his path is in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known; his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out, but ere long they will be made manifest, and lie open to view. There are also the deep things of others, which he discovers, as the depth of sin in the deceitful heart of man, which none knows as himself; and which lie hid there until they are discovered in the light of the divine Spirit, who convinces of them, enlightens the understanding to behold those swarms of lusts and corruptions it never discerned before; and then a man comes to see and know the plague of his own heart, he was before a stranger to; also the depths of Satan, his deep-laid schemes, his wiles and stratagems, to draw into sin, and so to ruin; these are unknown to natural men, but saints are made acquainted with them, so that they are not altogether ignorant of his devices, Rev. ii. 24. 2 Cor. ii. 11. likewise the secret plots, counsels, and combinations of wicked men, which they lay deep, and seek to hide from the Lord, being formed in the dark; but he sees and knows them, discovers and confounds them: to which may be added all the wicked actions of men done in the dark, but cannot be hid from God, with whom the darkness and the light are both alike; and who, sooner or later, brings them to light, even the hidden things of darkness, and makes manifest the counsels of the heart, as he will do more especially at the day of judgment, to which every secret thing will be brought: *and bringeth to light the shadow of death;* not only life and immortality, as by the Gospel, but death, and the shadow of it, even deadly darkness, the grossest of darkness; such who are darkness itself he makes light, and out of the darkness in them commands light to shine, as in the first creation; to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, he causes a great light to arise, the light of the Gospel, and the light of grace, yea, Christ himself, the light of the world; he calls and brings them out of it into marvellous light, out of the dark dungeon and prison of sin and unbelief, to the enjoyment of spiritual light and life here, and to everlasting light and glory hereafter.

Ver. 23. *He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them, &c.*] As he did before the flood, when the earth was filled, and all over peopled with them, but at the flood he destroyed them at once. Sephorno interprets it of the seven nations in the land of Canaan, which were increased in it, and destroyed, to make way for the Israelites to inhabit it; and this has since been verified in other kingdoms, large and populous, and brought to destruction, particularly in the four monarchies, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, and will be in the antichristian states and nations of the world: *he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them* again; or *stretcheth* or *spreadeth out the nations* [c], as he did all over the earth before the deluge, and then most remarkably straitened them, when they were reduced to so small a number as to be contained in a single ark: *or leads them* [d]; that is, *governs them*, as Mr. Broughton renders the word, rules and overrules them, as large as they are; or leads them into captivity, as some Jewish writers [e], as the Israelites; though they have been enlarged, and became numerous, as it was promised they should, yet have been led into captivity, first the ten tribes by the Assyrians, and then the two tribes by the Chaldeans; the Targum is, *he spreadeth out a net for the nations, and leadeth them*, that is, into it, so that they are taken in it, see Ezek. xii. 13.

Ver. 24. *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, &c.*] The people of the earth are the common people; the *chief* or *heads* [f] of them, as it may be rendered, are kings, princes and generals of armies; whose *hearts* may be said to be *taken away* when they are dispirited, and deprived both of courage and conduct; have neither valour nor wisdom, neither fortitude of mind, nor military skill to defend themselves and their people against their enemies. Sephorno interprets this of Sihon and Og, whose spirits the Lord hardened, and made their hearts obstinate to

[c] שטח extendit, Tigurine version, Drusius, Mercerus; expandit, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt; expandens, Schultens.

[d] וינחם & ducit eas, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Coccejus, Schmidt.

[e] Kimchi, Ben Melech, Bar Tzemach.

[f] ראשי capitum, Montanus, Coccejus, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.

war with Israel, Deut. ii. 30. but it may be better understood of the Israelites, and the heads of them, when they were discomfited by the Amalekites, quickly after their coming out of Egypt, see Numb. xiv. 45. about which time Job lived: and the rather, since it follows, *and caused them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way:* no track, no beaten path to follow, to be a guide to them, and direct their way; in such a wilderness the Israelites wandered near forty years, see Psal. cvii. 40.

Ver. 25. *They grope in the dark without light*, &c.] Like blind men, as the men of Sodom, when they were struck with blindness; or *they grope, or feel the dark, and not light*[g], as the Targum; as the Egyptians did when such gross darkness was upon them as might be felt: *and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man;* that has lost his sight, his senses, and his feet, and knows not where he is, which way to go, nor how to keep on his legs, but reels to and fro, and is at the utmost loss what to do; all this is said of the heads or chief of the people, in consequence of their hearts being taken away, and so left destitute of wisdom and strength.

CHAP. XIII.

JOB begins this chapter by observing the extensiveness of his knowledge, as appeared from his preceding discourse, by which it was evident he was not less knowing than his friends, ver. 1, 2. and therefore would have nothing to do with them as judges in his cause, but would appeal to God, and debate the matter before him, and leave it to his decision, since he could expect no good from them, ver. 3, 4. and all the favour he entreats of them is, that they would for the future be no longer speakers, but hearers, ver. 5, 6, 13, 17. he expostulates with them about their wicked and deceitful way of pleading for God, and against him, ver. 7, 8. and in order to strike an awe upon them, suggests to them, that they were liable to the divine scrutiny; that God was not to be mocked by them, that he would surely reprove them for their respect of persons, and desires them to consider his dreadful majesty, and what frail creatures they were, ver. 9—12. then he expresses his confidence in God, that he should be saved by him, notwithstanding the afflictive circumstances he was in, ver. 14, 15, 16. and doubted not he should be able so to plead his cause, as that he should be justified, if God would but withdraw his hand, and take off his dread from him, ver. 18—22. he desires to know what his sins were, that he should hide his face from him, and treat him with so much severity, who was but a poor, weak, feeble creature, ver. 23, 24, 25. and concludes with a complaint of the bitterness and sharpness of his afflictions, with which he was consumed, ver. 26—28.

Ver. 1. *Lo, mine eye hath seen all* this, &c.] Or *all those things*[h] he had been discoursing of, concerning the wisdom and power of God, and his friends also; some of these he had seen instances of, he had been an eye-witness of them, and could give an ocular testimony to them; and others he had discerned with the eyes of his understanding, being opened and enlightened, and had a clear and distinct view of them, so that he had seen and knew as much of these things as any of them had. Some[i] interpret it *all* other things, pertaining to the same subject; by what he had said, it might be concluded he knew more; this was but a sample or specimen of his knowledge, which, when observed, it might be perceived what an understanding he had in such divine things: the words are indeed absolute, *my eye hath seen all things*[k], which must not be taken in the largest and comprehensive sense of all things to be seen, heard, and understood; for though Job's knowledge was very great, yet it did not take so great a compass as this; many things in nature his eye had not seen, others in providence he could not discern, and but a small portion of God, of his nature, perfections, ways, and works, was known by him, as he himself confesses elsewhere, ch. xxvi. 14. this therefore must be limited and restrained to the subject-matter in hand, and to what he and his friends had been treating of: *mine ear hath heard;* some things he had knowledge of by the report of others, from his forefathers, his ancestors, men of capacity and probity, that could be credited, and safely depended on, and even some things by revelation from God; for if Eliphaz his friend had an heavenly vision, and a divine revelation, which his ear received a little of, why may it not be thought that Job also was sometimes favoured with visions and revelations from God, whereby he became more intimately acquainted with divine and spiritual things? *and understood it;* that is, what he had seen and heard; some things may be seen, and yet not known what they are; and other things may be heard, and not understood; but Job had an understanding of what he had seen with his own eyes, or had received by revelation, human or divine: and all this is introduced with a *lo* or *behold;* not as a note of admiration at his knowledge, though the things known by him were wonderful, but as a note of attention to them, and to his remark on them, and as expressive of the certainty of his sight, hearing, and understanding of these things.

Ver. 2. *What ye know*, the same *do I know also*, &c.] Concerning God and his perfections, his sovereignty, holiness, justice, wisdom, power, goodness, *&c.* and concerning his providences, and his dealings with men in an ordinary or in an extraordinary way: *I am not inferior unto you:* as might be collected from the preceding discourse; see the note on ch. xii. 3.

[g] ימששו חשך ולא אור palpant tenebras & non lucem, Vatablus, Mercerus, Drusius, Schultens.

[h] כל אלה omnia hæc, V. L. Tigurine version, Beza, Michaelis; so Vatablus, Mercerus, Piscator, Codurcus.

[i] Alia omnia, Schmidt.

[k] Omnia, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Boldacius, Cocceius, Schultens.

Ver. 3. *Surely I would speak to the Almighty*, &c.] Or *therefore I would speak*[l], since he knew as much as his friends, and they knew no more than he, if so much, he would have no more to do with them, they should not be his judges; nor would he be determined by them, but would appeal to God, and plead his own cause before him, by whom he doubted not he should be candidly heard; he knew that he was the Judge of all the earth, and would do right; and that he sat on a throne judging righteously, and would maintain his right and his cause; that he would judge him according to his righteousness and integrity, of which he was conscious, and would pass a just decisive sentence in his favour, and give the cause for him against his friends, as he afterwards did; for this is not to be understood of speaking to him in prayer, though that is a speech either of the heart or of the tongue, or of both, to God; and which he allows of, yea, delights in, and which is a wonderful condescension; and therefore it may be used with boldness and freedom, and which gracious souls are desirous of; and the consideration of God being *almighty*, or *all-sufficient*, is an argument, motive, and inducement to them to speak or pray unto him, since he is able to do all things for them they want or desire of him; but here it is to be understood of speaking to him, or before him, in a judicial way, at his bar, before his tribunal, he sitting as a Judge to hear the cause, and decide the controversy between Job and his friends. Some render it, *I would speak for the Almighty, and desire to reason for God*[m]; seeing he knew so much of him; not speak against him, as his friends suggested he had, but for him, on behalf of his sovereignty, justice, holiness, wisdom, and strength, as he had done, and would do yet more; by which he would have it known, that as he had as much knowledge as they, he was as zealous as any of them to plead for God, and defend him, and promote his honour and glory to the uttermost; but the other sense is best: *and I desire to reason with God*; not at the bar of his justice, with respect to the justification of his person by his own righteousness; so no man can reason with God, as to approve himself just with him; nor will any sensible man desire to enter into judgment with him on that foot; a poor sensible sinner may reason with God at the throne of grace, and plead for pardoning mercy and justifying grace through the blood and righteousness of Christ, and from the declarations, proclamations, and promises of grace through him; but of neither of these sorts of reasonings are the words to be understood, but of debating the matter in controversy between Job and his friends before God, that he might hear it, and decide it; this was what Job was desirous of, of having the cause brought before him, the case stated and pleaded, and reasoned on in his presence; this he signifies would be a pleasure to him; he *should delight* to have it so, as the word[n] here used may be interpreted.

Ver. 4. *But ye are forgers of lies*, &c.] This is a hard and very harsh saying; Job was now in a passion, provoked by his friends, and retorts upon them what they had charged him with, ch. xi. 3. so often in controversies and disputes between good men undue heats arise, and unbecoming words drop from their lips and pens; to tell lies is a bad thing, but to forge them, to tell a studied premeditated lie, is dreadfully shocking, contrary to the grace of God, and which good men cannot allow themselves in, it is the character of bad men, see Isa. lxiii. 8. Psal. cxix. 69. but it may be Job may not design lies in a strict and proper sense, but falsehoods and untruths; for though no lie is of the truth, yet every untruth is not a lie; because a man may deliver an untruth, not knowing it to be so, but taking it for a truth, speaks it, without any design to impose upon and deceive others. Doctrinal lies may be intended, such as the false prophets told, whereby they made the hearts of the righteous sad, and were the untempered mortar they daubed with, Ezek. xiii. 10, 22. and the word here used has the same signification, and may be rendered, *daubers of lies*[o]; that colour over things, and make falsehoods look like truths, and deliver them for such, and like others speak lies in hypocrisy: now those here referred to were these, that God did not afflict good men, at least in any very severe manner, and that Job, being thus afflicted, was a bad man, and an hypocrite; both these Job charges as lies: *ye are all physicians of no value*; or *idol-physicians*[p]; not that pretended to the cure of idols, but were no better than idols themselves, and understood no more how to cure than they, than an Heathen deity, the god of physic Æsculapius, or any one that might be reckoned such; but was no other than an image of wood or stone, and so could not be possessed of the faculty of healing, and such were Job's friends; an idol is nothing, and is good for nothing, and such were they as physicians, they were idol-physicians, like the idol-shepherd, Zech. xi. 17. of no value at all: the Rabbins[q] say, the word used signifies a nerve or sinew of the neck, which when broken is incurable; and such physicians were they, that could do him no service, no more than cure a broken neck; this is to be understood of them, not as physicians of his body, that they pretended not to be; he was greatly diseased from head to foot, and had no hope of a recovery of his health, nor did they pretend to prescribe for him, nor does he reproach them on that account; but as physicians of his soul, afflicted and distressed, they came to administer comfort to him under his afflictions, but they were miserable comforters, as he elsewhere calls them, ch. xvi. 2. instead of acting the part of the good Samaritan, and pouring in oil and wine into his wounds, they poured in vinegar, and made them bleed and smart the more, and added affliction to his affliction; instead of healing, they wounded him yet more and more; and, instead of binding up his wounds, opened them wider, and gave him sensible pain; instead of giving him the cordials of the Gospel, they gave him the corrosives of the law; and instead of pointing out unto him the gracious promises of God, for the support of his afflicted soul, they loaded him with charges of sin, and set him to work by repentance and reformation to

[l] אולם ideo, propterea, Pineda.
[m] אל שדי pro Omnipotente—pro Deo, Junius & Tremellius.
[n] אחפץ lubet, Schultens.
[o] טפלי שקר incrustatores fuci, Schultens.

[p] רפאי אלל curatores idoli, Bolducius; so Ramban; medici idoli, Pineda; so some in Drusius.
[q] Jarchi & Bar Tzemach.

obtain the forgiveness of them: they said many good things, but misapplied them, being ignorant of the case, and so were physicians of no value; as such are who are ignorant of the nature and causes of a disease, and therefore make wrong prescriptions, though the medicines they prescribe may in themselves be good: indeed, in soul-cases, or for the healing of the diseases of the soul, which are natural and hereditary, epidemical and universal, nauseous and loathsome, and of themselves mortal, all physicians are of no value; but Jesus Christ, who is the only physician of souls, the able, skilful, and infallible one, that cures all fully and freely that apply unto him; bodily physicians are of no use in such cases, nor merry companions, nor legal preachers, who direct to supple the wounds with tears of repentance, and bind them up with rags of a man's own righteousness; Christ is the only Saviour, his blood the balsam that heals every wound, and his righteousness that affords peace, joy, and comfort to afflicted minds, and delivers from those weights and pressures of mind with which they are bowed down.

Ver. 5. *And that ye would altogether hold your peace,* &c.] Since what they said of him was not true, nor any thing to the purpose, or that tended to the comfort of his afflicted soul, but the reverse; and therefore he could have wished they had never broke silence, but continued as they were the first seven days of their visit; and now, since they had spoken, and had done no good by speaking, but hurt, he desires for the future they would be silent, and say no more: *and it should be your wisdom*: it would be the greatest evidence of it they could give; they had shewn none by speaking; it would be a proof of some in them, should they hold their peace; a very biting expression this! see Prov. xvii. 28.

Ver. 6. *Hear now my reasoning,* &c.] Job entreats his friends that they would be no longer speakers, but hearers; that they would vouchsafe to sit still, and hear what he had to say; though he was greatly afflicted, he had not lost his reason, wisdom was not driven out from him, ch. vi. 13. he had still with him his reasoning powers, which he was capable of making use of, and even before God, and desires that they would attend to what he had to say on his own behalf: *and hearken to the pleadings of my lips*: he was capable of pleading his own cause, and he was desirous of doing it before God as his Judge; and begs the favour of his friends to be silent, and hear him out, and then let judgment be given, not by them, but by God himself.

Ver. 7. *Will you speak wickedly for God?* &c.] As he suggests they did; they spoke for God, and pleaded for the honour of his justice, by asserting he did not afflict good men, which they thought was contrary to his justice; but then, at the same time, they spoke wickedly of Job, that he being afflicted of God was a bad man, and an hypocrite; and this was speaking wickedly for God, to vindicate his justice at the expense of his character, which there was no need to do; and shewed that they were poor advocates for God, since they might have vindicated the honour of his justice, and yet allowed that he afflicted good men, and that Job was such an one: *and talk deceitfully for him?* or tell lies for him, namely, those just mentioned, that only wicked men, and not good men, were afflicted by him, and that Job was a bad man, and an hypocrite.

Ver. 8. *Will ye accept his person?* &c.] Accepting or respecting persons ought not to be done in judgment by earthly judges; which is done when they give a cause to one through favour and affection to his person, because rich, or their friend, and against another, because otherwise; and something like this Job intimates his friends did in the present case; they only considered what God was, holy, just, wise, and good in all he did, and so far they were right, and too much respect cannot be given him; but the fault was, that they only attended to this, and did not look into the cause of Job itself, but wholly neglected it, and gave it against him, he being poor, abject, and miserable, on the above consideration of the perfections of God; which looked like what is called among men acceptation, or respect of persons: *will ye contend for God?* it is right to contend for God, for the being of God against atheists, for the perfections of God, his sovereignty, his omniscience, omnipresence, &c. against those that deny them, for his truths and doctrines, word, worship, and ordinances, against the corrupters of them; but then he and those are not to be contended for in a foolish and imprudent manner, or with a zeal, not according to knowledge, much less with an hypocritical one, as was Jehu's; God needs no such advocates, he can plead his own cause, or make use of persons that can do it in a better manner, and to better purpose.

Ver. 9. *Is it good that he should search you out?* &c.] That is, God; searching is ascribed to him after the manner of men; not that he is ignorant of persons or things he searches after, or exercises that application, diligence, and industry, and takes those pains which are necessary in men to find out any thing; when he makes search, it is not on his own account, but others; at least it is only to shew his knowledge of persons and things, and to make men known to others, or things to them themselves; and is here to be understood in a judicial sense, as it frequently is the case, so it was here, a man that is *first in his own cause,* as the wise man says, Prov. xviii. 17. *seemeth just;* to himself and others; it looks upon the representation he makes of things as if he was in the right: *but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him;* traverses his arguments in his own vindication, and shews the fallacy of them; so Job's friends, making the worst of his cause, and the best of their own, seemed right in their own eyes; but God, who is the searcher of hearts, and who knows all things, could see through their coverings of things, and could not be deceived by them, but would find them out, and expose them; as he did afterwards, when he gave judgment against them, and declared they had not said that which was right, as his servant Job had, ch. xlii. 7, 8. and therefore it was not to their profit and advantage, and to their honour and credit, to be searched out by him, or to run the risk of it, as they did, which is the amount of this question: *or as one mocketh another, do ye so mock him?* men may be mocked by their fellow-creatures, either by words or gestures, as good men usually are in all ages, especially the prophets of the Lord, and

the ministers of his word; or they may be deceived and imposed upon by the false glosses and colourings of artful men, as simple men are deceived by the fair speeches of false teachers, which is no other than an illusion of them, or mocking them: in the first sense God may be mocked, though he should not; there have been and will be such bold and daring creatures as to mock at his promises and his providence, to mock at his word, ordinances, and ministers, which is interpreted by him a mocking and despising himself; but in the latter sense he cannot be mocked, and it is a vain thing to attempt it; *he not deceived, God is not mocked*, Gal. vi. 7. he sees through all the fallacious reasonings of men; he judges not according to outward appearance; he sees and knows the heart, and all the views and designs of men, and can detect all their sophisms and false glosses; he is not to be deceived by specious pretences of doing such and such actions for his glory, as casting out good men, and their names, or traducing their characters that he may be glorified, or killing them to do him service, Isa. lxvi. 5. John xvi. 2. he is not to be flattered as one man may flatter another; to do this with him, is to mock him, he is not to be mocked in this way.

Ver. 10. *He will surely reprove you*, &c.] Or *in reproving he will reprove you*[a]; he will certainly do it, it may be depended upon, and be expected; he will never suffer sin to go unreproved and uncorrected: he will do it to the purpose, with sharpness and severity, as the nature of the crime requires; he reproves by his spirit, and it is well for men when he thoroughly, and in a spiritual and saving way, reproves them by him, and convinces them of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and he reproves by his word, which is written for reproof and correction; and by his ministers, one part of whose work it is to rebuke and reprove men for bad practices, and bad principles; and in some cases they are to use sharpness, and which when submitted to, and kindly taken, it is well; and sometimes he reproves by his providences, by afflictive dispensations, and that either in love, as he rebukes his own children, or in wrath and hot displeasure, as others, which is here designed; and as it is always for sin he rebukes men, so particularly he rebukes for the following, as might be expected: *if ye do secretly accept persons*; acceptance of persons in judgment is prohibited by God, and is highly resented by him; yea, even the acceptance of his own person to the prejudice of the character of an innocent man; which seems to be what Job has respect unto, as appears from ver. 8. and some versions render it, *if ye accept his face*[b]; and though this may be done not openly and publicly, but in a covert and secret manner, under disguise, and with specious pretences to the honour and glory of God.

Ver. 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid*, &c.] To commit sin, any sin, and particularly that just mentioned, which they might expect to be reproved for; there is an excellency in the name of God, which is fearful and dreadful, and in the nature and perfections of God, his power, justice, and holiness, in which he is glorious and tremendous, and should deter men from sinning against him; and there is an excellency in his works of nature and providence, which are wondrous, and shew him to be near at hand, and can at once, if he pleases, take vengeance for sin: or *shall not his height*[c], &c. his sublimity, his superiority to all beings; he is the most high God, higher than the highest among men, he is above all gods, all that are so called; and therefore all the inhabitants of the earth should stand in awe of him, and not sin: or *shall not his lifting up*[d]? &c. on a throne of judgment, as the Targum adds; he is the Judge of the whole earth, and will judge his people, and right their wrongs; he sits on a throne high, and lifted up, judging righteously; and will maintain the cause of the innocent, and avenge himself on those that injure them, and therefore it must be a fearful thing to fall into his hands: some render it, *shall not his burning*[e]; or flaming fire, &c. as Jarchi observes, and apply it to hell-fire, and the everlasting burnings of the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; and which are very terrible, and may well affright men from sinning against God; but the first sense seems to be best: *and his dread fall upon you?* the dread of men, of powerful and victorious enemies, is very terrible, as was the dread of the Israelites which fell upon the inhabitants of Canaan, Josh. ii. 9. but how awful must be the terror of the great and dreadful God, when that falls upon men, or his terrible wrath and vengeance are revealed from heaven, and threaten every moment to fall upon the transgressors of his law, upon those that mock him and injure his people.

Ver. 12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes*, &c.] Either of things they put Job in remembrance of, the mementos which they had suggested to him; see ch. iv. 7. or the things which they had brought forth out of their memories, the instances they had given of what had been in the world, the arguments, objections, and reasonings, they had made use of in this controversy; their *memorable sentences*[f], as some render it, were of no more moment and importance than ashes, and easily blown away like them; or whatsoever was memorable in them, or they thought would perpetuate their memory hereafter, as their houses and lands, and towns and cities, called by their names, these memorials should perish, Psal. xlix. 11. and ix. 6. or their wealth and riches, their honour and glory, their learning, wisdom, and knowledge, all should fade, and come to nothing; the memory of the just indeed is blessed, the righteous are had in everlasting remembrance, because of their everlasting righteousness; but as for any thing else, that may be thought to be a remembrance of man, it is but as ashes, of little worth, soon gone, and often trampled upon; and men should remember that they are but dust and ashes, as Aben Ezra[g] observes, even in their best estate, in comparison of the excellency of God, before spoken of; and as

[a] הוכח יוכיח arguendo arguet, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Bolducius, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt; redarguendo redarguet, Michaelis.

[b] פניו faciem ejus, V. L. Munster, Piscator; personam ipsius, Beza, so the Targum.

[c] שאתו celsitudo ejus, Montanus, Vatablus, Bolducius; sublimitas ejus, Beza, Mercerus.

[d] Elevatio, erectio, Drusius.

[e] So some in Jarchi & Bar Tzemach.

[f] זכרוניכם sententiæ vestræ memorabiles, Schultens.

[g] So the Tigurine version, meminisse oportebat vos similes esse cineri.

Abraham confessed in the presence of God, Gen. xviii. 27. *your bodies to bodies of clay*: that is, are like to bodies of clay, to such as are made of clay after the similitude of human bodies; and such are the bodies of men themselves, they are of the earth, earthly, they are houses of clay, which have their foundation in the dust; earthen vessels, and earthly houses of this tabernacle, poor, mean, frail, brittle things, are crushed before the moth, and much more before the Almighty: the word is by some rendered *eminencies*, the most eminent men; what is most eminent in them are like to *eminences of clay*[g], or heaps of dirt: some interpret this, as the former expression, of their words, reasonings, arguments, and objections; which though great swelling words, were vain and empty, mere bubbles, and though reckoned strong reasonings, unanswerable arguments, and objections, had no strength in them, but were to be easily thrown down like hillocks of clay; and though thought to be like shields, or high and strong fortresses, as some[h] take the word to signify, yet are but clayey ones.

Ver. 13. *Hold your peace, let me alone*, &c.] Or, cease *from me*[i], from speaking to me, or hindering me from speaking. Job might perceive, by some motions of his friends, that they were about to interrupt him; and therefore he desires they would be silent, and let him go on: *that I may speak*; or, *and I will speak, and let come on me what will*: either from men, or from God himself; a good man, when he knows his cause is good, and he has truth on his side, is not careful or concerned what reproach may be cast upon him, or what censures from men he may undergo; or what persecutions from them he may endure; none of these things move him from his duty, or can stop his mouth from speaking the truth; let him be threatened with what he will, he cannot but speak the things which he has seen and heard, and knows to be true; as for what may come upon him from God, that he is not solicitous about; he knows he will lay nothing upon him but what is common to men, will support him under it, or deliver him from it in his own time and way, or however make all things work together for his good: some render it, *and let something pass by me*, or *from me*[k]; that is, somewhat of his grief and sorrow, whilst he was speaking and pouring out his complaints before God; but the former sense seems best.

Ver. 14. *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth*, &c.] Or bite my lips, to keep in my words, and refrain from speaking? I will not do it: *and put my life in my hand?* or, expose it to danger by a forced silence; when I am ready to burst, and must if I do not speak; I will not thus endanger my life; it is unreasonable I should, I'll speak my mind freely and fully, that I may be refreshed; so Sephorno interprets it of Job's putting his hand to his mouth, that he might be silent; and of putting a forcible restraint upon himself, that he might not declare what was upon his mind; see ver. 19. but others, as Bar Tzemach, take the sense to be, what is the sin I have committed, that such sore afflictions are laid upon me; that through the pain and distress I am in, I am ready to tear off my flesh with my teeth, and my life is in the utmost danger? and some think he was under a temptation to tear his own flesh, and destroy himself; and therefore argues why he should be thus hardly dealt with, as to be exposed to such a temptation, and thrown in such despair, which yet he laboured against; but rather the meaning is, in connexion with the preceding verse, let whatsoever will come upon me, *at all events*, *I will take my flesh in my teeth, and I will put my life in my hand*[l]; I will expose myself to the greatest dangers, which is the sense of the last phrase in Judg. xii. 3. 1 Sam. xix. 5. and xxviii. 21. Psal. cxix. 109. come life, come death, I'll not fear; I am determined to speak out my mind, let what will be the consequence; and with this bold and heroic spirit agrees what follows.

Ver. 15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, &c.] There is a double reading of these words; the Keri, or marginal reading, is לו, *in him*, which we follow; the Cetib, or textual reading, is לא, *not*, which many follow, and render the words, *lo, he will slay me, I shall not hope*; or, *I have no hope*, or *do not expect*[m]; that is, any other than to be slain or die; and this agrees with various expressions of his elsewhere, that he had no hope of any long continuance of life, or of restoration to health and outward happiness again, but expected to die quickly; see ch. vi. 11. and vii. 21. and x. 20. and xix. 10. *but I will maintain mine own ways before him*; or *to his face*[n]; though I die on the spot instantly, I'll stand by it, and make it appear that the ways I have walked in are right, that I have behaved as a sincere upright man, a man fearing God, and eschewing evil; a character which God himself has given of me, and I have not forfeited it: *I will argue* or *prove*[o] it before him, as it may be rendered; that my life and conversation has been agreeable to my profession of him; that my ways have been according to his revealed will, and my walk as becoming the character I bear; and this I'll maintain and support as long as I live; I'll never depart from this sentiment, or let go my integrity to my latest breath; see ch. xxvii. 5, 6. but the marginal reading seems best, *yet will I trust in him*[p]? verily I will, though I am under cutting and slaying providences, under sore afflictions, which may be called killing and slaying, or death itself; though there is an addition of them, one affliction upon another, and sorrow upon sorrow; though I am killed continually, all the day long, or die by inches; yea, though in the article of death itself, yet even then *will I trust* and hope: God only is the object of trust and confidence, and not a creature, or any creature-enjoyment, or creature-act; and great encouragement there is to trust in him, see-

[g] לגבי חמר גביכם eminentiæ vestræ, eminentiæ luteæ, Beza; so Bolducius.
[h] Sic Cocceius, Beza.
[i] מגני desistite a me, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[k] ויעבר עלי מה ut transeat præter me aliquid, vel a me, Schmidt.
[l] Super quocunque eventu, Schultens.

[m] Non sperabo, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus. So Cocceius, Schultens, Gussetius, p. 420.
[n] אל־פניו ad facies ejus, Montanus, Bolducius; so Vatablus, Schultens.
[o] אוכיח arguam, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Schmidt, Schultens; probabo, Piscator.
[p] An non sperem in eum? so some in Munster; so Junius & Tremellius, Beza, Codurcus.

ing in him is everlasting strength, to fulfil his promises, to help in time of need, and to save with an everlasting salvation; he is to be trusted in at all times, in times of affliction, temptation, desertion, and death itself: it may be rendered[s], *I will hope in him*, since there is mercy and plenteous redemption with him, and he delights in those that hope in his mercy; his eye is upon them, and his heart is towards them: or *I will wait for him*, or *expect him*[t]; wait for deliverance by him, wait all the days of his appointed time, till his change come; wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, expect all needful grace from him now, and eternal glory and happiness hereafter: *but* notwithstanding his trust was alone in God for time and eternity, yet, says he, *I will maintain mine own ways before him*; that I am not an hypocrite, or have behaved as a bad man; but have acted under the influence of grace, according to his mind and will revealed.

Ver. 16. *He also* shall be *my salvation*, &c.] Job, though he asserted the integrity of his heart and life, yet did not depend on his ways and works for salvation, but only on the Lord himself; this is to be understood not of temporal salvation, though God is the author of that, and it is only to be had of him, yet Job had no hope concerning that; but of spiritual and eternal salvation, which God the Father has contrived, determined, and resolved on, and sent his Son to effect; which Christ being sent is the author of by his obedience, sufferings, and death; and in him, and in his name alone, is salvation; and every soul, sensible of the insufficiency of himself and others to save him, will resolve, as Job here, that he, and he only, shall be his Saviour, who is an able, willing, and complete one; see Hos. xiv. 3. and the words are expressive of faith of interest in him. Job knew him to be his Saviour, and living Redeemer, and would acknowledge no other; but claim his interest in him, now and hereafter, and which was his greatest support under all his troubles; see ch. xix. 26, 27. Psal. xxvii. 1. *for an hypocrite shall not come before him*: a hypocrite may come into the house of God, and worship him externally, and seem to be very devout and religious; and he shall come before the tribunal of God, and stand at his bar, to be tried and judged; but he shall not continue in the presence of God, nor enjoy his favour, or he shall not be able to make his cause good before him; and indeed he does not care to have himself examined by him, nor shall he be saved everlastingly, but undergo the most severe punishment, Matt. xxiv. 51. Job here either has respect to his friends, whom he censures as hypocrites, and retorts the charge upon they brought on him; or he has reference to that charge, and by this means clears himself of it, since there was nothing he was more desirous of than to refer his case to the decision of the omniscient God, and righteous Judge; which if he was an hypocrite he would never have done, since such can never stand so strict and severe an examination.

Ver. 17. *Hear diligently my speech*, &c.] Or, *in hearing hear*[u]; meaning, not only that his friends would attentively hear him, but continue to hear him; that they would hear him out what he had to say further: upon his expressing himself with so much faith and confidence in God, they might rise up from their seats and be preparing to be gone, as not having patience to hear a man talk so confidently, who they thought was a bad man and an hypocrite; or they might attempt to interrupt him while speaking, and therefore he desires they would be still, and patiently and diligently hear what he had more to say: *and my declaration with your ears*; that is, that they would listen to it attentively, when he doubted not but he should make his case as clear as the sun, and set it in such a point of view, as that it would appear most plainly to be right, and he to be a just man.

Ver. 18. *Behold now, I have ordered* my *cause*, &c.] Or *judgment*[w]; that is, he had looked over his cause afresh, had reviewed the state of his case, had considered it in every light, had drawn a plan of it, had digested it in a proper manner, and had arranged his reasons and arguments in vindication of himself in a regular form; and had them at hand, and could readily and easily come at them on occasion, to vindicate himself; and upon the whole could say, in the strongest manner, and could draw this conclusion, *I know that I shall be justified*; which, though it may primarily respect the case in dispute between him and his friends, and the charge of wickedness and hypocrisy brought against him by them, from which he doubted not he should upon a fair hearing be acquitted by God himself, yet it may include his whole state of justification, Godward, in which he was and should continue; and so may respect, not only the justification of his cause before men, as it was ordered and managed by him, but also the justification of his person before God, of which he had a full assurance; having ordered his cause aright, settled matters well, and proceeded upon a good plan and foundation; which to do is not to put justification upon the foot of purity of nature at first birth, and a sober life and conversation from youth upward, and a perfection of good works arrived unto, as imagined; nor upon a comparative righteousness with respect to other men, even profane and ungodly persons; nor upon repentance, and sincere though imperfect obedience; nor upon an external belief of evangelic truths, and a submission to Gospel ordinances: but such order their cause well, and rightly conclude their justification, who see and own themselves to be transgressors of the law of God, behold and acknowledge their own righteousness to be insufficient to justify them, view the righteousness of Christ revealed in the Gospel, in its glory, excellency, and suitableness, and lay hold upon it as their justifying righteousness; and observing that the word of God declares, that those that believe in Christ are and shall be justified, and finding in themselves that they do with the heart believe in Christ for righteousness, hence they most comfortably and most sensibly conclude that they are justified

[s] In eo tamen sperabo, Schmidt, Piscator, Michaelis.
[t] Ipsum expectabo, Drusius.
[u] שמעו שמוע audite audiendo, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, &c.
[w] משפט judicium, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

persons; for this knowledge is of faith, and this faith the faith of assurance; it is not barely for a man to know that there is righteousness in Christ, and justification by it, but that there is righteousness in him for himself, and that he is the Lord his righteousness; for the words may be rendered, *I know that I am righteous*; or, *am justified* *; justification is a past act in the mind of God; it is present, as it terminates on the conscience of a believer; it is future, as it will be notified at the day of judgment before angels and men: see Isa. xlv. 25.

Ver. 19. *Who is he that will plead with me*, &c.] Enter the lists with him; dispute the point, and try the strength of his arguments he had to plead for his own justification: thus Christ, the head of the church, and the surety of his people, is represented as speaking when he had by his obedience and sufferings made satisfaction for them, by bringing in an everlasting righteousness, and was, as their public and federal head, justified and acquitted, Isa. l. 4—9. and much the same words are put into the mouth of a believer in him, and are expressed by him, Rom. viii. 33, 34. who stands acquitted from all charges that men or devils, friends or foes, the law or justice of God, the devil and and his own unbelieving heart, at any time, can bring against him. Job, well knowing the uprightness of his heart and life, the justness of his cause depending between him and his friends, boldly challenges them to come forth, and try it with him; or rather he seems desirous that God himself would take the case in hand, and plead with him; he was ready to engage with him, and in the presence of his friends, and in their hearing; and doubted not of being acquitted before God, and at his bar; so satisfied was he of his own innocence as to the things charged upon him: *for now, if I hold my peace, I shall give up the ghost*: his sense seems to be, that if he was not allowed to speak for himself, and plead his cause, and have a hearing of it out, he could not live, he could not contain himself, he must burst and die; nor could he live under such charges and calumnies, he must die under the weight and pressure of them; though some think that this not only expresses his eagerness and impatience to have his cause tried fairly before God, but contains in it an argument to hasten it, taken from the near approach of his death: *for now*, in a little time, *I shall be silent* *; be in the silent grave: *I shall expire*: or die; and then it will be too late; therefore if any will plead with me, let them do it immediately, or I shall be soon gone, and then it will be all over: or rather the sense is, I challenge any one to reason the matter, and dispute the point with me; and I promise that, if the cause goes against me, *now will I be silent*; I'll not say one word more in my vindication: *I will die*; or submit to any death, or any sort of punishment, that shall be pronounced upon me; I'll patiently endure it, and not complain of it, or object to the execution of it; so Sephorno.

Ver. 20. *Only do not two things unto me*, &c.] This is an address not to Zophar as in the place of God, as some, but to God himself; by this it appears, that though in modesty he does not mention him, yet he it is he has the chief, if not the sole, regard unto in the preceding verse; for his desire was to speak to the Almighty, and reason with God, and have nothing more to do with his friends, ver. 3, 4, 5. but before any pleadings begin on either side, he is desirous of settling and fixing the terms and conditions of the dispute; he requests that two things might be granted him, which are mentioned in the next verse: *then will I not hide myself from thee*; through fear or shame, but boldly appear before God, and come up even to his seat, and plead with him face to face.

Ver. 21. *Withdraw thine hand far from me*, &c.] His afflicting hand, which pressed him; this he desires might be removed, or otherwise he could not have the command of himself, make use of his reasoning faculties, recollect his arguments, and give them in their due force and strength; for afflictions of body affect the soul and memory, understanding and judgment; this is one of the things he would have agreed unto before the dispute was entered on; the other follows: *and let not thy dread make me afraid*: the terrors of his law, or the dreadful apprehensions of his wrath; he desires to be freed from all slavish fear of God, that now possessed his mind through the severity of his dispensations towards him, behaving as if he was his enemy; or he deprecates his appearance in any external visible way and manner, which might be affrighting to him, and so hinder freedom of speech in his own defence; these two things are before requested, ch. ix. 34, 35. which should they be granted, he proposes as follows.

Ver. 22. *Then call thou, and I will answer*, &c.] Either call him by name in open court, and he would answer to it; or arraign him at the bar, and exhibit charges against him, and he would make answer to them and clear himself; his sense is, that if God would take upon him to be plantiff, and accuse and charge him with what he had to object to him, then he would be defendant, and plead his own cause, and shew that they did not of right belong unto him: *or let me speak, and answer thou me*: or he would be plaintiff, and put queries concerning the afflictions he was exercised with, or the severity of them, and the reason of such usage, and God be the defendant, and give him an answer to them, that he might be no longer at a loss as he was for such behaviour towards him: this is very boldly said indeed, and seems to savour of irreverence towards God; and may be one of those speeches for which he was blamed by Elihu, and by the Lord himself; though no doubt he designed not to cast any contempt upon God, nor to behave ill towards him; but in the agonies of his spirit, and under the weight of his affliction, and to shew the great sense he had of his innocence, and his assurance of it, he speaks in this manner; not doubting but, let him have what part he would in the debate, whether that of plaintiff or defendant, he should carry the cause, and it would go in his favour; and though he proposes it to God to be at his option to choose which he would take, Job stays

* כי אני אצדק quod ego justus sum, Schmidt; me justum esse, vel fore, Schultens.

* כי עתה אחריש ואגוע nunc enim silebo & expirabo, Cocceius; so Schmidt, Schultens.

not for an answer, but takes upon him to be plaintiff, as in the following words.

Ver. 23. *How many are mine iniquities and sins?*] Whether of ignorance or presumption, through mistake or wilfulness, voluntary or involuntary, sins of omission or commission, secret or open, or of heart, lip, or life; for by this heap of words he uses in this and the next clause he means all sorts of sins, be they what they would; he desires to know what they were, both with respect to quality and quantity, how great[i] they were, what heinous and capital crimes he had been guilty of, that such sore afflictions were laid upon him: and how many they were, as they were suggested to be by his friends, and who indeed call them infinite, ch. xxii. 5. and as they might seem to be from the many afflictions endured by him, which were supposed to be for sins; though, as Schultens observes, such an interrogation as the force of a diminution and negation, as that of the Psalmist; *how many are the days of thy servant?* Psal. cxix. 84. that is, how few are they? or rather none at all; namely, of light and joy, of pleasure and comfort; so Job represents by this his sins to be but few[k] in comparison of what his friends surmised, or might be concluded from his afflictions; and indeed none at all of a capital nature, and such as were of a deep die, atrocious and enormous crimes; only such as were common to good men, who all have their frailties, infirmities, and imperfections, there being not a just man that does good and sins not: Job did not pretend to be without sin, but he was not sensible of any notorious sin he could be charged with, nor was he conscious of allowing himself in any known sin, or of living and walking therein, which is inconsistent with the grace of God; moreover, as he knew his interest in his living Redeemer and surety, to whom, and not to himself, his sins and transgressions were imputed; he might ask, *how many iniquities and sins are to me*[l]? as the words may be literally rendered; that is, which are to be reckoned to me, to be placed to my account? none at all; see 2 Cor. v. 19. Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. *make me to know my transgression and my sin*; not that he was ignorant of sin, of the nature and demerit of it, as unregenerate men are, who know not the plague of their own hearts, in-dwelling sin, internal lusts, nor the exceeding sinfulness of sinful actions, nor the effect and consequences of sin, pollution, guilt, the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and eternal death; at least do not know it as to be affected with a sense of it, to have a godly sorrow for it, repent of it, confess it, and forsake it; such knowledge as this is from the spirit of God, and which Job had; but his meaning is, that if he could not be charged with many sins, as might seem to be the case, yet if there was but one that could be produced, and was the reason of his being afflicted after this manner, he desires to know what that was, that he might, upon conviction of it, acknowledge it, repent of it, relinquish it, and guard against it; he desires to have a copy of his indictment, that he might know what he stood charged with, for what he was arraigned, condemned, and punished, as it was thought he was; this he judged a reasonable request, and necessary to be granted, that he might answer for himself.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face.*] Not from his cry, because of his sore and grievous afflictions, as Bar Tzemach; nor from helping and saving him from his troubles, as Sephorno; nor from looking on his right ways, as Jarchi; but from his person, withdrawing the manifestation of his face and favour; withholding the discoveries of his love; and denying him the light of his countenance, and sensible communion with him, and enjoyment of him, he had been indulged with; Job formerly had seen the face of God, enjoyed his presence, and walked in fellowship with him; but now he had withdrawn himself from him, and he knew not where to find him; see ch. xxiii. 2, 8, 9. a greater blessing cannot be had than the gracious presence of God; nothing gives more pleasure when enjoyed, and nothing more grievous to good men when it is withheld; oftentimes sin is the cause of it, but not always, as in this instance of Job; the end of the Lord in all his afflictions, both inward and outward, was to try his patience, his integrity, and faithfulness; but as Job was for the present ignorant of it, he desires to know the reason of this the Lord's behaviour towards him; as it is what all good men should do in the like circumstances, nothing being more afflicting and distressing to them, and even intolerable; see Psal. x. 11. xiii. 1. and lxxxviii. 14. some think here is an allusion to the behaviour of judges towards such as were condemned by them, they were prejudiced against, and would neither hear nor see them; or to a rite and custom in former times, as Pineda observes, when judges, at the time of pronouncing sentence on a malefactor, used to draw a curtain between them; or to the covering of the face of the criminal, see ch. ix. 24. *and holdest me for thine enemy?* Job had been an enemy to God, as all men are in a state of nature, yea, enmity itself, as is shewn by their wicked works; but he was now reconciled unto God, the enmity of his heart was slain, and he had laid down his weapons of rebellion, and ceased committing hostilities against God, and was become subject to him and to his law, through the power of efficacious grace; a principle of love, which is the fruit of the spirit in regeneration, was implanted in him; and he was a true and sincere lover of God, one that feared him, and trusted in him; whose faith worked by love, and so appeared to be of the right kind; and therefore, since he was conscious to himself that he loved God with all his heart, loved his word, his ways, and worship, his people and all that belonged to him, it was cutting and grievous to him to be thought and accounted, or dealt with, as an enemy to him; for so he interpreted his conduct towards him; as he afflicted him, he took it to be in anger and fury, and hot displeasure; and as he hid his face from him, he supposed it was in great wrath, viewing him in this light as his enemy.

Ver. 25. *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?* &c.] A leaf that falls from a tree in autumn, and withers and is rolled up, and driven about by the wind, which it cannot resist, to which Job here com-

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[i] כמה vox pertinet ad multitudinem et magnitudinem, Pineda.

[k] So Ben Melech interprets these words.

[l] לי sunt mihi, Beza, Schmidt, Michaelis.

pares himself; but it is not to be understood of him with respect to his spiritual estate; for being a good man, and one that trusted in the Lord, and made him his hope, he was, as every good man is, like to a tree planted by rivers of water, whose leaf withers not, but is always green, and does not fall off, as is the case of carnal professors, who are compared to trees in autumn, which cast their leaves and rotten fruit; see Psal. i. 3. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. Jude, ver. 12. but in respect to his outward estate, his frailty, weakness, and feebleness, especially as now under the afflicting hand of God; see Isa. lxiv. 6. so John the Baptist, on account of his being a frail mortal man, a weak feeble creature, compares himself to a reed shaken with the wind, Matt. xi. 7. now to break such an one was to add affliction to affliction, and which could not well be borne; and the like is signified by the next clause, *and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?* which can't stand before the wind, or the force of devouring fire; this also respects not Job in his spiritual estate, with regard to which he was not like to dry stubble or chaff, to which wicked men are compared, Psal. i. 4. but to standing corn and wheat in the full ear; and not only to green grass, which is flourishing, but to palm-trees, and cedar-trees of the Lord, which are full of sap, to which good men are like; but he describes him in his weak and afflicted state, tossed to and fro like dry stubble; and no more able to contend and grapple with an incensed God than dry stubble can withstand devouring flames; this he says, partly to suggest that it was below the Divine Being to set his strength against his weakness; as David said to Saul, *after whom is the king of Israel come out? after a dead dog, after a flea?* 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. which words Bar Tzemach compares with these; and partly to move the divine pity and commiseration towards him, who uses not to *break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.*

Ver. 26. *For thou writest bitter things against me, &c.*] Meaning not sins and rebellions, taken notice of by him, when his good deeds were omitted, as Jarchi; sin is indeed an evil and a bitter thing in its own nature, being exceeding sinful and abominable, and its effects and consequences; being what provokes God to anger most bitterly, and makes bitter work for repentance; as it did in Peter, who, when made sensible of it, wept bitterly; sooner or later, sin, though it is a sweet morsel rolled about in the mouth for a while, yet in the issue proves the gall of asps within, bitter and distressing; and this God also puts down in the book of his remembrance, yea, writes it as with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: but that cannot be meant here, since Job was inquiring after his sins, asking what and how many they were, and would not allow of any being committed by him that were heinous and notorious; wherefore afflictions are rather here intended, which are bitter and grievous, and not joyous, and especially such as Job was afflicted with; see Ruth i. 22. and these were written by the Lord in the book of his eternal purposes and decrees, and were the things he performed, which were appointed for Job, as he full well knew, and as all the afflictions of God's people are; and besides they were written in a judiciary way, and so against him; they were, as he apprehended, the sentence of a judge written down, and read, and pronounced, and according to it inflicted, and that with great deliberation as things are written, and in order to continue, as what is written does; and so denotes that a severe decree was gone forth against him, with design, and was and would be continued: *and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth;* which had been committed through weakness and ignorance, and which, it might have been thought, would not have been taken notice of and animadverted on; or rather which Job concluded had been forgiven and forgotten, according to the tenour of the covenant of grace, and would never have been brought into account any more; and yet these were not only remembered by the Lord, at least seemingly, by the afflictions that were endured; but they were by him brought to Job's remembrance, and the guilt of them charged upon him, and stared him in the face, and loaded his conscience, and filled him with reproach and shame, as Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 19. and which is deprecated by the Psalmist, Psal. xxv. 7. and what aggravated the case and made it the more distressing was, that in Job's apprehension it was to continue with him as an inheritance, as the word [m] signifies, which abides with men in their families for ever; and some respect may be had to the corruption of nature, which is hereditary, and remains with men from their youth upwards.

Ver. 27. *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, &c.*] Which is one kind of punishment of offenders, and a preservation of them from making their escape; and is a security and reservation of them for further punishment sometimes; and so Job looked upon his afflictions as a punishment for he knew not what, and with which he was so surrounded and enclosed, that there was no getting out of them any more than a man can whose feet are set fast in the stocks; and that he was here kept for greater afflictions still, which he dreaded. Aben Ezra interprets it, *thou puttest my feet in lime;* and this is followed by others [n], suggesting, as a man's steps in lime are marked and easily discerned, so were his by the Lord; but this seems to be foreign from the mind of Job, who would not make such a concession as this, as if his steps taken amiss were so visible: *and lookest narrowly into all my paths;* so that there was no possibility of escaping out of his troubles and afflictions; so strict a watch was kept over him; see chap. vii. 12. according to Ben Gersom, this refers to the stocks, *it keeps all my ways;* kept him within from going abroad about the business of life, and so may refer to the disease of his body, his boils and ulcers, which kept him at home, and suffered him not to stir out of doors; but the former sense is best: *thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet;* either *it*, the stocks, made a mark upon his heels, with which they were pressed hard, as Gersom; or rather God set one upon them, afflicting him very sorely and putting him to an excruciating pain, such as is felt by criminals when

[m] תורישני hæreditare me facis, Beza, Schmidt, Michaelis; so Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schultens; so the Targum and Ben Melech.

[n] Calce tinxisti pedes meos, Gussetius, p. 550. so some in Ben Melech.

heavy blows are laid upon the soles of their feet, to which the allusion may be; or else the sense is, that he followed him closely by the heels, that whenever he took a step, it was immediately marked, and observed by the Lord, as if he trod in his steps, and set his own foot in the mark that was left.

Ver. 28. *And he as a rotten thing consumeth, &c.*] This by some Jewish writers [z] is referred to and connected with the driven leaf and dry stubble Job compares himself to, ver. 25. and so the sense is, that his body, which, for its frailty and weakness, is compared to such things, is like any rotten thing, a rotten tree, as Ben Melech; or any thing else that is rotten, that is consuming and wasting away, as Job's body was, being clothed with worms and clods of dust: *as a garment that is moth-eaten*; a woollen garment, which gathers dust, out of which moths arise; for dust, in wool and woollen garments, produces moths, as Aristotle [a] and Pliny [b] observe; and a garment eaten by them, slowly, gradually, and insensibly, yet certainly, decays, falls to pieces, becomes useless, and not to be recovered: such was Job's body, labouring under the diseases it did, and was every day more and more decaying, crumbling into dust, and just ready to drop into the grave; so that there was no need, and it might seem cruel, to lay greater and heavier afflictions on it: some interpreters make this *he* to be God himself, who sometimes is as rottenness and a moth to men, in their persons, families, and estates; see Hos. v. 12.

CHAP. XIV.

JOB, having turned himself from his friends to God, continues his address to him in this chapter; wherein he discourses of the frailty of man, the shortness of his life, the troubles that are in it, the sinfulness of it, and its limited duration, beyond which it cannot continue; all which he makes use of with God, that he would not therefore deal rigorously with him, but have pity on him, and cease from severely afflicting him, till he came to the end of his days, which could not be long, ver. 1—6. he observes of a tree, when it is cut down to the root, yea, when the root is become old, and the stock dies, it will, by means of being watered, bud and sprout again, and produce boughs and branches; but man, like the failing waters of the sea, and the decayed and dried-up flood, when he dies, rises not, till the heavens be no more, ver. 7—12. and then he wishes to be hid in the grave till that time, and expresses hope and belief of the resurrection of the dead, ver. 13—15. and goes on to complain of the strict notice God took of his sins, of his severe dealings with men, destroying their hope in life, and removing them by death; so that they see and know not the case and circumstances of their children they leave behind, and whilst they live have continual pain and sorrow, ver. 16—22.

Ver. 1. *Man* that is *born of a woman, &c.*] Man, Adam; not the first man, so called, for he was made and created out of the dust of the earth, and not born of a woman; the woman was made out of him, and not he of her; *earthly man*, as Mr. Broughton translates it, as every descendant of Adam is; as is the earth, such are they that are earthy, every one of which is born of a woman; yet not as opposed unto and distinguished from the heavenly One, or the Lord from heaven, for he also as man was made and born of a woman: this, though a proper description of all mankind, there being none but what are born of a woman, see Matt. xi. 11. yet Job chiefly designs himself: for having spoken of his wasting circumstances in which he was, in the last verse of the preceding chapter, goes on in this to treat of his frailty and mortality, and to improve it into an argument with God for pity and mercy, as appears from ver. 3. where he speaks of himself in the first person, as here in the third, and all along: he may have respect in this clause to Eve, the mother of all living, from whom all descend, and of whom, in a sense, they may be said to be born; or else to his immediate parent, he and every man being born of a woman; no man, but the first, ever came into the world in any other way; there is one that came into the world without an earthly father, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ, but none without a mother; nor he, who indeed was born of a virgin, and so in an extraordinary and miraculous manner; and this is observed, not so much on account of natural descent, or to denote that, as being reckoned from the mother, she having so great a concern in the production of man, conceiving, bearing, and bringing him forth; nor to remark the sinfulness of nature, though one born of a sinful woman must needs be so too, since this is expressed clearly in a following verse; but the weakness and frailty of man; as is the creature that generates, such is that that is generated: creatures born of strong ones are strong, and of weak ones weak; a creature born of a lion is a strong one; and man, born of a woman, must be weak and feeble, and no wonder he is short-lived, as follows: is *of few days*; or *short of days* [c]; comes short of the days he might have lived, if man had never sinned, and comes short of the days the first man did live, and which those before the flood generally lived, who most of them lived upwards of nine hundred years; whereas now, and ever since the times of Moses, and about which Job lived, the days of the years of man are but threescore and ten; and such are shorter of days still, who live not more than half this time, who are cut off in the bloom and prime of life, the days of whose youth are shortened, who die in their youth, or in their childhood and infancy; and

[z] R. Levi, Ben Gersom, & Bar Tzemach.
[a] Hist. Animal. l. 5. c. 32.
[b] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 35.

[c] קצר ימים brevis dierum, Montanus, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens; so Beza, Vatablus, Drusius, Mercerus.

such especially are short of days who are carried from the womb to the grave, or die as soon as born; and those that live the longest, their days are but few, when compared with the days of eternity, or with those men shall live in another world, either good men in heaven, or wicked men in hell, which will be for ever; and especially with respect to God, with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, and therefore the days and age of man are as nothing before him. Job has here also a respect to himself, whose days in his own apprehension were very few, and just at an end, and therefore craves pity and compassion, see ch. x. 20. and what aggravates the shortness of man's days is, as it follows: *and full of trouble*: man is born to it, being born in sin; sin and trouble go together, where there is sin there is trouble; sin entered into the world, and death by it, with the numerous train of afflictions and miseries which issue in it: all men have their troubles, some of one sort, and some of another; wicked men are not indeed in trouble as other men, as good men are; they have not the same sort of trouble, yet are not exempt from all; they are *full of commotion*[e], disquietude and uneasiness, as the word signifies; they are restless, and ever in motion; they are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, but is continually casting up mire and dirt; some are of such tempers and dispositions, that they can't sleep unless they do mischief; and though they are many of them prosperous in their worldly circumstances, there are others that are reduced to poverty and distress, are attended with diseases and disorders, pains and sores, and blaspheme that God that has power over them; and these are of all men the most miserable, having no interest in God, in his loving-kindness, nor any enjoyment of his presence, and so nothing to support them in, and carry them through their troubles; and though they are generally without any sense of sin or danger, have no remorse of conscience, and their hearts are hardened; yet at times they are *full of trembling*[e], as some render the words; are seized with a panic through the judgments of God that are upon them, or are coming upon them, or when death is made the king of terrors to them: and good men they have their troubles; besides those in common with others, they have inward troubles arising from the vanity of their minds and thoughts, the impurity of their hearts, and the power of in-dwelling sin in them, and especially from the breaking forth of it in words and deeds; from the weakness of their graces, from the hidings of God's face, and the temptations of Satan: in short, Job's meaning is, that men in the ordinary course of things meet with so much trouble, that there is no need of any extraordinary afflictions to be laid on them, such as his were.

Ver. 2. *He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down*, &c.] As the flower comes from the earth, so does man: as it comes out of the stalk, so man out of his mother's womb; as the flower flourishes for a while, and looks gay and beautiful, so man whilst in youth, in health and prosperity. Job, doubtless, has respect to his own case before his troubles came upon him, when he was possessed of all that substance, which made him the greatest man of the east; when his children were like olive-plants around his table, and his servants at his command, and he in perfect health of body: and as a flower flourishes for a little while, and then withers; no sooner is it come to its full blow, but presently decays; such is the goodliness of man, it fades away whenever God blows a blast upon it; yea, he is easily and quickly cut down by death, like a beautiful flower cut with the knife, or cropped by the hand, or trampled upon by the foot, see Psal. ciii. 15. and xc. 5, 6. Isa. xl. 6, 7. *he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not*: either as the shadow of the evening, which is lost when night comes on; or the shadow on a dial-plate, which is continually moving on; or, as the Jewish Rabbins say, as the shadow of a bird flying, which stays not, whereas the shadow of a wall, or of a tree, continues: a shadow is an empty thing, without substance, dark and obscure, variable and uncertain, declining, fleeting, and passing away; and so fitly resembles the life of a man, which is but a vapour, a bubble, yea, as nothing with God; is full of darkness, of ignorance, and of adversity, very fickle, changeable, and inconstant, and at most but of a short continuance.

Ver. 3. *And dost thou open thine eyes on such an one*, &c.] So frail and feeble, so short-lived and sorrowful, so soon and easily cut down and destroyed: and by opening of his eyes is not meant his providential care of men; whose eyes indeed are everywhere, run to and fro throughout the earth, and are careful of and provident for all sorts of men, which is very wonderful, Psal. viii. 4. nor the displays of his special grace and favour towards his own peculiar people, on whom his eyes of love, grace, and mercy, are opened, and are never withdrawn from them, which is marvellous loving-kindness; but the exercise of rigorous justice in punishing, afflicting, and chastising with so much severity, as Job thought to be his own case; the eyes of God, as he thought, were set on him for evil, and not for good; he looked wistly on him, and in a very frowning manner; he sharpened his eye upon him, as the phrase is, ch. xvi. 9. and as some render the word[f] here, looked narrowly into all his ways, and watched every motion and every step he took, and pursued him with great eagerness, and used him with great strictness in a way of justice, which he, a poor, weak creature, was not able to bear; which sense is confirmed by what follows: *and bringeth me into judgment with thee?* by this it appears Job has a view to himself all along, and to the procedure of God against him, which he took to be in strict justice, and that was what he was not able to bear; he was not a match for God, being such a frail, weak, sinful, mortal creature; nor was God a man as he was, that they should come together in judgment, or be fit persons to contend together upon the foot of strict justice; sinful man can never be just with God upon this bottom, or

[e] שבע רגז satur commotione, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Coccerius, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[e] Saturus tremore, Montanus; satur trepidi tumultus, Schultens.

[f] פקחת עיניך super illo aeuis oculos tuos, Coccelus; super hunc apertos vibras oculos, Schultens.

be able to answer to one objection or charge of a thousand brought against him: and therefore, as every sensible man will deprecate God's entering into judgment with him, so Job here expostulates with God why he should bring him into judgment with him; when, as he fled to his grace and mercy, he should rather shew that to him than in a rigorous manner deal with him.

Ver. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* &c.] Either produce a clean person from an unclean one: it is not to be expected that one, perfectly free from sin, should be generated by, or brought out of, one that is defiled with it; which is the case of all men; the first man, though made upright, sinned, and by sinning defiled himself, and all human nature in him: and so those that immediately descended from him were polluted likewise, and so on in all generations, every man being conceived and shaped in iniquity; so that it is not possible that man that is born of a woman, sinful and unclean, should be clean himself, or be free from sin; by which it is manifest, that the sinfulness of human nature is unavoidable; it is natural and necessary, and cannot be otherwise, such being the case and circumstances of immediate parents, from whom men descend; and that this is the case of all men that come into the world by ordinary and natural generation; there is none righteous or pure from sin: no, *not one*: and things being so, Job thought it hard that he should be singled out, and so severely chastised, when the sinfulness of nature was from and by his birth, and was natural and unavoidable, and when there was not a single person on earth free from it. There never was but one instance of one clean being brought out of an unclean person, and that was our Lord Jesus Christ of the Virgin Mary; which was not in the ordinary way of generation, but by a supernatural and extraordinary production of his human nature, through the power of the Holy Ghost, whereby it escaped the original contagion and pollution of mankind: or else, in consequence of this, the sense is, who can bring forth or produce a good work from an impure person? or how can it be expected that a man that is defiled with sin should do a good work perfectly pure? for there is not even a just and good man that doth good and sinneth not; and much less is it to be looked for, that men in a mere state of nature, that are as they come into the world, sinful and impure, should ever be able to perform good works; it may as well be thought that grapes are to be gathered of thorns, or figs of thistles; men must be born again, created in Christ Jesus, have faith in him, and the Spirit of God in them, ere they can do that which is truly good from right principles, and with right views; and man at most and best must be an imperfect creature, and deficient in his duty, and cannot bear to be strictly examined, and rigorously prosecuted: or the meaning is, *who can make*[f] an uncleanman a clean one? *no, not one*: a man can't make himself clean by any thing he can do, by his repentance and humiliation, by his good works, duties, and services; none can do this but God; and to this sense some render the words, *who can— is there one*[g]? there is, that is, God, he can do it, and he only: though men are exhorted to cleanse themselves, this does not suppose a power in them to do it; this is only designed to convince them of the necessity of being cleansed, and to awaken a concern for it; and such as are made sensible thereof will apply to God to purge them, and make them clean, and create a clean heart within them: and this God has promised to do, and does do; he sprinkles the clean water of his grace, and purifies the heart by faith in the blood of Jesus, which cleanses from all sin, and is the fountain opened to wash in for sin and uncleanness; the Targum is, "who can give a clean thing out of a man that is "defiled with sins, except God who is one, and can "forgive him?" none can pardon sin but God, or justify a sinner besides him; and he can do both in a way of justice, upon the foot of the blood and righteousness of Christ.

Ver. 5. *Seeing his days are determined*, &c.] Or *cut out*[i], exactly and precisely, how many he shall live, and what shall befall him every day of his life; whose life, because of the shortness of it, is rather measured by days than years: *the number of his months are with thee*: before him, in his sight, in his account, and fixed and settled by him: *thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass*: the boundaries of his life, the period of his days, beyond which he cannot go; the term of man's life is so peremptorily fixed by God, that he cannot die sooner, nor live longer, than he has determined he should; as the time of a man's birth, so the time of his death is according to the purpose of God; and all intervening moments and articles of time, and all things that befall a man throughout the whole course of his life, all fall under the appointment of God, and are according to his determinate will; and when God requires of man his soul, no one has power over his spirit to retain it one moment; yet this hinders not the use of means for the preservation and comfort of life, since these are settled as well as the end, and are under the divine direction: the word for bounds signifies sometimes *statutes*[k]: though not to be understood of laws appointed by God, either of a moral or ceremonial nature; but here it signifies set, stated, appointed times[l]. Seneca[m] says the same thing; "there "is a boundary fixed for every man, which always re-"mains where it is set, nor can any move it forward "by any means whatsoever."

Ver. 6. *Turn from him, that he may rest*, &c.] From this short-lived afflicted man, whose days are limited, and will soon be at an end, meaning himself; not that he desires he would withdraw his gracious presence, nothing is more agreeable than this to a good man, and there is nothing he more deprecates than the withdrawment of it; besides, this was Job's case, and one part of his complaint, ch. xiii. 24. nor to withhold his supporting presence, or his providential care of him, without which he could not subsist, but must die and

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[f] מי יתן quis potest facere? V. L. dabit, i. e. faciet, Vatablus; sistet aut efficiet, Michaelis; quis efficiet? Cocceius.

[g] לא אחד nonne tu qui solus est? V. L. annon unus? sc. Mediator, Cocceius.

[i] חרוצים exacte præfiniti sunt, Tigurine version.

[k] חקו statuta ejus, V. L. Mercerus, Schmidt.

[l] Stata tempora, Beza.

[m] Consolat. ad Marciam, c. 20.

drop into the dust; though some think this is the sense, and render the words, *turn from him, that he may cease* [r]; to be, or to live, and so a wish for death, that he might have rest in the grave from all his labours, pains, and sorrows; but rather the meaning is, that he would turn away from afflicting him in this extraordinary manner; since, according to the ordinary course of things, he would meet with many troubles and afflictions, and had but a little time to live, and therefore entreats he would take off his hand which pressed him sorely, and grant him a little respite; or *look off from him* [s]; not turn away his eye of love, grace, and mercy, that is not reasonable to suppose; that was what he wanted, that God would look upon him, and have compassion on him under his affliction, and abate it; but that he would turn away his angry frowning countenance from him, which he could not bear; he had opened his eyes upon him, ver. 3. and looked very sternly, and with great severity in his countenance, on him, and it was very distressing, and even intolerable to him; and therefore begs that he would take off his eye from him, that he might have *rest* from his adversity, that he might have some ease of body and mind, some intervals of peace and pleasure: or *that he might cease* [t] from murmuring, as Aben Ezra; or rather from affliction and trouble; not that he expected to be wholly free from it in this life, for man is born to it, as he full well knew; and the people of God have always their share of it, and which abides and waits for them while in this world; but he desires he might be rid of that very sore and heavy affliction now upon him; or *that it might cease* [u], the affliction he laboured under, which would be the case if God would turn himself, remove his hand, or look another way, and not so sharply upon him: *till he shall accomplish as an hireling his day;* an hireling, as if he should say, that is hired for any certain time, for a year, or more or less, he has some relaxation from his labours, time for eating and sleeping to refresh nature; or he has some time allowed him as a respite from them, commonly called holydays; or if he is hired only for a day, he has time for his meals; and if his master's eye is off of him, he slackens his hand, and gets some intermission from his labour; wherefore at least Job begs that God would let him have the advantage of an hireling. Moreover, to *accomplish his day*, is either to do the work of it, or to get to the end of it; every man has work to do whilst in this world, in things natural, civil, and religious, and is the work of his day or generation, and what must be done while it is day; and a good man is desirous of finishing it; to which the recompense of reward, though it is not of debt, but of grace, is a great encouragement, as it is to the hireling: or *till as an hireling he shall will*, or *desire with delight and pleasure* [w] *his day;* that is, his day to be at an end, which he wishes and longs for; and when it comes is very acceptable to him, because he then enjoys his rest, and receives his hire; so as there is a fixed time for the hireling, there is for man on earth; and as that time is short and laborious, so is the life of man; and at the close of it, the good and faithful servant of the Lord, like the hireling, in some sense rests from his labours, and receives the reward of the inheritance, having served the Lord Christ; which makes this day a grateful and acceptable one to him, what he desires, and with pleasure waits for, being better than the day of his birth; and especially when his life is worn out with trouble, and he is weary of it through old age, and the infirmities thereof, those days being come in which he has no pleasure. Job therefore entreats that God would give him some intermission from his extraordinary troubles, till his appointed time came, which then would be as welcome to him as the close of the day is to an hireling, see ch. vii. 1, 2.

Ver. 7. *For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, &c.*] That is, if it be cut down to the root, and only the stump of the root is left in the ground, as the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, yet the owner of it may entertain a hope that it is not utterly destroyed, but will bud out again; or *change* [x] its state and condition, and become flourishing again; or *renew* [y] itself, and its strength, and put out new shoots and branches; either it will rise up into a new body, as the laurel, as Pliny [z] relates, or produce new sprouts as the willow, alder-tree, and others; for this is not true of every tree, though it may be of many; for it is [a] reported of the cypress-tree, when cut down, it never sprouts out any more, unless in one place, in Ænaria; but since this is the case of some, it is sufficient to Job's purpose: *and that the tender branch thereof will not cease;* from shooting out; or *its suckers will not cease* [b]; which may be observed frequently to grow out of the roots of trees, even of those that are cut down, such as above mentioned.

Ver. 8. *Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, &c.*] Lies long there, and is become dry, and seems to be consumed, on which account there may be the less hope of its flourishing: *and the stock thereof die in the ground;* which may make it still more improbable; for this is not to be understood with some interpreters [c] of the stock or trunk of the tree cut down, and lying along on the earth, and in the dust of it; though it may be observed, that even such a stock or trunk, separated from the root, and as it lies along, will sprout again, as particularly in elms: but it may rather mean, since it is said to be *in the ground*, that part of the stock or stump left in the ground, from whence the roots part and spread in the earth; and even though this dies, or at least so seems, yet there being still life and vigour in the roots, they send forth suckers.

Ver. 9. Yet *through the scent of water it will bud, &c.*] As soon as it smells it, or perceives it, is sent

[r] ויחדל donec desinat, sc. esse vel vivere, Piscator, Cocceius.
[s] שעה מעליו respice abs eo, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis; so De Dieu, Schultens.
[t] Et cesset, Mercerus; & desinat a malo suo, Pagninus.
[u] Et cesset afflictio, Drusius; so the Targum.
[w] ירצה grato animo excipiet, Tigurine version; velit, Montanus, Bolducius; acceptum habeat, Piscator, De Dieu, Michaelis.

[x] יחליף mutabit se, Drusius; conditionem suam, Piscator.
[y] Renovat se, Schmidt.
[z] Nat. Hist. apud Pinedam in loc.
[a] Servius in Virgil. Æneid. l. 6. p. 641. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 33.
[b] ינקתו surgensque ejus surculus, Schultens.
[c] So Piscator and Cocceius.

able of it, or partakes of its efficacy; denoting both how speedily, and how easily, at once as it were, it buds forth through the virtue either of rain-water that descends upon it, or river-water by which it is planted, or by any means conveyed unto it; particularly this is true of the willow, which delights in watery places; and, when it is in the circumstances before described, will by the benefit of water bud out again, even when its stock has been seemingly dead: *and bring forth boughs like a plant;* as if it was a new plant, or just planted; so the Vulgate Latin version, *as when it was first planted;* or as a plant that sends forth many branches: the design of this simile is to shew that man's case is worse than that of trees, which when cut down sprout out again, and are in the place where they were before; but man, when he is cut down by death, rises up no more in the same place; he is seen no more in it, and the place that knew him knows him no more; where he falls he lies until the general resurrection; he rises not before without a miracle, and such instances are very rare, and never either before or at the resurrection, but by the omnipotence of God; whereas a tree, in the above circumstances, sprouts out of itself, according to its nature, and in virtue of a natural power which God has put into it; not so man[y].

Ver. 10. *But man dieth, and wasteth away,* &c.] All men, every man, *Geber*, the mighty man, the strong man; some die in their full strength; the wise man, notwithstanding all his wisdom and knowledge, and even skill in the art of medicine; the rich man, with all his riches, with which he cannot bribe death, nor keep it off; the great and the honourable, emperors, kings, princes, nobles, all die, and their honour is laid in the dust; yea, good men die, though Christ has died for them; even those that are the most useful and beneficial to men, the prophets of the Lord, and the ministers of his word; and it is no wonder that wicked men should die, though they put the evil day far from them, make an agreement with death, or bid it defiance, their wickedness shall not deliver from it; all men have sinned, and death passes on them, it is appointed for them to die; not their souls, which are immortal, but their bodies, which return to dust, and are only the mortal part; death is a disunion or separation of soul and body: and now when this is made, the body *wasteth away* in the grave, and becomes rottenness, dust, and worms, and does not by the strength of nature spring up again, as a tree does; though some understand, by an inversion of the phrases, a wasting before death through diseases, as if the words were to be read, *but man wasteth away and dieth*[z]; he is enervated by sickness, his strength is weakened in the way, and when he dies there is none left in him; he is *cut off*[a], as some choose to render it, or cut down as a tree is; but then there is no force or natural strength in him to rise again, as in a tree: *yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?* not in the same place he was; not in his house and habitation where he lived; nor in his family, and among his friends, with whom he conversed, nor in the world, and on the earth where he did business; he is indeed somewhere, but where is he? his body is in the grave; his soul, where is that? if a good man, it is in the presence of God, where is fulness of joy; it is with Christ, which is far better than to be here; it is with the spirits of just men made perfect; it is in Abraham's bosom, feasting with him and other saints; it is in heaven, in paradise, in a state of endless joy and happiness: if a wicked man, his soul is in hell, in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, with the devil and his angels, and other damned spirits; in a prison, from whence there is no release, and in the uttermost misery and distress, banished from the divine Presence, and under a continual sense of the wrath of God.

Ver. 11. *As the waters fail from the sea,* &c.] The words may be rendered either without the *as*, and denote dissimilitude, and the sense be, that the waters go from the sea and return again, as with the tide: *and the flood decays and dries up;* and yet is supplied again with water: *but man lieth down, and riseth not again;* or else with the *as*, and express likeness; as the waters when they fail from the sea, or get out of lakes, and into another channel, never return more; and as a flood, occasioned by the waters of a river overflowing its banks, never return into it more; so man, when he dies, never returns to this world any more. The Targum restrains this to the Red sea, and the parting of that and the river Jordan, and the drying up of that before the ark of the Lord, and the return of both to their places again.

Ver. 12. *So man lieth down,* &c.] Or *and*, or *but man lieth down*[b]; in the grave when he dies, as on a bed, and takes his rest from all his labours, toil and troubles, and lies asleep, and continues so till the resurrection-morn: *and riseth not;* from off his bed, or comes not out of his grave into this world, to the place where he was, and to be engaged in the affairs of life he was before, and never by his own power; and whenever he will rise, it will be by the power of God, and this not till the last day, when Christ shall appear in person to judge the world; and then the dead in Christ will rise first, at the beginning of the thousand years, and the wicked at the end of them: *till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep;* for so the words are to be read, not in connexion with those that go before, but with the last clauses; though the sense is much the same either way, which is, that those who are fallen asleep by death, and lie sleeping in their graves, and on their beds, these shall neither awake of themselves, nor be awaked by others, *till the heavens be no more;* that is, never, so as to awake and arise of themselves, and to this natural life, and to be concerned in the business of it; which sometimes seems to be the sense of this phrase, see Psal. lxxxix. 29. Matt. v. 18. or, as some render it, *till the heavens are worn out*, or *waxen old*[c]; as they will like a garment, and be folded up, and laid aside, as to their present use, Psal. cii. 26. or till they shall vanish away,

[y] Mutat terra vices —— nos ubi decidimus, Horat. Carmin. l. 4. Ode 7.

[z] So the Tigurine version, Vatablus, and some in Drusius; and some Hebrews in Ramban and Bar Tzemach.

[a] ויחלש exciditur, Beza, Piscator, Mercerus; so Kimchi & Ben Gersom.

[b] ואיש & vir, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Schmidt; at vir, Coccecius.

[c] עד בלתי donec alteratur cœlum, V. L. so some in Bar Tzemach, though disapproved of by him as ungrammatical.

and be no more, as to their present form, quality, and use, though they may exist as to substance; and when this will be the case, as it will be when the Judge shall appear, when Christ shall come a second time to judge the world; then the earth and heaven will flee away from his face, the earth and its works shall be burnt up, and the heavens shall pass away with great noise; and then, and not till then, will the dead, or those that are asleep in their graves, be awaked by the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and they shall be raised from their sleepy beds, awake and arise, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Ver. 13. *And that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, &c.*] The house appointed for all living, which some understand by the *chambers* in Isa. xxvi. 20. The cemeteries or dormitories of the saints, where they lie and sleep until the indignation of God against a wicked world is over and past; or in Hades, the state of the dead, where they are insensible of what is done in this world, what calamities and judgments are on the inhabitants of it, and so are not affected and grieved with these things; or in some cavern of the earth, in the utmost recesses of it, in the very centre thereof, if possible; his wish is, to be buried alive, or to live in some subterraneous place, free from his present afflictions and misery, than to be upon earth with them: *that thou wouldest keep me secret;* so that no eye should see him, that is, no human eye; for he did not expect to be hid from the sight of God, be he where he would, before whom hell and destruction, or the grave, are and have no covering; and not only be secret, but safe from all trials and troubles, oppressions and oppressors; especially as he may mean the grave, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest; the keys of which Christ keeps in his hands, and locks and unlocks, and none but him; and where he has laid up his jewels, the precious dust of his saints, and where they and that will be preserved as hidden treasure: *until thy wrath be past:* either with respect to others, an ungodly world, to punish whom God sometimes comes out of his place in great wrath and indignation; and to prevent his dear children and people from being involved in common and public calamities, he takes them away before-hand, and hides them in his chambers, Isa. xxvi. 19, 20. and lvii. 1. or with respect to himself, as to his own apprehension of things, who imagined that the wrath of God was upon him, being severely afflicted by him; all the effects of which he supposed would not be removed until he was brought to the dust, from whence he came, and until his body was changed at the resurrection; till that time there are some appearances of the displeasure of God against sin: and then follows another petition, *that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me:* either for his going down to the grave, and being hid there, for which there is an appointed time; for as that is the place appointed for man, it is appointed for man to go unto it, and the time when, as appears from ver. 5. or his coming out of the grave, for his resurrection from thence, which also is fixed, even the last day, the day God has appointed to judge the world in righteousness by Christ, at which time the dead will be raised; though of that day and hour no man knows: unless he should mean a time for deliverance from his afflictions, which also is set; for God, as he settles the bounds of an affliction, how far it should go, and no farther, so likewise the time when it should end; and either of these Job might call a remembering of him, who thought himself, in his present case, as a dead man, out of mind, as those that lie in the grave, remembered no more.

Ver. 14. *If a man die, &c.*] This is said not as if it was a matter of doubt, he had before asserted it; as sure as men have sinned, so sure shall they die; nothing is more certain than death, it is appointed by God, and is sure; but taking it for granted, the experience of all men, and the instances of persons of every age, rank, and condition, testifying to it: the Targum restrains it to wicked men, "if a wicked "man die:" *shall he live again?* no, he shall not live in this earth, and in the place where he was, doing the same business he once did; that is, he shall not live here; ordinarily speaking, the instances are very rare and few; two or three instances there have been under the Old Testament, and a few under the New; but this is far from being a general and usual case, and never through the strength of nature, or of a man's self, but by the mighty power of God: or it may be answered to affirmatively, he shall live again at the general resurrection, at the last day, when all shall come out of their graves, and there will be a general resurrection of the just, and of the unjust; some will live miserably, in inexpressible and eternal torments, and wish to die, but cannot, their life will be a kind of death, even the second death; others will live comfortably and happily an endless life of joy and pleasure with God, Father, Son and Spirit, angels and glorified saints: hence, in the faith of this is the following resolution, *all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come:* there is an appointed time for man on earth when he shall be born, how long he shall live, and when he shall die, see ch. vii. 1. and xiv. 5. or *of my warfare* [t], for the life of man, especially of a good man, is a state of warfare with many enemies, sin, Satan, and the world; at the end of which there will be a *change:* for not a change of outward circumstances in this life is meant; for though there was such a change befell Job, yet he was, especially at this time, in no expectation of it; and though his friends suggested it to him, upon his repentance and reformation, he had no hope of it, but often expresses the contrary: but either a change at death is meant; the Targum calls it a change of life, a change of this life for another; death makes a great change in the body of a man, in his place here, in his relations and connexions with men, in his company, condition, and circumstances: or else the change at the resurrection, when this vile body will be changed, and made like unto Christ's: when it will become an incorruptible, glorious, powerful, and spiritual body, which is now corruptible, dishonourable, weak, and natural; and, till one or other of these should come, Job is determined to *wait*, to live in the constant expectation of death,

[t] צבאי quibus nunc milito, V. L. militiæ meæ, Montanus, Tigurine version, Drusius, Codurcus, Michaelis, Schultens.

and to be in a readiness and preparation for it; in the mean while to bear afflictions patiently, and not shew such marks of impatience as he had done, nor desire to die before God's time, but, whenever that should come, quietly and cheerfully resign himself into the hands of God; or this may respect the frame and business of the soul in a separate state after death, and before the resurrection, believing, hoping, and waiting for the resurrection of the body, and its union to it, see Psal. xvi. 10.

Ver. 15. *Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee, &c.*] Either at death, when the soul of man is required of him, and he is summoned out of time into eternity, and has sometimes previous notice of it: though not by a prophet, or express messenger from the Lord, as Hezekiah had, yet by some disease and distemper or another, which has a voice, a call in it to expect a remove shortly; and a good man that is prepared for it, he answers to this call readily and cheerfully; death is no king of terrors to him, he is not reluctant to it, yea, desirous of it; entreats his dismission in peace, and even longs for it, and rejoices and triumphs in the views of it: or else at the resurrection, when Christ shall call to the dead, as he did to Lazarus, and say, Come forth; and when they shall hear his voice, even the voice of the archangel, and shall answer to it, and come forth out of their graves, the sea, death, and the grave, being obliged to deliver up the dead that are therein; though some think this refers to God's call unto him in a judicial way, and his answers to it by way of defence, as in ch. xiii. 22. but the other sense seems more agreeable to the context: *thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands*; meaning his body, which is the workmanship of God, and a curious piece of workmanship it is, wonderfully and fearfully made, and curiously wrought; and though it may seem to be marred and spoiled by death, yet God will have a desire to the restoration of it at the resurrection to a better condition; even the bodies of his people, and that because they are vessels chosen by him, given to his Son, redeemed by his blood, united to his person, and sanctified by his Spirit, whose temples they are, and in whom he dwells: wherefore upon these considerations it may be reasonably supposed that Father, Son, and Spirit, have a desire to the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, and in which they will have a concern; and from which it may be concluded it will be certainly effected, since God is a rock, and his work is perfect, or will be, both upon the bodies and souls of his people; and the work of sanctification will not be properly completed on them until their vile bodies are changed, and made like to the glorious body of Christ; which must be very desirable to him, who has such a special love for them, and delight in them. Some render the words with an interrogation, *wilt thou desire* to destroy *the work of thine hands*[e]? surely thou wilt not; or, as Ben Gersom, "is it fit "that thou shouldest desire to destroy the work of "thine hands?" surely it is not becoming, it cannot be thought that thou wilt do it; but the former sense is best.

Ver. 16. *For now thou numberest my steps, &c.*] Or *but now*[f], at this present time thou seemest to have no desire to me, or affection for me, but the reverse. Job was in a pretty good frame of mind a little before, having in view his last change, and the glorious resurrection; but on a sudden he returns to his former complaints of God, and here of the rigour and strictness of his justice in marking his steps, and correcting him for his sin; so very uncertain are the best of frames: the outward conversation of men, whether good or bad, is often in Scripture expressed by walking, and the actions of men, good or evil, are the steps taken therein; here they signify evil ones, irregular steps, steps out of the way of God's commandments, aberrations, strayings from thence, false steps; these Job supposed God not only had knowledge of, as he has of all the ways, paths, and goings of men, but took very exact notice of his wrong steps; looked very narrowly to his paths, as in ch. xiii. 27. and strictly marked them; yea, told them one by one, that he might miss none, and make up a large account, which he put down in his book, in order to produce against him; in which Job was mistaken: he thought God dealt with him as he does with wicked men, whose evil actions are not only known and observed, but are counted and put down in the book of his remembrance, which will be opened at the last day, and produced against them; but God has blotted out of his book the sins of his people, and will remember them no more; he has a book of remembrance for their good works, words, and thoughts, but none for their evil ones: *dost thou not watch over my sin?* of error, infirmity, and weakness; observe it, mark it in a strict and rigorous way, which, when God does, who can stand before him? or *watch for my sin*[g]? as Jeremiah's enemies watched for his halting; so Job here represents God very wrongly, as if he watched for an opportunity against him, to take the advantage of it, and severely chastise him: or *thou dost not wait for my sin*[h]; that is, the punishment of it, as many of the Jewish writers[i] carry the sense; which is, that God did not defer the punishment of sin, or give him any respite or breathing-time, but as soon as ever he committed any offence, immediately, at once, he was rough with him, and used him with great severity. Aben Ezra inserts the word *only*, as explanative of the meaning of the words, thus, *thou watchest only over my sin*, or dost not mark and observe any thing but my sins; not my good deeds, only my evil ones; which is a wrong charge, for God takes notice of the good works of his people, and rewards them in a way of grace, though not of debt, as well as of their evil works, and chastises for them in a fatherly way: others render the words to this sense, what is not, or of no moment or consequence, thou keepest for me in mind and memory, as sin[k]; that which is not sin, or at least not known to me to be sin, or however something very trifling, scarce to be called a sin, yet I am dealt with for it as if a very heinous one; or I

[e] תכסף pendere desiderabis? Pagninus, Vatablus.
[f] כי עתה at nunc, Piscator.
[g] See Dan. ix. 14. Jer. xx. 10.

[h] לא תשמור על חטאתי non differes punitionem meam, Pagninus.
[i] Jarchi, Gersom, Bar Tzemach.
[k] So Schultens.

am afflicted for I know not what, or, which is all one, for what is not known to me. Some take the words to be a petition, *do not observe my sin*[l]; or mark it strictly, or keep it in mind, or reserve it against another time, but hide thy face from it, and remember it no more, nor never against me.

Ver. 17. *My transgression is sealed up in a bag, &c.*] Denoting either the hiddenness of it, as in Hos. xiii. 12. not from God; nor in such sense sealed up as sin is by the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ, who has thereby removed it out of the sight of divine justice; so that when it is sought for it shall not be found, nor any more seen, which is the sense of the phrase in Dan. ix. 24. where the words, *to make an end of sin*, may be rendered, to *seal* them *up*: but this Job would not have complained of; he means it was hid as in a bag from himself, or he knew not what it was; the transgression was sealed up from him, he was entirely ignorant of and unacquainted with what it was for which he was severely afflicted: or else his sense is, that God had taken strict notice of his transgressions, and had, as it were, put them up in a bag, and set a seal upon it, that none might be lost, but might be ready to be produced against him another day: in allusion, as it is thought, to bills of indictment put up in bags sealed, to be brought into courts of judicature at a proper time, for which they are reserved: *and thou sewest up mine iniquity*: in the bag in which it is sealed; not only did he seal up the bag, but sewed a cloth over it thus sealed, for greater security: or *thou sewest to mine iniquity*[m], or adds iniquity to iniquity, as in Psal. lxix. 27. as arithmeticians do, who add one number to another until it becomes a great sum; thus God, according to Job, tacked and joined one sin to another, till it became one large heap and pile, reaching to the heavens, and calling for vengeance; or, as Sephorno interprets it, joined sins of ignorance to sins of presumption; or rather sewed or added the punishment of sin to sin, or punishment to punishment; the Targum is, "my transgression is sealed up in a "book of remembrances, and thou hast joined it to "my iniquities."

Ver. 18. *And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, &c.*] Job here returns to his former subject of the irreparable state of man at death, which he illustrates by various other similes, as before; and first by a *mountain falling*, which may be supposed, and has been fact, and when it does, it *comes to nought*; it crumbles into dust, and where it falls there it lies, and never rises up to a mountain, or to the height it had, any more; or it *withers*[n], as some render it, the plants, herbs, and trees that grow upon it, wither away, see Nah. i. 4. or *it is dissolved*, or *flows*[o], and spreads itself over the face of the green earth it covers, and destroys with its dust and sand, which is never more gathered up to form a mountain again; so man, like unto a mountain, as kingdoms and states, and kings and princes, and great men are; the Targum instances in Lot; as a man may be said to be, that is in good health of body, and in prosperous circumstances in his family; when he falls, as he does by death, which is expressed by falling, 2 Sam. iii. 38. he comes to nought, he is not any more in the land of the living, nor in the place and circumstances in which he was before: *and the rock is removed out of his place*; from the mountain, of which it was a part; or elsewhere, by earthquakes, by force of winds, or strength of waters; and which, when once removed, is never returned to its place any more; so man, who in his full strength seems like a rock immovable, when death comes, it shakes and moves him out of his place, and that never knows him any more.

Ver. 19. *The waters wear the stones, &c.*] Either by continual running in them, or constant dropping upon them[p]; and the excavations or hollow places they make are never filled up again, these impressions are never effaced, nor the stones reduced to their ancient form; so man, though he may have the strength of stones, yet the waters of afflictions will gradually wear him away, and bring him to the dust of death, and where he must lie till the heavens be no more: *thou washest away the things which grow* out *of the dust of the earth*; herbs, plants, and trees, which a violent inundation of water tears up by the roots, and carries away, and they are never restored to their places any more. The word ספיחיה, which we render *the things which grow out*, the spontaneous productions of the earth, as in Lev. xxv. 5. Aben Ezra interprets of floods of water; and so Schultens, from the use of the word[q] in the Arabic language, translates it, *their effusions*; that is, the effusions of waters before mentioned, the floods and inundations of them overflow, *and wash away the dust of the earth*; not only that which is on the superfices of it, the soil of it; but, as the same learned man observes, they plough and tear up the earth itself, and carry it away, and it is never repaired; so men at death are carried away as with a flood, and are no more, see Psal. xc. 5. *and* or *so*[r] *thou destroyest the hope of man*, not the hope of a good man about his eternal state, and of enjoying eternal happiness; which is the gift of God's grace, which is without repentance, never revoked, called in, or taken away or destroyed; it is built upon the promise of God, who cannot lie; it is founded on the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; and though it may be brought low, it is never lost; the hope of carnal men in an arm of flesh, in the creature and creature-enjoyments, is indeed destroyed; and so is the hope of external professors of religion, that is formed on their own works of righteousness, and profession of religion; but of this Job is not speaking, but of the hope of man of living again in this world after death; for this is a reddition or application of the above similes used to illustrate this point, the irreparable state of man at death, so as that he shall never return to this life again, and to the same state and circumstances of things as before; and next follows a description of death, and the state of the dead.

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[l] Nec serves, id est, observes peccatum meum; some in Mercerus.
[m] ותטפל על עוני assuis iniquitati meæ, Piscator; & adjungis ad iniquitatem meam, Beza.
[n] יבול marcescit, Tigurine version, Mercerus; emarcescit, Schultens.
[o] Diffluit, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis.
[p] Gutta cavat lapidem, Ovid. de Ponto, l. 4.
[q] سفح effudit, Golius, col. 1182. Castel. col. 2590.
[r] Sic, Vatablus, Drusius, Mercerus, Schultens; ita, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; it answers to כן, Aben Ezra, Gersom.

Ver. 20. *Thou prevailest for ever against him*, &c.] God is an overmatch for man, in any thing, in every thing; there is no contending with him, or standing against him, he is stronger than he, and always prevails; there is no withstanding any disease, and the force of it, when he sends it; it is a messenger and servant of his, it goes at his command, and does what he bids it do; and all the art and power of man cannot resist it, or hinder what God would have done by it; and so death itself is irresistible; what's stronger than death? it is a king that reigns with a despotic power; it reigns irresistibly, victoriously, and triumphantly; it prevails over all men, in all ages, and will do to the end of the world; no man has power over his spirit to retain it one moment, when death comes to separate it from the body: and this prevalence of God by death over men will be for ever; the grave is man's long home, to which he is brought by death, and he will never return from it more, to come again into this world, and be about the business of it as now; and he passeth out of the world, and is seen no more in it; death is a going the way of all flesh, a departure out of this life, and to it man never usually returns more; he goes to Hades, to the invisible place, and makes his appearance no more here; see Psal. xxxvii. 35, 36. *thou changest his countenance* at death; the forerunners of death will change a man's countenance, pains, and diseases of body; by these God makes man's beauty to consume like the moth: the fear of death will change a man's countenance, as the hand-writing on the wall did Belshazzar's; even such who have outbraved death, and pretended to have made a covenant and agreement with it, yet when the king of terrors is presented to them, they are seized with a panic, their hearts ache, and their countenances turn pale; but oh! what a change is made by death itself, which for this reason is represented as riding on a pale horse; Rev. vi. 8. when the rosy florid looks of man are gone, his comeliness turned into corruption, his countenance pale and meagre, his eyes hollow and sunk, his nose sharp-pointed, his ears contracted, and jaws fallen, and his complexion altered, and still more when laid in the grave, and he is turned to rottenness, dust, and worms: *and sendeth him away*; giveth him a dismission from this world; sendeth him out of it, from his house, his family, friends, and acquaintance: his birth is expressed often by his coming into the world, and his death by going out of it; for here he has no continuance, no abiding, no rest; and yet there is no remove till God gives him dismission by death, then he sends him away from hence; some in wrath, whom he sends to take up their abode with devils and damned spirits; others in love, to prevent their being involved in evils coming upon the earth, and to be in better company, with God and Christ, with angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect: Maimonides interprets this of Adam [z], who, when he changed the object of his countenance, and looked on the forbidden fruit, was sent out of paradise.

Ver. 21. *His sons come to honour*, &c.] Or *are multiplied* [a], see Nah. iii. 15. their families increase like a flock, become very numerous, which was reckoned a great blessing; or *become heavy* [b]; being loaded with gold and silver, with riches and honour, raised to great grandeur and dignity, and possessed of much wealth and large estates: *and he knoweth it not*; the man whose countenance is changed and sent away into another world; for the dead know nothing of the affairs of this life; a good man indeed after death knows more of God and Christ, of the doctrines of grace, and mysteries of Providence; but he knows nothing of the affairs of his family he has left behind: some understand this of a man on his death-bed whilst alive, who, when he is told of the promotion of his sons to honour, or of the increase of their worldly substance, takes no notice of it; either being deprived of his senses by the disease upon him; or through the greatness of his pains and agonies, or the intenseness of his thoughts about a future state, does not advert to what is told him, nor rejoice at it; which in the time of health would have been pleasing to him: but the first sense seems best: *and they are brought low*, that is, his sons; or *are diminished* [c]; lessened in their numbers, one taken off after another, and so his family decreases; or they come into low circumstances of life, are reduced in the world, and brought to straits and difficulties, to want and poverty: *but he perceiveth it not of them*; he is not sensible of their troubles, and so not grieved at them; see Isa. lxiii. 16. or when he is told of them on his death-bed, he does not advert to them, or regard them, having enough to grapple with himself, and his mind intent on his everlasting state, or carried above them in the views of the love, grace, and covenant of God; see 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Ver. 22. *But his flesh upon him shall have pain*, &c.] Either he shall be chastened with strong pains on his sick and dying bed; which is the reason why he neither rejoices at the happiness of his family, nor is distressed at their misfortunes; having so much pain in his flesh and bones to endure himself; or, as Gussetius [d] renders it, *for this* his flesh and soul shall have pain and grief while he lives, because he cannot know how it will be with his family when he is dead; but rather this is to be understood of a man when dead; and so it is a continuation of the description of death, or of the state of the dead; thus Aben Ezra interprets it of his flesh upon him, that is, his body shall melt away, rot and corrupt, meaning in the grave; so the word is used of marring and destroying, in 2 Kings iii. 19. to which the Targum inclines, "but his flesh, "because of worms upon him, shall grieve;" and so Jarchi, troublesome is the worm to a dead man as a needle in quick flesh; pain and grief are by a prosopopœia attributed to a dead body; signifying, that could it be sensible of its case, it would be painful and grievous to it: and his *soul within him shall mourn*; either whilst he lives, because of his afflictions and terrors, the days being come in which he has no pleasure, and the time of death drawing nigh; or

[z] Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 2. p. 5.
[a] ירבו πολλοὶ γενόμενοι, Sept. multiplicabuntur, Vatablus, Bolducius.
[b] Multi vel graves sunt, Drusius; graves erunt et onusti, Mercerus.
[c] יצערו ὀλίγοι γενόμενοι, Sept. minuuntur, numero pauci erunt, Drusius.
[d] Ebr. Comment. p. 605.

his dead body, as the word is used in Psal. xvi. 10. said to mourn by the same figure; or his soul, because of his body being dead; or rather his breath, which at death fails and pines away[z].

CHAP. XV.

JOB's three friends having in their turns attacked him, and he having given answer respectively to them, Eliphaz, who began the attack, first enters the lists with him again, and proceeds upon the same plan as before, and endeavours to defend his former sentiments, falling upon Job with greater vehemence and severity; he charges him with vanity, imprudence, and unprofitableness in his talk, and acting a part unbecoming his character as a wise man; yea, with impiety and a neglect of religion, or at least as a discourager of it by his words and doctrines, of which his mouth and lips were witnesses against him, ver. 1, 6. he charges him with arrogance and a high conceit of himself, as if he was the first man that was made, nay, as if he was the eternal wisdom of God, and had been in his council; and, to check his vanity, retorts his own words upon him, or however the sense of them, ver. 7—10. and also with slighting the consolations of God; upon which he warmly expostulates with him, ver. 11—13. and in order to convince him of his self-righteousness, which he thought he was full of, he argues from the angels, the heavens, and the general case of man, ver. 14—16. and then he declares from his own knowledge, and from the relation of wise and ancient men in former times, who made it their observation, that wicked men are afflicted all their days, attended with terror and despair, and liable to various calamities, ver. 17—24. the reasons of which are their insolence to God, and hostilities committed against him, which they are encouraged in by their prosperous circumstances, ver. 25, 26, 27. notwithstanding all, their estates, riches, and wealth, will come to nothing, ver. 28—30. and the chapter is closed with an exhortation to such, not to feed themselves up with vain hopes, or trust in uncertain riches, since their destruction would be sure, sudden, and terrible, ver. 31—35.

Ver. 1. *Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite*, &c.] Or, who was of Teman, as the Targum, the first of Job's friends and comforters, the oldest of them, who first began the dispute with him; which was carried on by his two other companions, who had spoken in their turns; and now in course it fell to him to answer a second time, as he here does, and *said*, as follows.

Ver. 2. *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge*, &c.] As Job had been thought to be, or as he himself thought he was, which he might say sarcastically; or as he really was, not worldly wise, nor merely wise in things natural, but in things divine; being one that had the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, and wisdom itself; believed in Christ, and walked wisely and circumspectly before men; now it is not becoming such a man to utter vain knowledge, or such knowledge as is like the wind, or, as the Targum, windy knowledge; empty, not solid, nor satisfying, but swells and puffs up, and is knowledge falsely so called; but it does not appear that Job did utter such vain and fruitless things as deserved to be compared to the wind: *and fill his belly with the east wind*; which is noisy and blusterous, rapid and forcible, bearing all before it, and very infectious in hot countries; and such notions Job, according to Eliphaz, satisfied himself with, and endeavoured to insinuate them into others; which were nothing but great swelling words of vanity, and tended to subvert the faith of men, and overthrow all religion, and were very unwholesome, infectious, and ruinous to the minds of men, as suggested.

Ver. 3. *Should he reason with unprofitable talk*, &c.] That is, the wise man, such a man as Job; does it become him to talk such idle stuff? that which is false, and foolish, and frothy, that does not minister grace to the hearer, and is not for the use of edifying; as whatever is untrue, unwise, vain, and empty, must be useless and answer no good end; nothing is profitable but what tends to increase solid wisdom and spiritual knowledge, and to exercise grace, and influence an holy life; wherefore what are profitable to the souls of men are the doctrines of the word of God, and the experiences of the grace of God, communicated by his people one to another; and nothing but these, or what agrees with them, should come out of the mouth of a wise and good man; nor can such an one expect to convince men of their errors, or reprove them for their sins with success, who deals in words of no profit: *or with speeches wherewith he can do no good*; but may do a great deal of hurt both to himself and others; but the same thing is here signified in different words.

Ver. 4. *Yea, thou castest off fear*, &c.] Not of man; a slavish fear of man is to be cast off, because that brings a snare, deters men from their duty, and leads into sin; though there is a fear and reverence of men which ought to be given to them, *fear to whom fear*, Rom. xiii. 7. but here the fear of God is meant, which is to be understood of the grace of fear, of which Job was possessed; that could not be cast off, for this is not what is in a man naturally, or is by the light of nature, and arises from natural conviction, which may be cast off, as was by Pharaoh; but this is a blessing of the covenant of grace, sure and firm, and is one of the gifts of grace that are without repentance; it is a part of internal grace, which can never be lost; it is improved and increased by fresh discoveries of the grace and goodness of God, and is an antidote and preservative against apostacy: perhaps the whole worship of God may be meant, external worship, or outward religion in the form of it, which is sometimes signified by the fear of God: Eccl. xii. 14. Isa. xxix. 13. and it is cast off when it is neglected and not attended to, or when men become profane, after they have made a profession of religion; but as neither of these can be

[z] תאבל emarcida luget, Schultens.

thought to be the case of Job, rather the meaning of Eliphaz may be, that Job did not shew that reverence to God he should, as his words may seem, in ch. xiii. 20, 21, 22. or that by his way of talk and reasoning, and by the notions he had imbibed and gave out, and the assertions he laid down, all religion would be made void among men; for if, as he had said, God *destroys the perfect and the wicked*, and *the tabernacles of robbers prosper*, and *the just men are laughed to scorn*, ch. ix. 22, and xii. 4, 6. who would fear God? it might be inferred from hence, that it is a vain thing to serve him, and there can be no profit got by keeping his ordinances, and walking before him; this is the way to put an end to all religion, as if Eliphaz should say, and discourage all regard unto it: and *restrainest prayer before God*: prayer is to be made to God and to him only, it is a part of religious worship, directed to by the light of nature, and ought to be performed by every man; it is a special privilege of the saints, who have a covenant-God on a throne of grace to go to, and can pray in a spiritual manner for spiritual things; and especially is to be observed in times of trouble, in which Job now was, and never to be disused; now this charge either respects Job himself, that he left off praying, which can hardly be supposed; or that he drew out prayer to a great length, as some understand the words [w], like the tautologies of the Heathen; or he diminished prayer, as others [x], lessened the times of prayer, and the petitions in it: or rather it may respect others; not that it can be thought he should lay his injunctions on those over whom he had any authority, forbidding his servants, or those about him, to pray; but that by his manner of reasoning he discouraged prayer, as Eliphaz thought, as an useless thing; for if God laughs at the trials and afflictions of the innocent, and suffers wicked men to prosper, who would pray to him, or serve him? see ch. x. 23, and xii. 6.

Ver. 5. *For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity*, &c.] Which was in his heart, and so was an evidence against him, and proved him perverse, and made good the above charges exhibited against him: or *thine iniquity teaches thy mouth* [y]; the wickedness that was in his heart prompted his mouth to speak the things he did, see Matt. xii. 34. and this, as it was an instance of his folly, Prov. xv. 2. so a proof of his casting off the fear of the Lord; for if that had been before his eyes, he would have bridled his lips, and not uttered all the wickedness of his heart: for he that *bridleth not his tongue, his religion is vain*, James i. 26. *and thou choosest the tongue of the crafty*; coloured over things under specious pretences of religion and godliness, so that the simple and ignorant took him for a holy good man, when he was at heart an hypocrite; in this light Eliphaz puts Job, as one that walked and talked in craftiness, and was a deceitful worker, and imposed upon men with false glosses and plausible pretences.

Ver. 6. *Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I*, &c.] Or shews thee to be a wicked person, guilty of things charged upon thee; out of thine own mouth thou art convicted, there needs no other evidence to be brought against thee, that is sufficient; and thou savest me, and any other, the trouble of passing the sentence of condemnation upon thee: thou hast done it thyself, thine own mouth is judge and jury, and brings in the verdict, and pronounces it, as well as is the witness, as follows, and is instead of a thousand witnesses, ch. ix. 20. *yea, thine own lips testify against thee*; and therefore there were no need of producing any other testimony; what he had said shewed that his talk was vain and unprofitable, unbecoming a wise man, and tending to make null and void the fear of God among men, to discourage all religious exercises, and particularly prayer before God.

Ver. 7. Art *thou the first man* that *was born?* &c.] The first Adam, who was created in wisdom and knowledge, and had a large share of understanding in things natural, civil, and moral; knew much of God and his perfections, of the works of nature, and of the wisdom and power of God displayed in them; one instance of which is his giving names to the creatures; dost thou think thou art that self-same individual person, the father of all mankind, who had such a stock and fund of knowledge, until, by seeking after more, and that unlawful, he lost much of what he had? dost thou imagine that thou hast lived ever since, and seen or known every thing that was done in all ages from the beginning, and hast gathered a large share of knowledge from long experience, and by making strict observations on men and things in such a length of time? or, as the Targum, "wast thou born with the first man, "without father and mother?" and hast thou existed ever since? or, *wast thou born before Adam?* before the first man [z]? Art thou the wisdom and son of God, who was before Abraham, before Adam, before any creature whatever, was in the beginning with God, and was God? What dost thou make thyself to be, Job? thou, a mere man, dost thou make thyself to be the eternal God? for to be before the first man, or to be the first-born of every creature, or to be born before every creature, is expressive of eternity, as is the following phrase: *or wast thou made before the hills?* or existed before they did? as is said of the son of God, Prov. viii. 25. what is before the hills and mountains is eternal; the eternal God and his eternity are thus described, Psal. xc. 2.

Ver. 8. *Hast thou heard the secret of God?* &c.] Or, *in the secret of God* [a], in his cabinet-council, what was said and done there? hast thou stood in the council of God? hast thou been one of his privy council, or counsellors, and been let into all the secrets of God, of his purposes and providence, and into the reasons of all his administrations, that thou talkest so freely, and boldly, and confidently as thou dost? Indeed Christ, the son of God, was the Angel of the great council; the counsel of peace was between him and his Father; yea, he was in his bosom, and privy to all his thoughts, designs, and decrees, and knew every thing, what

[w] תגרע tulisti, V. L. traheres, Cocceius; multiplicasti, so some in Bar Tzemach.

[x] Imminues, Montanus; imminuisti, Bolducius; diminuis, Schmidt; minuis, Schultens.

[y] יאלף עונך פיך docuit iniquitas tua os tuum, V. L. Pagninus, Bolducius; docebit, Montanus; docet, Piscator, Cocceius; so Tigurine version.

[z] So Mercerus, and some in Vatablus, Schmidt, Jarchi, & Bar Tzemach.

[a] בסוד אלוה in secreto Dei, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schultens.

would be, and the reasons thereof; as well as the nature of his Father, his perfections, mind, and will, which he has declared: but could Job pretend to this, or any thing like it? no, surely. Indeed there are some secrets of God which he makes known to his people, and no doubt, in some measure, Job was acquainted with them: such as the secrets of God's love, and of the covenant of his grace, which are with them that fear him; and such an one Job was, and with whom, in times past at least, the secret of God was, even his everlasting love in the open manifestation of it to him; which is a secret in the heart of God, till revealed and shed abroad in the hearts of his people; and so the *mysteries* of God, as some render the word, the doctrines of the Gospel, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, the knowledge of them, is given to the sons of men; Job was acquainted with them, with the incarnation of Christ, redemption by him, and the resurrection of the dead; the secrets of Providence, though they may not always be known now, they will be hereafter; yea, God does nothing but he reveals his secrets to his servants the prophets, as he did to Abraham his friend; and as for the purposes of God, which are the secret things that belong to him, and can never be known unless revealed, and when fulfilled, even those, such as relate to the election of men, their redemption by Christ, and effectual vocation, are made known by God's saving and calling them according to them: *and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?* not keep it to himself without communicating it to others, which to do is to imprison the truth, and detain it in unrighteousness; as men have freely received, they should freely give; but he arrogated and ascribed wisdom to himself, monopolized it, and would allow no man to have any share of it but himself; he reckoned so highly of himself, as if he was the only wise man in the world; thus what he charged his friends with Eliphaz retorts upon himself, ch. xii. 2. as he does his own words in the following verse.

Ver. 9. *What knowest thou that we know not?* &c.] Which are pretty near the words of Job to his friends, ch. xii. 3. and xiii. 2. and to the same sense is what follows: what *understandest thou which is not in us?* in our hearts, minds, and understanding; or among us, which one or other, or all of us, have not: yet all men have not knowledge alike; some that profess themselves to be wise, and to have a large share of knowledge, are fools; and such who think they know something extraordinary, and more than others, know nothing as they ought to know; and such who have gifts of real knowledge have them different one from another; even of the things known there is not a like degree of knowledge, and particularly in spiritual things; some are little children in understanding, some are young men and know more, and some are fathers, and know most of all; an equality in knowledge belongs to another state, to the latter-day glory, when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, and all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, and especially to the ultimate glory, when saints will know as they are known.

Ver. 10. *With us are both the gray-headed*, &c.] The gray-headed man, or one that is so, it is in the singular number; gray hairs are a sign of old age, and an emblem of wisdom, see ch. xii. 12. to which words Eliphaz may be thought to refer; Job there suggesting as if wisdom was with him, being an ancient man: *and very aged men*; or *man* rather; Mr. Broughton renders it, and *all gray*, as if the other word only signifies one that has a mixture of gray hairs on him, but this one all whose hairs are turned gray: *much elder than thy father*; or *greater*, as the same learned man renders it; and so Aben Ezra and Bar Tzemach say in the Arabic language the word signifies, and may design a third person. Ben Gersom thinks that Eliphaz was older than Job, and that his other two friends were younger than he, or Zophar only was younger than he; one of the Targums paraphrases the words thus, "but Eliphaz who is gray, and Bildad who is aged, "are with us, and Zophar who is greater in days "than thy father;" it appears that they were very old men by what Elihu says, ch. xxxii. 6, 7. though it may be Eliphaz may not barely have respect to themselves and their age, but to their ancestors, their fathers, from whom they had their knowledge, when they were but of yesterday, and knew little, and so pleads antiquity on their side; and it has been observed that Teman, from whence Eliphaz was, was famous for wisdom, and wise men in it, at least it was so in after-times; and if so early, the observation would be more pertinent, and the sense might be thought to be, that we have at Teman men as ancient and as wise as at Uz, in the schools of the one as in the schools of the other, and so have the opportunity of gaining as much wisdom and knowledge as Job: or it may be the meaning only is this, that we have on our side the question as many ancient and learned men, or more, than Job can pretend to; and thus, as before, antiquity is pleaded; but is not a sure rule to go by, at least by trusting to it men may be led aside; for though truth is the good old way, and is the oldest way, yet error is almost as old as truth; it follows so close upon the heels of it, that it is difficult, in some cases, to discern which is first, though truth always is: there is the old way which wicked men have trodden; and a pretence to antiquity, if not carefully observed, may lead into it, see Jer. vi. 16. Job xxii. 15.

Ver. 11. *Are the consolations of God small with thee?* &c.] Meaning either those which Eliphaz and his friends had administered, when, upon his repentance and reformation, they promised him great and good things that should befall him and his family, and that his latter end should be greater than his beginning; which Job slighted, took no notice of, nor entertained any hope concerning it; and these they called the consolations of God, not only because great, as things excellent have the name of God added to them, to express their excellency, but because they were administered in the name of God, and were according to the word and will of God, at least as they thought: Ben Gersom renders it, *the consolations of these*; these were Bildad and Zophar; so Bar Tzemach; or, as others, *these consolations*[b] which I and my friends have suggested; but not human, rather divine consola-

[b] תנחומות אל consolationes istorum virorum, Vatablus; consolationes istæ, so some in Drusius.

tions are meant; and this is a fresh charge against Job, that he made light of such, even the consolations of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, who are each of them comforters; saints may and should comfort one another, and ministers of the Gospel are Barnabases, sons of consolation; but God is the great Comforter, it is he only can speak and apply comfort to purpose; and his consolations are not to be accounted *small*, if it be considered from whence they come, from the great God, the Creator, to creatures, dust and ashes, sinful ones, on whom they are bestowed, such as are undeserving of them, yea, deserving of the wrath of God, and the curses of his law; and also the nature of these comforts, as that they are strong consolations, and effectual through the power and grace of God, and are everlasting, the matter and foundation of them being so; and though they may be refused through unbelief, as being too great in the view of a sinful creature for himself, yet they can never be accounted small, or slighted and despised by a gracious soul; nor can it be thought they were by Job, since he was so distressed with the arrows of the Almighty, a sense of divine wrath, and was so desirous of the divine Presence, and even begged he might take comfort a little: *is there any secret thing with thee?* any secret wisdom and knowledge which they were strangers to; or any secret way of conveying comfort to him they knew not of; or any secret sin in him, any Achan in the camp, that hindered him from receiving comfort, or put him upon slighting what was offered to him.

Ver. 12. *Why doth thine heart carry thee away*, &c.] To such conceit of thyself, and contempt of others, and even to slight the consolations of God; the heart, being deceitful and wicked, sometimes carries away good men to say and do those things which are unbecoming; and if, in any instance, this was Job's case, it was owing to his own heart, which carried him beyond due bounds; for whenever any man is *tempted* to do evil, *he is drawn away of his own lust*, and enticed, James i. 14. *and what do thine eyes wink at*: conniving at and shutting his eyes against his own sins and iniquities, unwilling to see them, and be convinced of them, and own them; or shutting them against the charges and reproofs of his friends, and all the light and evidence with which they came; or rather as carelessly attending to them, and scoffing and sneering at them: some render it, *what do thine eyes aim at*[e]? as men, when they take an aim at a mark, wink with or shut one eye; what are thy designs? what hast thou in view? what wouldest thou be at, talking and behaving in such a manner as thou dost?

Ver. 13. *That thou turnest thy spirit against God*, &c.] Not against men, his friends only, but against God himself, being filled with wrath and indignation at him; shewing the enmity of his heart unto him, and committing hostilities upon him, stretching out his hand, and strengthening himself against him, running upon him, on the thick bosses of his buckler, as after expressed: *and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?* as in ch. ix. 22. and x. 3. and xii. 6. and xiii. 22—27.

Ver. 14. *What is man, that he should be clean?* &c.] Frail, feeble, mortal man, or woful man, as Mr. Broughton renders it; since he is sinful, whereby he is become such a weak and dying creature: this question, as well as the following, is put by way of contempt, and as lessening man in a comparative sense, and in order to abate any high conceit of himself; who is not naturally clean, but the reverse, being conceived and born in sin; nor can he be so of himself, nor by any means he is capable of; and however clean he may be in his own eyes, or in the eyes of others, yet is not clean in the sight of God, and still less pure than him, his Maker, as in ch. iv. 17. and indeed cannot be clean at all, but through the grace of God, and blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin: *and he which is born of a woman*; a periphrasis of man, ch. xiv. 1. *that he should be righteous?* as no man is naturally; there is none righteous, no, not one; though man originally was made righteous, yet sinning he lost his righteousness, and all his posterity are without any; nor can they become righteous of themselves, or by any works of righteousness done by them; and though they may trust in themselves that they are righteous, and may appear outwardly so before men, yet by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified or accounted righteous in the sight of God, and much less be more just than he, as in ch. iv. 17. nor can any of the sons of men be made or reckoned righteous but by the obedience of Christ, or by that justifying righteousness that is in him: what Eliphaz here says concerning the impurity, imperfection, and unrighteousness of men, are very great truths; but if he aims at Job, as he seems to do, he misses his mark, and mistakes the man, and it is in vain with respect to him, or as a refutation of any notions of his; for Job asserts the corruption and depravity of human nature as strongly as it is expressed here, ch. xiv. 4. nor does he ever claim, but disclaims, sinless perfection, ch. ix. 20. nor did he expect to be personally justified before God by any righteousness of his own, the imperfection of which he was sensible of, but by the righteousness of his living Redeemer, ch. ix. 30, 31. and xix. 25. but what he pleaded for was the integrity and uprightness of his heart in opposition to hypocrisy he was charged with; and the holiness and righteousness of his life and conversation, in opposition to a course of living in sin, or to his being guilty of some notorious sin or sins for which he was afflicted, as was insinuated. Eliphaz here recurs to his oracle, ch. iv. 17, 18. and expresses it much to the same sense.

Ver. 15. *Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints*, &c.] In holy men, set apart for himself by his grace, whose sins are expiated by the blood of his Son, and whose hearts are sanctified by his Spirit, and who live holy lives and conversations, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; these, though he trusts many of them with much, as the prophets of old with the messages of his grace and will, and the ministers of the word with treasure, in their earthen vessels, the sacred depositum of the glorious Gospel, with gifts of grace, fitting them for their work, and with the care of the souls of men; yet he trusts none of them with themselves, with the redemption and salvation of their souls, with the regeneration and sanctification of their hearts, and with their preservation to eternal glory; he has put those into the

[e] ירזמון collimant, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; so Broughton.

hands of his Son and Spirit, and keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation: the Targum renders it, in his saints above, in the saints in heaven, in glorified men; he is there their all in all; as their happiness, so their safety and protection; see an instance of his care and preservation of them after the resurrection, when in a perfect state, Rev. xx. 8, 9. or this may be understood of the angels, who sometimes are called saints, Deut. xxxiii. 2. who though they have been trusted with many things to impart to the sons of men, yet not with the salvation of men, nor even with the secret of it; they were not of God's privy-council when the affair was debated and settled; nor with other secrets, as the day and hour of the last judgment, the coming of the Son of man: or the sense may be, *he putteth no perfection* or *stability*[*] in them, that is, perfection in comparison of his; for if theirs were equal to his, they would be Gods, which it is impossible to be, or for God to make them such; and likewise such stability as to have been able to have stood of themselves, which it appears they had not, since many of them fell, and the rest needed confirming grace, which they have by Christ, the Head of all principalities and powers: yea, *the heavens are not clean in his sight*: heaven-born men, partakers of the heavenly calling, whose hearts and affections are set on heavenly things, and have their conversation in heaven; yet these, in the sight of a pure and holy God, and in comparison of him, are impure and unholy; or they of heaven, as Mr. Broughton renders it, the inhabitants of heaven; the angels on high, as the Targum paraphrases it; these are charged by him with folly, and they, conscious of their imperfection with respect to him, cover their faces with their wings, whilst they celebrate the perfection of his holiness, who is so glorious in it; though the natural heavens may be intended, at least not excluded, and the luminous bodies in them, as Bildad seems to explain it, ch. xxv. 5, 6. the stars are reckoned the more dense and thick part of the heavens, the moon has its spots, and by later discoveries it seems the sun is not without them, and the heavens are often covered with clouds and darkness, and the present ones will be purified with fire at the general conflagration, which supposes them unclean, and they shall pass away, and new ones succeed, which implies imperfection in the former, or there would be no need of others; this is the proof Eliphaz gives of what he had suggested in the preceding verse.

Ver. 16. *How much more abominable and filthy is man, &c.*] In his natural, corrupt, and unregenerate estate; man, as a creature, was not abominable, but becoming sinful he is; he is so in himself, cast out to the loathing of his person, being full of wounds, bruises, and putrefying sores, yea, like a dead corrupted carcass, for he is dead in trespasses and sins; and he appears to be corrupt by the abominable works done by him, as all the works of the flesh are; yea, he is abominable to himself, when made sensible of his state and case; he then abhors himself, and repents of his sins, he loathes his sins, and himself for them; and must be much more so in the sight of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, as man is nothing else than a mass of sin, and therefore must be *filthy*; for sin is of a defiling nature, it defiles the body and all its members, and the soul with all its powers and faculties; man is naturally and originally filthy, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; nor can a clean thing be brought out of an unclean; he is internally and universally unclean, his heart is a sink of sin, desperately wicked, and wickedness itself; his mind and conscience are defiled, and there is no place clean; and this appears outwardly in his actions, in his life and conversation, which is filthy also: for if the ploughing of the wicked is sin, and the righteousnesses of men are filthy rags, how impure must the immoral actions of wicked men be? man is so impure, that nothing but the blood of Christ can purify his heart, and purge his conscience from dead works, and make white his outward conversation-garment: *which drinketh iniquity like water*: it is as natural to him to commit iniquity as it is for a man to drink water when he is thirsty, and he does it with equal gust, delight, and pleasure; as cold water is delightful to a thirsty soul, so is sin to a sinner, a sweet morsel he holds in his mouth; divers lusts are divers pleasures, though these pleasures are but for a season: sin, like water, is easy to be come at, it is near at hand, it easily besets men, and is all around them, and they easily give into it; every one turns to his wicked course as readily as the horse rushes into the battle; and the phrase may be expressive of the abundance of sin committed, like large draughts of water greedily taken down by a man athirst, and repeated again and again; moreover, as water drank enters into men, and is taken down as an harmless thing, yet often proves very hurtful and pernicious to them when drank whilst they are hot, and occasions disorders, which issue in death; so sin, though it may seem harmless, and be pleasing and refreshing, going down like water, yet it works like poison, and is the gall of asps within a man, and ends in eternal death, if grace prevents not. This is the conclusion and application of the whole to man, arguing from the greater to the lesser, and so proving the impurity and imperfection of man, and that he cannot be clean and righteous before God of himself.

Ver. 17. *I will shew thee, hear me, &c.*] Here Eliphaz proceeds to illustrate and make plain, to clear and defend, his former sentiment and proposition, and into which the rest of his friends came; that only wicked, and not righteous men, are afflicted of God, especially in such a manner as Job was; and he proposes to shew things worthy of his regard, and not such vain and unprofitable things which Job had uttered; and, in order to stir up and engage his attention, he says what follows: *and that which I have seen I will declare*; what he had been an eye-witness of himself; the same he had observed, ch. iv. 8. and such testimonies are most regarded, and reckoned most authentic and creditable, especially when they come from men of character; see Luke i. 1, 2. 1 John i. 1.

Ver. 18. *Which wise men have told from their fathers, &c.*] Men wise in the best sense, not to do evil, but

[*] לא יאמין non posuit stabilitatem, Pagninus; immutabilitatem, sive perfectionem absolutam, Vatablus; firmum opus non produxit, Tigurine version; non crediturus esset firmitatem, Junius & Tremellius.

to do good; not worldly-wise men, but such who have wisdom, sound wisdom in the inward parts; who are wise to salvation, and who are partakers of divine and spiritual wisdom; and such men, as they would never tell an untruth, so they would never report a false or a foolish thing they had heard, nor any thing but upon a good testimony, what they have received from their fathers, who were also wise and good men; and therefore such a testimony, though not ocular, but by tradition, deserves regard: *and have not hid it;* their fathers did not hide it from them, and what they have received from their fathers they did not hide it from their children; and so it came to be handed down from one to another with great truth, exactness, and certainty, and to be depended upon, see Psal. xliv. 1. and lxxviii. 3, 4.

Ver. 19. *Unto whom alone the earth was given,* &c.] Who were intrusted with the government of whole kingdoms and nations; and therefore not mean men, but persons of great consequence, and to be credited; being such as were appointed by God, and by him put into such an high office, for which they were qualified by him; and being observed to be such by men, were made choice of by them to take the government of them: this is not to be restrained to the land of Canaan, and to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to whom it was given, and to their posterity; and who it is very probable at this time did not yet enjoy it; but it respects more and larger tracts of land, and the rulers of them, and at a greater distance of time, and very likely Noah and his sons, to whom the whole earth was given, and by whom it was replenished, and among whom it was divided; this seems opposed to what Job had said, ch. ix. 24. *and no stranger passed among them:* either there was no wicked man among them, a stranger to God and godliness; or an enemy that invaded them, passed through them, disturbed and dispossessed them of their power and substance; which shews how wise and good men are regarded by the Lord, and not distressed and afflicted as wicked men be; as well as serves to strengthen the credit of their character, and the report received and derived from them by tradition, and tacitly glances at Job's distress and disturbance by the Chaldeans and Sabeans; next follows the account of the things either seen by Eliphaz, or handed down from such credible persons now described.

Ver. 20. *The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days,* &c.] Either to commit iniquity, which he is at great pains to do, and even to weariness; and, agreeably to the metaphor used, he conceives it in his heart, he travails with it in his mind, and he brings forth falsehood and a lie, what disappoints him, and which issues in death, eternal death, see Psal. vii. 14. James i. 14, 15. or to get wealth and riches, in obtaining of which he pierces himself through with many sorrows; and these being like thorns, in using them he gets many a scratch, and has a good deal of trouble, pain, and uneasiness in keeping them, insomuch that he cannot sleep comfortably through fear of losing them; wherefore he does not enjoy that peace, comfort, and happiness, it may be thought he does; and, besides all this, he has many an inward pain and gripe of conscience for his many sins and transgressions, which lie at the door of conscience, and when it is opened rush in, and make sad work, and put him to great pain and distress; for otherwise this cannot be said of every wicked man, that they are in outward pain and distress, or in uncomfortable circumstances, at least in appearance; for of some it is said, *they are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men,* Psal. lxxiii. 5. they live wholly at ease, and are quiet, and die so, at least seemingly: some restrain this to some particular person whom Eliphaz might have in view; the Targum paraphrases it of wicked Esau, who it was expected would repent, but did not; others think that he had in his eye some notorious oppressor, that had lived formerly, or in his time, as Nimrod, the mighty hunter and tyrant, or Chedorlaomer, who held for some years several kings in subjection to him; but it is much if he does not design Job himself; however, he forms the description of the wicked man in such a manner, that it might as near as possible suit his case, and in many things he plainly refers to it: and this is a sad case indeed, for a wicked man to travail in pain all his days in this life, and in the world to come to suffer the pains of hell-fire to all eternity; the pains of a woman, to which the allusion is, are but short at most, but those of the wicked man are for life, yea, for ever; and among the rest of his pains of mind, especially in this world, what follows is one, and which gives much uneasiness: *and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor;* Mr. Broughton renders it, *soon-numbered years;* that is, few, as the years of man's life at most are but few, and those of the oppressor fewer still, since bloody and deceitful men do not live out half the days of the years of man's life, but are oftentimes cut off in the midst of their days; and be they more or fewer, they are all numbered and fixed, and the number of them is with God, and him only; they are fixed and settled by the decree of God, and laid up in his purposes, and reserved for the oppressor; but they are a secret to him, he does not know how long he shall live, or how soon he may die, and then there will be an end of his oppression and tyranny, and of his enjoyment of his wealth and riches unjustly got; and this frets him, and gives him pain, and makes him uneasy; whereas a good man is easy about it, he is willing to wait his appointed time, till his change comes; he is not so much concerned to know the time of his death as to be in a readiness for it. The Targum paraphrases this of Ishmael the mighty: the oppressor is the same with the wicked man in the preceding clause.

Ver. 21. *A dreadful sound is in his ears,* &c.] Or *a voice,* or *sound of fears*[t], of what causes fears; and which are either imaginary; sometimes wicked men fear when there is no cause or occasion for it; they fancy an enemy at their heels, and flee, when none pursues them; they are a *Magor Missabib,* a fear to themselves and all about them; like Cain, who fancied and feared that every man that met him would slay

[t] קול פחדים sonitus timorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Boldacius; to the same sense Codurcus, Junius & Tremellius, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.

him; such is the effect of a guilty conscience: or real; and these either extraordinary sounds, such as were made in the ears of the Syrian host, which caused them to flee, and leave their tents, and all their substance in them, 2 Kings vii. 6. or ordinary, as the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war, wars and rumours which are very terrible, especially to some persons; or sounds of fears, reports of one calamity after another, which cause fears; and so may respect Job's troubles, and the dreadful sound of them in his ears, brought by one messenger of bad tidings after another: but there is a more dreadful sound than either of these, which is sometimes in the ears of wicked men; the terrors of the law of God broken by them, the menaces and curses of it, and a sound of hell and damnation, which continually rings in their ears, and fills them with horror and black despair; and so the Targum, "the voice or sound of the fears in hell is in his ears;" and among the rest of his fears what follows is one, and so some connect the words, that* *in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him*; either God the lawgiver, whose law he has transgressed, and who is able, as to save his people, so to destroy the wicked, soul and body, in hell; and destruction from the Almighty, Job himself says, was a terror to him, ch. xxxi. 23. or a destroying angel, such an one as went through the land of Egypt, and destroyed the first-born, and into the camp of Israel, when they committed sin, and were destroyed of the destroyer; or some enemy, plunderer, and robber, such as the Sabeans and Chaldeans were, and to whom respect may be had; or even the devil himself, Apollyon, the destroyer of the souls of men, and who sometimes wicked men fear will come and carry them away, soul and body, to hell; or it may be death is meant, which kills and destroys all men; and wicked men are afraid that in the midst of all their peace and prosperity sudden destruction by death should come upon them, like a thief in the night, and remove them from all their enjoyments; and whether they are or no under any fearful apprehensions of this, it certainly will be their case.

Ver. 22. *He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness*, &c.] When he lies down at night he despairs of ever seeing the light of the morning, through fear of an enemy, a robber, a murderer, or of one disaster or another, Deut. xxviii. 66, 67. or when he is in any affliction and calamity, which is often signified by darkness, he can't persuade himself that he shall ever be delivered out of it, and restored to his former condition again: and here Eliphaz seems to glance at Job, who had no hope of his being brought into such a state of prosperity he had been in; whereas good men, when in darkness, believe they shall be brought again to the light, as the church in Mic. vii. 8, 9. or the infidel, who knows he must be laid in the dark and silent grave; the Heathen man, such as were many of the neighbours of Eliphaz, the Idumeans, among whom he dwelt, who were without the hope of a glorious resurrection; and which is an article of pure revelation, and which the idolatrous Heathen were strangers to, and so believed it not, or any deliverance from the grave; or this may respect the blackness of darkness, the outer darkness, the darkness of hell, which when once a wicked man is cast into, and enveloped with, he despairs, as he well may, of ever being delivered out of it: *and he is waited for of the sword*; or by them that kill with the sword, as the Targum, who lie in wait for him, to rob him, and kill him; or in his own apprehension he seems to have nothing but drawn swords about him, or a sword hanging over his head, or the judgments of God ready to fall upon him for his sins; for he, having killed others with the sword, must expect to be killed with it himself.

Ver. 23. *He wandereth abroad for bread*, &c.] Either as a plunderer and robber, he roves about to increase his worldly power and substance; or rather, being reduced to poverty, wanders about from place to place, from door to door, to beg his bread; which is a curse imprecated on the posterity of wicked men, Psal. cix. 10. *saying, where is it?* where is bread to be had? where shall I go for it? where lives a liberal man that will give it freely and generously? by this question it seems as if it was difficult for such a man to get his bread by begging; he having been cruel and oppressive to others, unkind and ungenerous in his time of prosperity, now finds but few that care to relieve him; and indeed a man that has not shewn mercy to the indigent, when in his power to have relieved them, cannot expect mercy will be shewn to him; this he does, wanders about, seeking food, *wheresoever he is**; *he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand*; either that a day of affliction and adversity is coming upon him, perceiving his affairs to grow worse and worse, or to be immediately and already on him, which obliges him to wander about for bread; or that the day of death is at hand, which he is made sensible of by one symptom or another; or rather it may be the day of everlasting darkness in hell, the wrath of God to the uttermost he has deserved; he finds the day of judgment is at hand, and the Judge at the door, and in a short time he must receive the reward of eternal vengeance for the wicked deeds he has done; for so the words may be rendered, *that the day of darkness is prepared by his hand**; by the evil works his hand has wrought, and so has treasured up to himself wrath against the day of wrath, and righteous judgment of God.

Ver. 24. *Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid*, &c.] Either his present troubles shall frighten him, they being so very dismal, terrible, and distressing, and make him fear that others were coming on, more dreadful and formidable; or those troubles he fears will be his portion hereafter, these terrify him beyond measure, even that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, that shall come upon every soul of man that doeth evil, Rom. ii. 8, 9. *they shall prevail against him as a king ready to the battle*; that is, trouble and anguish shall prevail against him; he will be no more able to resist them than a very inferior force, or even a single man, is able to resist a warlike king, attended with a numerous army, and these set in battle-array;

* Vastatorem invasurum eum, Junius & Tremellius.
* So Noldius in Ebr. Concord. Part. p. 97.

* בידו suis factis, Tigurine version; per manum suam, Schmidt.

such a man's troubles will come upon him as an armed man, against which he cannot stand; the Targum is, "they shall surround him as a king prepared for a footstool;" who being taken by the enemy shall be used as a footstool to mount on horseback; and as the word has the signification of a globe or ball, see Isa. xxii. 18. some think it has respect to the manner of kings, when taken captive, put into an iron cage, as Bajazet was by Tamerlane; or into an iron hoop, bound hand and foot, and hung up in chains; or, as Ben Gersom thinks, to the manner of drowning persons, who used to be tied hand and foot, as if rolled up in the form of a globe, and so cast into the water; but rather the reference is to an army, besieging a place all around in the form of a ball or globe, so that there is no escaping them; or rather it may be to a king drawing up his army in such a form, ready to engage in battle; or putting it in such a position when encamped or intrenched, waiting the motion of the enemy; see 1 Sam. xxvi. 5. and such are the troubles that surround and prevail against a wicked man, see Isa. xxix. 3. the reasons of the wicked man being brought into such a woeful condition follow.

Ver. 25. *For he stretched out his hand against God,* &c.] Being an hater of him, an enemy to him, yea, enmity itself against him; an enemy in his mind, which appears by his wicked works, which are so many acts of hostility against God; all sins are against God, his nature, his will, his law, and all his remonstrances, exhortations, cautions, and instructions; but some are more daring and impudent than others, or are committed in a more open, bold, and audacious manner, as were those committed by the inhabitants of Sodom, and those who are similar to them; especially such as strike at the being of God and his perfections, his providence and government of the world; and such as deny these may most truly be said to stretch out their hands against God, and strike at him: and this may regard not only sins committed against the light of nature and the law of God, but against the evangelic revelation, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it; for such who deny the one, and reject the other, openly oppose themselves to God, and expose themselves to his wrath and vengeance; for of how much sorer punishment shall such be thought worthy, who trample Christ and his blood under foot, despise and disobey his Gospel: *and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty;* by hardening his heart against him as Pharaoh did; by putting on a bold and brazen countenance, by setting his mouth against God in heaven, and suffering his tongue to walk through the earth, fearing neither God nor man; by entering into a friendship with the world, and making alliances with the enemies of God, even by making a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell; all which is egregious folly and madness: for a sinful man to oppose himself to God is to set briers and thorns to a consuming fire; for a weak feeble creature to set himself against the Almighty, who can crush him in a moment, and send him down to hell, is the height of folly: let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth, but not man with his Maker; who ever strengthened or hardened himself against him, and prospered?

Ver. 26. *He runneth upon him,* even *on* his *neck,* &c.] As a fierce and furious enemy runs upon another with great wrath and fury; as the he-goat in Daniel's vision ran upon the ram, in the fury of his power, that is, Alexander upon Darius; which instance Bar Tzemach refers to; and as an adversary, who throws down his weapons, and goes in to closer quarters, and takes his antagonist by the throat, or round the neck, in order to throw him down to the ground; in such a bold and insolent manner does the wicked man encounter with God; he makes up to him, and flies in his face, and most audaciously attacks him: or he runs upon him *with* his *neck*[1]; with a stretched-out neck, in the most haughty manner, with a neck like an iron sinew, and with a brow like brass: *upon the thick bosses of his bucklers;* alluding to shields, embossed in the middle, where they are thicker than in the other parts, and used to have a spike of iron set in the middle; so that it was daring and dangerous to run upon them: these may design the perfections of God, denied by the wicked man; or his providential dispensations, despised by him; or his purposes and decrees ridiculed, replied unto, and disputed; or the flaming sword of justice, and the curses of a righteous law, in defiance of which wicked men go on in sin: or *with the bosses of his bucklers*[2]; with all his family, as Schmidt; or employing all his wealth and riches, his power and authority, against God, and the interest of religion in the world. Some understand this of God, meeting the wicked man, stretching out his hand, and strengthening himself against him, as if he, God, ran upon the wicked man, and upon his neck, and took him by it, and shook him; as in ch. xvi. 12. and upon the thick bosses of his buckler, his bones and nerves, as Mr. Broughton; or on his power and wealth, which are not able to secure him from the vengeance of the Almighty; but the former sense seems best.

Ver. 27. *Because he covereth his face with his fatness,* &c.] He has no fear of God, nor shame for his sin; he blushes not to rise up against God in the manner he does, because his eyes stand out with fatness; or rather his face is covered with it, that is, he abounds in riches, he enjoys great prosperity, a large affluence of all good things; and this makes him haughty and imperious, neither to fear God, nor regard man like Jeshurun, who, when he *waxed fat,* was *grown thick, and covered with fatness, kicked* against God, and his providences, sinned and rebelled against him; *forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation,* Deut. xxxii. 15. and to the same purpose is the following clause: *and maketh collops of fat in his flanks;* a description of a very fat man, and one that pampers the flesh, and indulges himself in eating and drinking; and, figuratively, of one that abounds in the good things of this world, and which make him vain and proud, and lead him on to commit sin in a bold and daring way, promising himself impunity in it, but without any just ground for it, as the following

[1] בצואר erecto collo, V. L. Piscator; duro collo, Drusius, Michaelis; cum cervice, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens.

[2] בעבי גבי מגניו cum crassitie umbonum clypeorum suorum, Cocceius; so Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.

verses shew; perhaps some respect may be had to Job's children feasting with one another in their prosperity, which led on to sin, and issued in their ruin, as Eliphaz would suggest.

Ver. 28. *And he dwelleth in desolate cities,* &c.] This is either a continuation of the account of the wicked man's prosperity, which makes him haughty; such is his might and power, that he destroys cities and palaces, built and enjoyed by others, and then out of the ruins of them builds greater cities and more noble palaces, to perpetuate his name to posterity; which sense agrees with ch. iii. 14. and with the Targum, "and he makes "tabernacles in desert cities, that he may dwell in houses "which were not inhabited:" and so Ben Gersom: and hence because of his success among men, and the grandeur he lives in, his heart is lifted up, and his hand is stretched out against God; or else this may express the sinful course of life such a man lives, who chooses to dwell in desolate places, and deserts, to do hurt to others, to seize upon travellers as they pass by, and rob and plunder them of their substance, sitting and waiting for them in such places, as the Arabians in the wilderness, Jer. iii. 2. which is the sense of some, as Aben Ezra observes; or rather this points at the punishment of the wicked man, who though for the present may be in great prosperity, possessed of large cities and stately palaces, *yet* or *but* [a], for so the particle may be rendered, *he dwelleth in desolate cities;* in such as shall become desolate, being destroyed by a superior enemy, that shall come upon him; or through his subjects forsaking him, not being able to bear his tyranny and cruelty; or he shall be driven from his dominions by them, and be obliged to fly, and dwell in desert places; or he shall choose to dwell there, through the horrors of a guilty conscience; or, best of all, he shall be reduced to such distress and poverty, that he shall not have a house fit to dwell in; but *shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabited,* Jer. xvii. 6. as follows: *and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps;* such as have been deserted by their former inhabitants, because come to decay, and ready to fall down upon them, and become heaps of stones and rubbish.

Ver. 29. *He shall not be rich,* &c.] Though his heart is set upon it, he is determined at any rate to be rich; he labours for it with all his might and main, and yet shall not attain what he is so desirous of; many, who take a great deal of pains to be rich, and even in a lawful way, and are men of understanding in trade and business, and yet riches are not their portion; and some who get a great deal, yet don't grow rich; what they get, they put into a bag of holes, and it drops through as fast as they put in; what they get in one sinful way they consume in another, and so are always poor; and others, though they have amassed together a vast substance, yet still are but poor men, not using what they have either for their own good, or the good of others; and not being content with what they have, but always craving more, and so are even poor in their own account, not having what they would have: however, such a man is not rich towards God; for in godly and spiritual things he is destitute of the true riches of grace, and has no title to the riches of glory; and as for his earthly riches, these shall not endure; though he may be rich for the present, he will not be always so; and this sense the next clause confirms: *neither shall his substance continue;* or *his strength* [b]; his power and might, a rich man's wealth being his strong city, in which he places his trust and confidence; riches are called *substance,* though they are but a shadow, yea, mere nonentities, things that are not, in comparison of heavenly things; see Prov. xxiii. 5. and viii. 22. at least they are not an enduring substance; they are uncertain things, here to-day, and gone to-morrow; that make themselves wings, and fly away from the owners of them; or they are taken away from them, and are not like the riches of grace, which are durable riches; or like those of glory; but by one means or another are taken out of the hands of the possessors of them, and they are reduced to poverty: and this *their substance shall not rise;* or rather, *not rise again* [c], as the word may be rendered; notwithstanding all the pains they may take, their substance shall not rise, grow, and increase; or not rise up to the former pitch it did, but being fallen into poverty there they lie: *neither shall he prolong the perfection of it upon the earth;* though, indeed, there is no perfection in the creature, nor in creature-enjoyments, nor in outward riches and substance; such as have had the largest share of them, as David and Solomon, have declared they have seen an end of all perfection, and that all things, the highest enjoyments, are vanity and vexation of spirit; yet when men are got to the summit, and height, and perfection of outward happiness, as they or others may think, this is not prolonged, or continued long in the earth, or they continued in it; but often are suddenly cast down from the pinnacle of honour, wealth, and riches; hence some render the words, *and their prosperity shall not be fixed into the earth* [d]; shall not take root, though it may seem to do, Jer. xii. 2. and so shall not spread itself as a tree well rooted does; and as does the spiritual prosperity, perfection, and fulness of good men, which they have in and by Christ; being rooted in the love of God, in the grace of Christ, and having the root of the matter in them, they cast forth their roots as Lebanon, and their branches spread, and they are full of the fruits and blessings of grace, Hos. xiv. 5, 6.

Ver. 30. *He shall not depart out of darkness,* &c.] Out of the darkness of poverty, calamity, and distress he comes into, and, indeed, he despairs of it himself, as in ver. 22. and in a spiritual sense he departs not out of the darkness of sin, out of the dark state of unregeneracy; nor will he depart out of the blackness and darkness reserved for him hereafter, when he is once come into it: *the flame shall dry up his branches;* alluding either to a violent drought and heat, which dries up pastures, herbs, and trees, and the branches of

[a] So the Annotator of the Assembly of Divines.
[b] חילו ejus robur, Mercerus; potentia ejus, Drusius.
[c] לא יקום neque resurgent opes ejus, Schmidt.
[d] ולא יטה לארץ מנלם nec mittet in terra radicem suam, V. L. & non pangetur in terram prosperitas eorum, Schultens.

them; or to a wind, as the Septuagint, a burning wind, in the eastern countries, which consumed all green things; or to a flash of lightning, which shatters, strips, and destroys branches of trees: here it may signify the wrath of God, like a flame of fire consuming the wealth and substance, and families, of wicked men; whose children particularly may be compared to branches, and so respect may be had to Job's children, who were suddenly destroyed by a violent wind, which threw down the house in which they were: *and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away*; out of the world, a phrase expressive of death; either because of the breath of his own mouth, as some in Jarchi, because of his blasphemies against God and his people, because of his cursing and swearing his mouth is full of, and the many vain, foolish, and idle words which come out of it, and for which he will be condemned; or rather "by the breath of the mouth of God," as the Targum: either according to his purpose and decree, and by his order, and the word that goes out of his mouth; the wicked man shall be obliged to depart out of the world at once, being struck dead by him, as Ananias and Sapphira were; or by his powerful wrath and vengeance, whose breath is as a stream of brimstone, and with which he will slay the wicked of the earth, and particularly will consume the wicked one, antichrist, even with the spirit of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming, Isa. xi. 4. 2 Thess. ii. 8.

Ver. 31. *Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity, &c.*] Every wicked man is deceived, either by Satan, who deceives the whole world, deceived our first parents, and deceives all their posterity, not only profane sinners, but many professors of religion also; or by their own hearts, which are deceitful and desperately wicked; or through the deceitfulness of sin, which promises profit, pleasure, and liberty, and issues in ruin, pain, and bondage; and through the deceitfulness of riches, which promise that satisfaction they do not give: and such as are deceived in this manner are prone to trust in vanity; in men, who in every state, high or low, are altogether vanity; and in creature-enjoyments, in outward riches and wealth, which are all vanity and vexation of spirit; and in their own hearts, and the vanity of their minds, which to do is extreme folly; and in their righteousness and external privileges, which will be of no service to them, as to their acceptance with God, and eternal happiness; and therefore trust in whatsoever is vain and empty, and affords no solid satisfaction, real pleasure, and advantage, is here dehorted from; unless the words will be allowed to be justly rendered, as I think they may, *trust not in him that is deceived by vanity*[f]; by any of the above vain things, since he must himself be a vain man, and therefore not to be confided in: to which sense the Targum inclines; "he will not (or "should not) believe in a son of man (or in a man), "who errs through falsehood;" the reason dissuading from it follows: *for vanity shall be his recompense*: all that a man gets by trusting in vanity, or by trusting in a man deceived, is nothing but emptiness and vanity; he gets nothing solid and substantial, that will be of any advantage to him here or hereafter; and yet this he will not easily believe; and so Beza reads the words, *he that is deceived by vanity will not believe that vanity shall be his recompense.*

Ver. 32. *It shall be accomplished before his time, &c.*] Either the recompense or reward of his trusting in vanity, in vain persons or things, the punishment of such a trust, the sorrows and troubles following upon it; these shall come upon the wicked man *before his day*[f], as it may be rendered; before the day of his death, even before his old age; before the evil days come in a course of nature, and those years in which he has no pleasure: or his life, and the days of his life, *shall be filled up*[g]; or be at an end before his time; not before the time fixed in the decree and purpose of God, ch. xiv. 5. but before his own time, that he and his friends thought he might have lived, and as his healthful constitution promised; or before the then common term of human life; and so the phrase is expressive of an immature death: *and his branch shall not be green*; but dried up and wither away; his wealth and riches, his children and family, be utterly extinct; instead of being like a branch, green and flourishing, shall be like a dry stick, useless and unprofitable, only fit for burning; see ver. 30.

Ver. 33. *He shall shake off his unripe grape as the vine, &c.*] Either the wicked man himself shall shake off or lose his substance; or God shall shake off from him all that was dear and valuable to him; or he shall be shaken by one providence or another, just as a vine is shaken by a violent wind and tempest, and its unripe grapes are battered off by an hail-storm, or plucked off by the hand, or drop off through rottenness; so it is signified by this metaphor, that a wicked man should be stripped of his wealth and riches in a sudden manner; or his children should be snatched from him in their youth, before they were well grown up to maturity, and so like the unripe grape; perhaps respect is had to Job's case, both with regard to his substance and his family: *and shall cast off his flower as the olive*: which tree, when shaken in a violent manner, drops its flower, and so brings forth no fruit; it is observed by naturalists[h], that these two trees, the vine and the olive, flourish much about the same time, and often suffer much by storms and tempests, which destroy their fruits, and especially when rain falls in the time of their flowering; the same thing is intended in this clause as in the former.

Ver. 34. *For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, &c.*] Hypocrites are such who seem to be, and would be thought to be, what they are not; they are outwardly righteous before men, but inwardly very wicked; have a form of godliness, but are destitute of the power of it; pretend to much religion, and to be worshippers of God, when it is only in outward appearance, and not in reality and sincerity: and such as these have been in the congregations of the righteous, in all ages; but here Eliphaz speaks of a congregation

[f] בשוא נתעה per vanitatem deceptus, Beza; so Tigurine version.
[f] בלא יומו ante diem suam, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[g] תמלא complebitur, Montanus; implebitur, Schultens.
[h] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 25. l. 17. c. 2. 24.

of them, a society, a family of them; and very probably has his eye upon Job's, and would represent hereby that he, the head of his family, and his children, when living, and his servants and associates, were all hypocrites, and now become desolate, reduced to want and poverty, and in distressed circumstances: or were *solitary* [l] and alone, as the word is rendered in ch. iii. 7. destitute of friends, and of the comforts of life; and perhaps reference may be had to the future state of such, when they shall aloud be bid to depart from God, have no society with angels and saints, but shall have their portion with those of the same character with them, hypocrites, in the highest degree of torment and misery, Matt. xxiv. 51. *and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery*: either such tents, or houses, as were built with money taken as bribes; see Hab. ii. 12. or where such who received bribes dwelt; unjust judges, who took a gift that blinds the eyes, to pervert justice. Job is afterwards by Eliphaz represented as if he was an oppressor, a wicked magistrate, and guilty of such-like crimes as here pointed at, ch. xxii. 6—9. and the *fire* said to consume the dwelling-places of such may be understood either of material fire, such as came down from heaven, and destroyed Job's sheep; or figuratively, the wrath of God often compared to fire, which would appear in one way or another, to the utter ruin of such persons, their habitations, and those that dwelt in them.

Ver. 35. *They conceive mischief*, &c.] That is, such wicked persons as before described; they meditate sin in their minds, and contrive how to commit it, and form schemes within themselves to do mischief to others: *and they bring forth vanity*; or sin; for lust when it is conceived bringeth forth sin, and that is vanity, an empty thing, and neither yields profit nor pleasure in the issue, but that which is useless and unserviceable, yea, hurtful and ruinous; for sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death, even death eternal, Jam. i. 14, 15. *and their belly prepareth deceit*; their inward part frames and devises that which is designed to deceive others, and in the end proves deceitful to themselves: the allusion is to a pregnant woman, or rather to one who seems to be so, and whose conception proves abortive, and so deceives and disappoints herself and others; see Psal. vii. 14.

C H A P. XVI.

THIS chapter and the following contain Job's reply to the preceding discourse of Eliphaz, in which he complains of the conversation of his friends, as unprofitable, uncomfortable, vain, empty, and without any foundation, ver. 1, 2, 3. and intimates that were they in his case and circumstances, he should behave in another manner towards them, not mock at them, but comfort them, ver. 4, 5. though such was his unhappy case, that, whether he spoke or was silent, it was much the same; there was no alloy to his grief, ver. 6. wherefore he turns himself to God, and speaks to him, and of what he had done to him, both to his family, and to himself; which things, as they proved the reality of his afflictions, were used by his friends as witnesses against him, ver. 7, 8. and then enters upon a detail of his troubles, both at the hands of God and man, in order to move the divine compassion, and the pity of his friends, ver. 9—14. which occasioned him great sorrow and distress, ver. 15, 16. yet asserts his own innocence, and appeals to God for the truth of it, ver. 17, 18, 19. and applies to him, and wishes his cause was pleaded with him, ver. 20, 21. and concludes with the sense he had of the shortness of his life, ver. 22. which sentiment is enlarged upon in the following chapter.

Ver. 1. *Then Job answered and said.*] As soon as Eliphaz had done speaking, Job stood up, and made the following reply.

Ver. 2. *I have heard many such things*, &c.] As those Eliphaz has been discoursing of, concerning the punishment of wicked men; many instances of this kind had been reported to him from his preceptors, and from his parents, and which they had had from theirs, as well as Eliphaz had from his; and he had heard these things, or such-like, told *many times* from one to another, as Ben Gersom interprets it; or *frequently*, as the Vulgate Latin version, yea, he had heard them his friends say many things of this kind; so that there was nothing new delivered, nothing but what was *crambe millies cocta*, the same thing over and over again; insomuch that it was not only needless and useless, but nauseous and disagreeable, and was far from carrying any conviction with it, or having weight and influence upon him; that he only gave it the hearing, and that was all, and scarce with any patience, it being altogether unapplicable to him: that wicked men were punished for their sins, he did not deny; and that good men were also afflicted, was a very plain case; and that neither good nor hatred, or an interest in the favour of God or not, were not known by these things; nor could any such conclusion be fairly drawn, that because Job was afflicted, that therefore he was a bad man: *miserable comforters* are *ye all*; his friends came to comfort him, and no doubt were sincere in their intentions; they took methods, as they thought, proper to answer such an end; and were so sanguine as to think their consolations were the consolations of God, according to his will; and bore hard upon Job for seeming to slight them, ch. xv. 11. to which Job here may have respect; but they were so far from administering divine consolation, that they were none at all, and worse than none; instead of yielding comfort, what they said added to his trouble and affliction; they were, as it may be rendered, *comforters of trouble*, or *troublesome comforters* [k], which is what rhetoricians call an oxymoron; what they said, instead of relieving

[l] גלמוד solitarium, Montanus; and to the same sense Vatablus, Beza, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Cocceius.

[k] מנחמי עמל consolatores molestiæ, Vatablus, Drusius, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis; molesti, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Codurcus, Tigurine version; molestissimi, Schultens.

him, laid weights and heavy pressures upon him he could not bear; by suggesting his afflictions were for some enormous crime and secret sin that he lived in the commission of; and that he was no other than an hypocrite: and unless he repented and reformed, he could not expect it would be better with him; and this was the sentiment of them one and all: so to persons under a sense of sin, and distressed about the salvation of their souls, legal preachers are miserable comforters, who send them to a convicting, condemning, and cursing law, for relief; to their duties of obedience to it for peace, pardon, and acceptance with God; who decry the grace of God in man's salvation, and cry up the works of men; who lay aside the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ, the consolation of Israel, and leave out the Spirit of God the Comforter in their discourses; and indeed all that can be said, or directed to, besides the consolation that springs from God by Christ, through the application of the Spirit, signifies nothing; for if any comfort could be had from any other, he would not be, as he is called, the God of all comfort: all the creatures and creature-enjoyments, even the best are broken cisterns, and like the deceitful brooks Job in ch. vi. compares his friends to, that disappoint when any expectations of comfort are raised upon them.

Ver. 3. *Shall vain words have an end?* &c.] Or *words of wind* [k], vain empty words, great swelling words of vanity, mere bubbles that look big, and have nothing in them; here Job retorts what Eliphaz had insinuated concerning him and his words, ch. xv. 2, 3. and he intimates such worthless discourses should have an end, and a speedy one, and not be carried on to any length, they not bearing it; and wishes they were at an end, that he might hear no more of them; and suggests that it was weak and foolish in them to continue them; that if they could speak to no better purpose, it would be best to be silent: *or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?* when men are engaged in a good cause, have truth on their side, and are furnished with arguments sufficient to defend it, this animates and emboldens them to stand up in the defence of it, and to answer their adversaries, and to reply when there is occasion; but Job could not imagine what should encourage and spirit up Eliphaz to answer again, when he had been sufficiently confuted; when his cause was bad, and he had no strong reasons to produce in the vindication of it; or *what has exasperated* or *provoked thee* [l] to make reply? here Job seems to have thought that he had said nothing that was irritating, though it is notorious he had, such were his grief and troubles; and so well assured he was of his being in the right, that the harsh and severe words and expressions he had used were not thought by him to have exceeded due bounds, such as ch. xii. 2, 3, and xiii. 2, 4.

Ver. 4. *I also could speak as ye do,* &c.] As big words, with as high a tone, with as stiff a neck, and as haughtily and loftily; or *ought I to speak as you do* [m]? that I ought not, nor would you think I ought, if you were in my case; or, being so, *would I speak as you do* [n]? no, I would not, my conscience would not suffer me: *if your soul were in my soul's stead:* in the same afflicted state and condition, in the same distressed case and circumstances; not that he wished it, as some render the words, for a good man will not wish hurt to another; only he supposes this, as it was a case supposable, and not impossible to be a fact, some time or another, in this state of uncertainty and change; however it is right to put ourselves in the case of others in our own imagination, that so it may be considered in the proper point of view, that we may better judge how we should choose to be treated ourselves in such circumstances, and so teach us to do that to others as we would have done to ourselves: *I could heap up words against you;* talk as fast as you to me, and run you down with a great torrent of words; Job had a great fluency, he talked a great deal in his afflicted state, too much as his friends thought, who represent him as dealing in a multitude of words, and as a very talkative man, ch. viii. 2. and xi. 2. and what could he have done, had he his health, and in prosperous circumstances as formerly? he could have brought many charges and accusations against them, as they had against him; or *would I heap up words against you?* or *ought I?* &c. [o]; no, it would not be my duty, nor would I do it; humanity and good sense would never have allowed me to do it; but, on the contrary, *I would have joined* myself *with you,* in a social, free, and familiar manner, in words [p], in a friendly conjunction with you, so the words may be read and paraphrased; I would have come and paid you a visit, and sat down by you, and entered into a kind and compassionate confabulation with you about your case and condition, and done all I could to comfort you; I would have framed and composed (as the word used signifies) a set discourse on purpose; I would have sought out all the acceptable words, and put them together in the best manner I could for you [q]; had I the tongue of the learned, I would have made use of it, to have spoken a word in season to you: *and shake mine head at you;* by way of scorn and derision, that is, he could have done it as well as they; shaking the head is used as a sign of contempt, Psal. xxii. 8. Lam. ii. 15. or *would I,* or *ought I to shake my head at you* [r] if in my case? no, I would not; as I ought not, I would have scorned to have done it; or the sense may be, *I would have shook my head at you,* in a way of pity, bemoaning, lamenting, and condoling your case [s]; see Job xiii. 11. Nah. iii. 7.

Ver. 5. But *I would strengthen you with my mouth,* &c.] Comfort them with the words of his mouth; so

[k] לדברי רוח verbis venti, Beza, Bolducius, Mercerus, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[l] מה ימריצך quid exacerbat te, Junius & Tremellius; so Codurcus, Schultens.

[m] ככם אדברה sicut vos loqui deberem? Schmidt.

[n] Etiam ego ut vos loquerer? Cocceius; so Broughton.

[o] אחבירה עליכם במלים nectere deberem nexus contra vos verbis? Schmidt.

[p] Adjungerem me super vos in sermonibus, Montanus, Bolducius; so Vatablus, Cocceius.

[q] Vobis enim aptum sermonem accommodarem, Tigurine version; so Codurcus.

[r] אניעה־ראשי & caput meum quassarem super vobis, Cocceius; movere deberem super vos caput meum? Schmidt.

[s] So Tigurine version and Bar Tzemach, κινησας ρα καρη, Hom. Il. 17. v. 200.

God strengthens his people with strength in their souls, when he answers them with good and comfortable words; an angel strengthened Christ as man when in an agony, comforting him, suggesting comfortable things to him; so one saint may strengthen and comfort another when in distress, whether of soul or body; see Psal. cxxxviii. 3. Luke xxii. 43, 32. and thus Job had strengthened and comforted others, with his words in former times, as Eliphaz himself owns, ch. iv. 3, 4. and so he would again, were there a change in his circumstances, and objects presented: *and the moving of my lips should asswage your grief*: words uttered by him, which are done by the moving of the lips, should be such as would have a tendency to allay grief, to stop, restrain, forbid, and lessen sorrow; at least that it might not break out in an extravagant way, and exceed bounds, and that his friends might not be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

Ver. 6. *Though I speak, my grief is not assuaged*, &c.] Though he spoke to God in prayer, and entreated for some abatement of his sorrows, he got no relief; and though he spoke to himself in soliloquies, his sorrow was not repressed nor lessened; he could not administer comfort to himself in the present case, though he might to others in like circumstances, if his own were changed; and though *I forbear* speaking, hold my peace, and say nothing, *what am I eased?* or *what goes from me*[t]? not any thing of my trouble or grief: sometimes a man speaking of his troubles to his friends gives vent to his grief, and he is somewhat eased; and on the other hand being silent about it, he forgets it, and it goes off; but in neither of those ways could Job be released: or it may be his sense is, that when he spake of his affliction, and attempted to vindicate his character, he was represented as an impatient and passionate man, if not as blasphemous, so that his grief was rather increased than assuaged; and if he was silent, that was interpreted a consciousness of his guilt; so that, let him take what course he would, 'twas much the same, he could get no ease nor comfort.

Ver. 7. *But now he hath made me weary*, &c.] Or *it hath made me weary*[u], that is, *my grief*, as it may be supplied from the former verse; or rather God, as appears from the next clause, and from the following verse, where he is manifestly addressed; who by afflicting him had made him weary of the world, and all things in it, even of his very life, ch. x. 1. his afflictions were so heavy upon him, and pressed him so hard, that his life was a burden to him; they were heavier than the sand of the sea, and his strength was not equal to them; he could scarcely drag along, was ready to sink and lie down under the weight of them: *thou hast made desolate all my company*, or *congregation*[w]; the congregation of saints that met at his house for religious worship, as some think, which now through his affliction was broke up, whom Eliphaz had called a congregation of hypocrites, ch. xv. 34. which passage Job may have respect unto; or rather his family, his children, which were taken away from him: the Jews say[x], ten persons in any place make a congregation; this was just the number of Job's children, seven sons and three daughters; or it may be he may have respect to his friends, that came to visit him, who were moved and stupefied as it were at the sight of him and his afflictions, as the word[y] is by some translated, and who were alienated from him; were not friendly to him, nor administered to him any comfort; so that they were as if he had none, or worse.

Ver. 8. *And thou hast filled me with wrinkles*, &c.] Not through old age, but through affliction, which had sunk his flesh, and made furrows in him, so that he looked older than he was, and was made old thereby before his time; see Lam. iii. 4. for this is to be understood of his body, for as for his soul, that through the grace of God, and righteousness of Christ, was without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: *which is a witness against me*; as it was improved by his friends, who represented his afflictions as proofs and testimonies of his being a bad man; though these wrinkles were witnesses for him, as it may be as well supplied, that he really was an afflicted man: *and my leanness rising up in me*; his bones standing up, and standing out, and having scarce any thing on them but skin, the flesh being gone: *beareth witness to my face*; openly, manifestly, to full conviction; not that he was a sinful man, but an afflicted man; Eliphaz had no reason to talk to Job of a wicked man's face being covered with fatness, and of collops of fat on his flanks, ch. xv. 27.

Ver. 9. *He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me*, &c.] By whom is meant not Satan, as Jarchi, though he is an enemy to, and an hater of mankind, especially of good men; nor Eliphaz, as others, who had fallen upon Job with a great deal of wrath and fury, tearing his character in pieces, which Job attributed to his hatred of him; but it rather appears from the context that God himself is intended, of whom Job had now a mistaken notion and apprehension; taking him for his enemy, being treated by him, as he thought, as if he had an aversion to him, and an hatred of him; whereas God hates none of his creatures, being his offspring, and the objects of his tender care, and providential regard: indeed sin is hateful to him, and makes men odious in his sight, and he hates all the workers of iniquity, and those whom he passed by, when he chose others; though they are said to be hated by him as Esau was, yet not with a positive but a negative hatred; that is, are not loved by him; and considered as profane and ungodly persons, and as such foreordained to condemnation; for sin may be said to be hated, but good men never are; God's chosen ones, his children and special people, are the objects of his everlasting love; and though he may be angry with them, and shew a little seeming wrath towards them, yet never hates them; hatred and love are as opposite as any two things can possibly be; and indeed, strictly and properly speaking, there is no wrath nor fury in God towards his people; though they deserve it, they are not appointed to it, but are delivered from it by Christ; and neither that nor any of the effects of it

[t] מה מני יהלך quid a me abit, Junius & Tremellius, Schultens.
[u] Dolor meus, V. L. so Aben Ezra & Cocceius.
[w] עדתי meam congregationem, Pagninus; conventum meum, Montanus, Boldurius.
[x] Vid. Drusium in loc.
[y] Stupefe isti, Tigurine version; so Jarchi.

shall ever light on them; but Job concluded this from the providence he was under, in which God appeared terrible to him, like a lion or any such fierce and furious creature, to which he is sometimes compared, and compares himself, which seizes on its prey, and tears and rends it to pieces; Isa. xxxviii. 13. Hos. v. 14. thus God permitted Job's substance to be taken from him by the Chaldeans and Sabeans; his children by death, which was like tearing off his limbs; and his skin and his flesh to be rent and broken by boils and ulcers: Job was a type of Christ in his sorrows and sufferings; and though he was not now in the best frame of mind, the flesh prevailed, and corruptions worked, and he expressed himself in an unguarded manner, yet perhaps we shall not find, in any part of this book, things expressed, and the language in which they are expressed, more similar and to be accommodated to the case, and sorrows, and sufferings of Christ, than in this context; for though he was the son of God's love, his dear and well-beloved son, yet as he was the surety of his people, and bore and suffered punishment in their stead, justice behaved towards him as though there was a resentment unto him, and an aversion of him; yea, he says, *thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine Anointed* or *Messiah*, Psal. lxxxix. 38. and indeed he did bear the wrath of God, the vengeance of justice or curse of the righteous law; and was suffered to be torn in every sense, his temples with a crown of thorns, his cheeks by those that plucked off the hair, his hands and feet by the nails driven in them, and his side by the spear; and his life was torn, snatched, and taken away from him in a violent manner: *he gnasheth upon me with his teeth;* as men do when they are full of wrath and fury: this is one way of shewing it, as the enemies of David, a type of Christ, and the slayers of Stephen, his proto-martyr, did, Psal. xxxv. 16. Acts vii. 34. and as beasts of prey, such as the lion, wolf, &c. do: *mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me;* the Targum adds, as a razor. Here again Job considers God as his enemy, though he was not, misinterpreting his dealings with him; he represents him as looking out sharp after him, inspecting narrowly into all his ways, and works, and actions, strictly observing his failings and infirmities, calling him to an account, and afflicting him for them, and dealing rigidly and severely with him for any small offence: his eyes seemed to him to be like flames of fire, to sparkle with wrath and revenge; his face, as he imagined, was set against him, and his eyes upon him to destroy him; and thus the eye of vindictive justice was upon Christ his antitype, when he was made sin and a curse for his people, and the sword of justice was awaked against him, and thrust in him.

Ver. 10. *They have gaped upon me with their mouth, &c.*] Here Job speaks of the instruments which God suffered to use him ill; and he has respect to his friends who came with open mouth against him, loading him with calumnies and reproaches, laying charges to him he was not conscious of, and treating him with scorn and contempt, which such a gesture is sometimes a token of, Lam. iii. 46. and ii. 15. and in which manner also Christ was used by men, on whom the reproach of them that reproached God and his people fell, and who exhibited false charges against him of various sorts; and he was the reproach of men and the contempt of the people, who laughed him to scorn, opened their mouths in derision; they shot out the lip and shook the head, and mocked and scoffed at him; yea, *they gaped upon him with their mouth as a ravening and a roaring lion*, Psal. xxii. 6—7—13; to which the allusion is here, when they cried out themselves and called upon others to join them, saying, Crucify him, crucify him: *they have smitten me on the cheek reproachfully;* to be smitten on the cheek is a reproach itself, and is a suffering not very patiently endured. Hence Christ, to teach his followers patience, advised when they were smitten on the one cheek to turn the other, that is, to take the blow patiently; and it is not the smart of the stroke that is so much regarded as the shame of it, the affront given, and the indignity offered; see 2 Cor. xi. 20, 21. Matt. v. 39. so that the phrase may be taken for reproaching him; and indeed it may be rendered, *they have smitten on the cheek with reproach*[a]; they reproached him, which was the same as if they had smitten him on the cheek; they smote him with their tongues, as Jeremiah's enemies smote him; they threw the dirt of scandal and calumny at him, and which is the common lot of God's people; and though since they are reproached for Christ's sake, for the Gospel's sake, and for righteousness-sake, they should not be disturbed at that; but rather reckon themselves happy, as they are said to be, and bind these reproaches about their necks as chains of gold, and esteem them greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. This was literally true of Job's antitype, the Messiah, for as it was foretold of him that he should give his cheek to those that plucked off the hair, and they should smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon his cheek, Isa. l. 6. Mic. v. i. so this was done unto him by the servants of the high-priest in his hall, and by others, Matt. xxvi. 67. John xviii. 22. *they have gathered themselves together against me;* Job's friends got together in order to visit him and comfort him, but it proved otherwise, and he viewed it in no other light than as a combination against him: the words may be rendered, *they filled themselves against me*[b]; their hearts with wrath and anger, as the Targum; their mouths with reproaches and calumnies, and their eyes with pleasure and delight, and satisfaction at his miseries and afflictions; and so the Vulgate Latin version, "they are satiated "with my punishments;" though rather this may respect the high spirits they were in, the boldness and even impudence, as Job interpreted it, they shewed in their conduct towards him, their hearts being swelled with pride and haughtiness and passion[c]; see Esther vii. 5. Acts v. 3. or else their numbers that came against him; so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *they came by full troops upon me;* Job's three friends, being great personages, very probably brought a large retinue and train of servants with them; who,

[a] בחרפה cum opprobrio, Beza, Vatablus, Drusius; so Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens; with reproaches, Broughton.

[b] יתמלאון implererunt sese, De Dieu.

[c] Vid. De Dieu in loc.

observing their master's conduct, behaved in an indecent manner towards him themselves, to whom he may have respect, ch. xxx. 1. this was verified in Christ his antitype, whom Judas, with a multitude of men, with swords and staves, even with a band of soldiers, came to apprehend in the garden; and when Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel, were gathered against him to do what God had determined should be done, Matt. xxvi. 46. John xviii. 3. Acts iv. 27, 28.

Ver. 11. *God hath delivered me up to the ungodly,* &c.] The evil or wicked one, for it is in the singular number; and designs either Satan, into whose hands God had not only delivered his substance, but his person, excepting his life; though it may be, and which is an objection to this sense, Job as yet knew it not; or else Eliphaz, or, the singular number being put for the plural, as the next clause explains it, all his friends, whom he in turn calls evil and wicked men, because of their treatment of him; or else the Sabeans and Chaldeans are intended, who were suffered to plunder him of his substance; the words are very applicable to Christ, who was delivered to the Gentiles, and into the hands of sinners and wicked men, and that by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, who with wicked hands took him, and crucified him, Matt. xx. 19. and xxvi. 45. Acts ii. 23. or God *shut* him *up*, or *delivered* him *bound*[d], as the word signifies; which was literally true of Christ, who was bound by the Jews, and delivered first to the high-priest, and then to the Roman governor, in such circumstances, John xviii. 12, 13. Matt. xxvii. 2. *and turned me over into the hands of the wicked;* signifying the same as before, unless it should be rendered, *and caused me to decline, or come down by the hands of the wicked*[e]; that is, from his former state of prosperity and happiness, into the low circumstances in which he was, and which he was brought into by the means of wicked men, God suffering it so to be.

Ver. 12. *I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder,* &c.] He was in easy and affluent circumstances, abounding with the good things of this life, lay in his nest, as his expression is, ch. xxix. 18. quietly and peaceably, where he expected he should have died; and he was easy in his mind, had peace of conscience, being a good man that feared God, and trusted in his living Redeemer, enjoying the presence of God, the light of his countenance, and the discoveries of his love, see ch. xxxix. 2, 3, 4, 5. but now he was broken to pieces, he was stripped of his worldly substance; his family was broken up, and not a child left him; his body was broken, and full of ruptures through boils and ulcers; and his spirits were broken with his afflictions, and a sense of divine displeasure; the arrows of God's wrath, in his apprehension, stuck in him, and the poison thereof drank up his spirits. Mr. Broughton renders it, *I was wealthy,* and *he hath undone me;* though once so opulent, he was now broken, and become a bankrupt. It may be applied to Christ, his antitype, who, though rich, became poor to make his people rich, 2 Cor. viii. 9. and whose body was broken for them; and he was wounded and bruised for their transgressions, and whose heart was broken with reproach: *he hath also taken me by the neck, and shaken me to pieces;* as a combatant in wrestling, who is stronger than his antagonist, uses him; or as a giant, who takes a dwarf by his neck or collar, and shakes him, as if he would shake him to pieces, limb from limb; or *hath dashed* or *broken me to pieces*[f]; or to shivers; as glass or earthen vessels dashed against a wall, or struck with a hammer, fly into a thousand pieces, can never be put together again; so Job reckoned of his state and condition as irrecoverable, that his health, his substance, his family, could never be restored as they had been: *and set me up for his mark;* to shoot at, of which he complains ch. vii. 20. a like expression is used by the church in Lam. iii. 12, 13. and a phrase similar to this is used of Christ, Luke ii. 34. and in consequence of this are what follow.

Ver. 13. *His archers compass me round about,* &c.] Satan and his principalities and powers casting their fiery darts at him; or rather his friends shooting their arrows, even bitter words, reproaches, and calumnies; or the various diseases of his body, his boils and ulcers, which were so many arrows shot into him, in every part of him all around, and gave him exquisite pain and anguish; besides the arrows of the Almighty, or that painful sensation he had of the wrath of God. This also is true of Christ, the antitype of Job and of Joseph; of the latter of which it is said, *the archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him, but his bow abode in strength,* Gen. xlix. 23, 24. so Satan and his ministers threw their fiery darts at Christ when on the cross, and the scribes and priests, his emissaries, surrounded him there, and shot out their reproachful and blaphemous words at him, and the justice of God smote him, and the law of God cast its curses on him. Gussetius renders the words, *his great ones*[g]; and such Job's friends were, men of great substance, and lived in great credit and honour; some have supposed them to be kings, and such were those that opposed Christ, and distressed him, the rulers of the people, civil and ecclesiastic: *he cleaveth my reins asunder;* by causing his arrows to enter into them, Lam. iii. 13. the consequence of which must be death; a man cannot live, at least long, after this is his case; though some think this is to be understood of the disorder of the stone in his reins or kidneys, which was very distressing to him: *and doth not spare;* shews no mercy or pity, though in such sad circumstances and dreadful agonies; thus God spared not his own son, Rom. viii. 32. *he poureth out my gall upon the ground;* which is done by piercing the gall-bladder with the sword, or any such instrument, see ch. xx. 25. which must issue in death; and the design of both these clauses is to shew, that Job looked upon his case irretrievable, and he here makes use of hyperbolical expressions to set it forth by.

Ver. 14. *He breaketh me with breach upon breach,* &c.] Upon his substance, his family, and the health of his body, which came thick and fast, one after an-

[d] יסגירני vinctum me tradidit, Grotius, Michaelis, Schultens.
[e] ירטני divertere fecit a vita, Pagninus; declinare me facit, Beza, Drusius, Mercerus.

[f] ויפצפצני confregit me, V. L. Pagninus; minutatim confregit me, Tigurine version; so Schultens, Jarchi, & Ben Gersom.
[g] Ejus magnates, Comment. Ebr. p. 772. רביו ejus magni, Montanus.

other; referring to the report of those things brought by one messenger upon the back of another, see Ezek. vii. 26. *he runneth upon me like a giant;* with great fury and fierceness, with great strength and courage, with great speed and swiftness, causing great terror and distress; he not being able to resist him, any more than a dwarf a giant, and no more, nor so much, a match for him; see Isa. xlii. 13.

Ver. 15. *I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin,* &c.] Which he very probably put on when he rent his mantle, or sat in ashes; which actions were usually performed together in times of distress and sorrow, see Gen. xxxvii. 34. and this was no doubt a voluntary action of his, like that of the king of Nineveh and his subjects, though some have thought that Job was so reduced that he had no clothes to wear, and was obliged to put on such coarse raiment, which is not probable; and it seems that he put this next to his skin, which must be very uneasy to one that had been used to such soft apparel, as it seems did also the kings of Israel in time of mourning, 1 Kings xxi. 27. 2 Kings vi. 30. it is not only observed by several Jewish writers, that the word here used in the Arabic language signifies skin, as we render it, as Aben Ezra, Ben Melech, and others; but the skin of the wound, the thin skin which is drawn over a wound when it is healing, as Ben Gersom and Bar Tzemach; which, being tender, must be very unfit to bear such rough raiment upon it; nay, Schultens observes, that the Arabic word more properly signifies *torn skin*[k], as Job's skin must be full of ruptures through the boils and ulcers upon him; he himself says, that his *skin* was *broken, and become loathsome,* ch. vii. 5. now to have sackcloth put on such a skin must be intolerable; the phrase of *sewing* it to it is very unusual; though it may signify no more than an application of it, a putting it on him, and clothing himself with it; yet it seems to denote its sticking close to him, as if it was sewed to his skin, through the purulent matter of his boils clotting and cleaving to it; for he says in the above place that his *flesh* was *clothed with worms and clods of dust;* and those running into one another were like one scab, and, as it were, a garment to him; his *disease bound* him *about as the collar of his coat,* and his *skin* was as *black* as sackcloth itself, ch. xxx. 18—30. the design of the expression is both to shew the wretched and miserable condition he was in, and his great humiliation on account of his present circumstances; and that he was not that proud and haughty man, or behaved under his affliction in the insolent manner Eliphaz had suggested, ch. xv. 12, 13, 25, 26. but was one that humbled himself under the mighty hand of God, which is further confirmed by the next clause: *and defiled my horn in the dust;* as he did when he sat in ashes, as he afterwards repented in dust and ashes; and it was usual in the times of mourning to put dust or ashes upon the head; which may be meant by his horn, the horn of a beast, to which the allusion is, being in the head; and this may be put for the whole body, which sometimes, on such occasions, was rolled in dust and ashes, see Josh. vii. 6. Mic. i. 10. and the horn being an emblem of grandeur, power, and authority, may denote that Job now laid aside all the ensigns of it, and was content to have his honour laid in the dust, and lie low before God, and not lift up his horn unto him, and much less stretch out his hand against him; the Targum is, "I sprinkled my glory in or with dust."

Ver. 16. *My face is foul with weeping,* &c.] On account of the loss of his substance, and especially of his children; at the unkindness of his friends, and over his own corruptions, which he felt working in him, and breaking forth in unbecoming language; and because of the hidings of the face of God from him: the word used in the Arabic language[l] has the signification of redness in it, as Aben Ezra and others observe; of red wine, and, as Schultens adds, of the fermentation of it; and is fitly used to express a man's face in excessive weeping, which looks red, and swelled, and blubbered: *and on my eyelids is the shadow of death;* which were become dim through weeping, so that he could scarcely see out of them, and, like a dying man, could hardly lift them up; and such was his sorrowful condition, that he never expected deliverance from it, but that it would issue in death; and which he supposed was very near, and that he had many symptoms of it, of which the decay of his eyesight was one; and he was so far from winking with his eyes in a wanton and ludicrous way, as Eliphaz had hinted, ch. xv. 12. that there was such a dead weight upon them, even the shadow of death itself, that he was not able to lift them up.

Ver. 17. *Not for* any *injustice in my hands,* &c.] Came all those afflictions and calamities upon him, which occasioned so much sorrow, weeping, mourning, and humiliation; he does not say there was no sin in him, not any in his heart, nor in his life, nor any iniquity done by him, he had acknowledged these things before, ch. vii. 20. and ix. 20. 30, 31. but that there was nothing in his hands gotten in an unjust manner; he had taken away no man's property, nor injured him in the least in a private way; nor had he perverted justice as a public magistrate, by taking bribes or accepting persons, and could challenge any to prove he had, as Samuel did, 1 Sam. xii. 3. *also my prayer is pure;* he prayed, which disproves the calumny of Eliphaz, ch. xv. 4. and his prayer was pure too; not that it was free from failings and infirmities, which attend the best, but from hypocrisy and deceit; it came not out of feigned lips, but was put up in sincerity and truth; it sprang from an heart purified by the grace of God, and sprinkled from an evil conscience; it was put up in the faith of Christ, and as a pure offering through him; Job lifted up pure and holy hands, and with these a pure and holy heart, and for pure and holy things; so that it was not for want of doing justice to men, nor for want of devotion towards God, that he was thus afflicted by him; compare with this what is said of his antitype, Isa. liii. 9.

Ver. 18. *O earth, cover not thou my blood,* &c.] This is an imprecation, wishing that if he had been

[k] עלי גלדי super laceram cutem, Schultens; cutis casque laesa & ulceribus percussa, Stockius, p. 188. גלד cutim percussit, Hottinger. Smegma Orient. p. 135. Stockius, ib.

[l] חמרמרה intumuit, V. L. Tigurine version; fermentescit, Schultens.

guilty of any capital crime, of such acts of injustice that he ought to be punished by the judge, and even to die for them, that his blood when spilt might not be received into the earth, but be licked up by dogs, or that he might have no burial or interment in the earth; and if he had committed such sins as might come under the name of blood, either the shedding of innocent blood, though that is so gross a crime that it can hardly be thought that Job's friends even suspected this of him; or rather other foul sins, as injustice and oppression of the poor; the Tigurine version is, *my capital sins*, see Isa. i. 15, 18. then he wishes they might never be covered and concealed, but disclosed and spread abroad everywhere, that all might know them, and he suffer shame for them; even as the earth discloses the blood of the slain, when inquisition is made for it, Isa. xxvi. 21. *and let my cry have no place:* meaning if he was the wicked man and the hypocrite he was said to be, or if his prayer was not pure, sincere, and upright, as he said it was, then he desired that when he cried to God, or to man, in his distress, he might be regarded by neither; that his cry might not enter into the ears of the Lord of hosts, but that it might be shut out, and he cover himself with a cloud, that it might not pass through, and have any place with him; and that he might not meet with any pity and compassion from the heart, nor help and relief from the hand of any man.

Ver. 19. *Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, &c.*] That is, God, who dwells in the heavens, where his throne is, and which is the habitation of his holiness, and from whence he beholds all the sons of men, and their actions, is the all-seeing and all-knowing Being; and therefore Job appeals to him as his witness, if he was guilty of the things laid to his charge, to bear witness against him, but if not to be a witness for him, which he believed he would, and desired he might: *for my record is on high:* or *my testimony:* that can testify for me; who is an *eye-witness*[k], as some render it, before whom all things are naked and open; who has seen all my actions, even the very inmost recesses of my mind, all the thoughts of my heart, and all the principles of my actions, and him I desire to bear record of me; such appeals are lawful in some cases, which ought not to be common and trivial ones, but of moment and importance, and which cannot well be determined in any other way; such as was the charge of hypocrisy against Job, and suspicions of his having been guilty of some notorious crime, though it could not be pointed at and proved; see 1 Sam. xii. 3, 4. 2 Cor. i. 13. Phil. i. 8.

Ver. 20. *My friends scorn me, &c.*] Not that they scoffed at his afflictions and calamities, and at his diseases and disorders, that would have been very brutish and inhuman, but at his words, the arguments and reasons he made use of to defend himself with, see ch. xii. 4. but *mine eye poureth out* tears *unto God:* in great plenty, because of his very great sorrows and distresses, both inward and outward; and it was his mercy, that when his friends slighted and neglected him, yea, bore hard upon him, and mocked at him, that he had a God to go to, and pour out not only his tears, but all his complaints, and even his very soul unto him, from whom he might hope for relief; and what he said, when he did this, is as follows.

Ver. 21. *Oh that one might plead for a man with God, &c.*] That is, that one might be appointed and allowed to plead with God on his account; or that he be admitted to plead with God for himself; or however, that there might be a hearing of his case before God, and that he would decide the thing in controversy between him and his friends, when he doubted not but it would be given on his side: *as a man pleadeth for his neighbour;* using great freedom, and powerful arguments, and having no dread of the judge, nor fear of carrying the cause for his neighbour; so Job wishes, that either one for him, or he himself, might be freed from the dread of the divine Majesty, and might be suffered to speak as freely to his case as a counsellor at the bar does for his client. The words will admit of a more evangelic sense by observing that God, to whom Job says his eye poured out tears, at the close of the preceding verse, is to be understood of the second Person in the Godhead, Jehovah, the Son of God, the Messiah; and then read these words that follow thus, *and he will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend;* which last clause perhaps may be better rendered, *even the Son of man,* &c. and so they are expressive of Job's faith, that though his friends despised him, yet he to whom he poured out his tears, and committed his case, would plead his cause with God for him, and thoroughly plead it, when he should be acquitted. The appellation, *the Son of man*, is a well-known name for the Messiah in the New Testament, and is not altogether unknown in the Old, see Psal. lxxx. 17. and one part of his work and office is to be an advocate with the Father for his friends, whom he makes, reckons, and uses as such, even all the Father has given him, and he has redeemed by his blood; for these he pleads his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, to the satisfaction of the law, and justice of God, and against Satan, and all enemies whatever, and for every blessing they want; and for which work he is abundantly fit, because of the dignity of his person, his nearness to God his Father, and the interest he has in him. Gussetius[l] goes this way, and observes that this sense has not been taken notice of by interpreters, which he seems to wonder at; whereas our English annotator on the place had it long ago, and Mr. Caryll after him, though disapproved of by some modern interpreters.

Ver. 22. *When a few years are come, &c.*] As the years of man's life are but few at most, and Job's years, which were yet to come, still fewer in his apprehension; or *years of number*[m], that are numbered by God, fixed and determined by him, ch. xiv. 5. or being few are easily numbered: *then I shall go the way* whence *I shall not return:* that is, go the way of all flesh; a long journey; death itself is meant, which is a going out of this world into another, from whence there is no return to this again, to the same place, condition, circumstances, estate, and employment as now; other-

[k] שהדי oculatus meus testis, Schultens.
[l] Ebr. Comment. p. 320, 321.

[m] שנות מספר anni numeri, Montanus, Vatablus, Beldncius; numbered days, Broughton; so Tigurine version.

wise there will be a resurrection from the dead, the bodies will rise out of the earth, and souls will be brought again to be united with them, but not to be in the same situation here as now: this Job observes either as a kind of solace to him under all his afflictions on himself, and from his friends, that in a little time it would be all over with him; or as an argument to hasten the pleading of his cause, that his innocence might be cleared before he died; and if this was not done quickly, it would be too late.

CHAP. XVII.

IN this chapter Job not only enlarges upon the reason given in the preceding chapter, why he was desirous of an advocate with God, and one to plead his cause with him for him, ver. 1. but adds other reasons taken from the usage of his friends, from the impossibility of any but a divine Person being his surety; and of any one being provided and appointed as such but by God himself; from the insufficiency of his friends to judge of his cause, and from the condition and circumstances he was in, ver. 2—7. then he takes notice of the effects his present case would have on good men, that though they might be astonished at it, they would be filled with indignation against hypocrites, and would not be moved and stumbled by his afflictions to apostatize from and desert the good ways of God, ver. 8, 9. after which he addresses his friends, and either calls upon them to renew the dispute with him, or repent of their notions, and join with him in his sentiments, ver. 10. and lastly describes his state and circumstances, according to his apprehension of things, observing the shortness of his life, and the darkness of the dispensation he was under, through one thing and another, ver. 11, 12. that he had nothing but the grave in view, which, and its attendants, he had made very familiar with him, ver. 13, 14. and that he had no hope of restoration to a better condition, as to his outward circumstances, and that he, and his hopes his friends would have him entertain, and they also, would go down together to the grave, and there should lie in the dust, and rest together till the morning of the resurrection, ver. 15, 16.

Ver. 1. *My breath is corrupt,* &c.] Through the force of his disease, which made it have an ill smell, so that it was strange and disagreeable to his wife, ch. xix. 17. passing through his lungs, or other parts, which were affected with some disorder, or as frequently is the case of dying persons, and so Job thought himself to be. The word [*] used has the signification of pain, even of the pains of a woman in travail; and so may signify, that Job drew his breath with great pain, as people troubled with an asthma do, or dying persons in the hiccups, or just fetching their last breath; or *my spirit* [*], as it may be rendered, that is, his vital spirits which were exhausted and spent, there were scarce any left in him; or *my mind* [*], or soul, which was overwhelmed with grief, and so disturbed, that he was not himself, but in a manner distracted with the terrors of God, and the severity of his hand upon him: *my days are extinct:* here Job corrects himself: he had spoken of a few years before, but it is as if he should say now, why do I talk of a few years, when I have but a few days to live, and even those are as good as gone? meaning not only his days of prosperity, which were at an entire end, as he thought, but the days of his natural life; the lamp of life was almost burnt out, the oil was spent, the wick was just extinguished, it was like the snuff of a candle going out: *the graves* are ready *for me;* the place of his fathers' sepulchres, the burial-place of his ancestors, where many graves were; or he may have respect to various things into which the dead are put, as into so many graves; as besides their being rolled up in linen, as was the way of the eastern countries, there was the coffin, a sort of a grave, and which sometimes was made of stone; and then the place dug in the earth, more properly called the grave, and often over that a sepulchral monument was erected; so that there was grave upon grave. Job does not seem to have any respect to the usage of kings, and great personages, preparing stately monuments for themselves whilst living, such as the pyramids of Egypt, built by and for their kings, as is supposed; for the words *are ready* are not in the text, only supplied, though they are also by the Targum; they are very short and significant in the original text, *the graves for me,* or they are mine; the grave is my property, my house, where I expect shortly to be, and there to abide and dwell until the resurrection, and which was desirable to him; *a grave to me;* that is all that I desire, or can expect; here he wished to be, as he did not doubt he quickly should be; and it is as if he should say, I am ready for that, and so Jarchi paraphrases it; and happy is the man that is ready for the grave, for death, and eternity, for the coming of his Lord, having the grace of God wrought in him, and the righteousness of his living Redeemer on him, which was Job's case; such an one shall go into the nuptial chamber at once, and be received into everlasting habitations.

Ver. 2. Are there *not mockers with me?* &c.] Meaning not irreligious persons, such as make a mock at sin, a jest of religion, a laugh at good men, sneer at the doctrines and ordinances of God, and scoff at things future, as the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and a future judgment; with whom it is very uncomfortable to be, as well as with any sort of profane men, and such there were no doubt in Job's time; but he seems to design his friends, by whom he thought himself mocked, and who were, as he imagined, scorners of him, ch. xii. 4. and xvi. 20. and therefore for this reason entreats his case might be heard, and his cause pleaded: *and doth not mine eye continue in their provocation? or lodge all*

[*] Pineda.

[*] רוחי spiritus meus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, &c.

[*] Anima mea, Piscator, Schmidt.

night[s]; his sense is, that they were continually provoking him with their words, their scoffs and jeers, their censures and calumnies, and the weak reasons and arguments they made use of to support their charges and suspicions; these dwelt upon his mind not only in the daytime, but in the night, so that he could not get a wink of sleep for them; their words were so teasing and distressing, and they acted such a cruel part to him, and stuck so close to him, and hung upon his thoughts, that he could not get clear of them in the night-season; but his mind ran upon them, which kept him waking, that he could not close his eyelids for thinking of them.

Ver. 3. *Lay down now*, &c.] A pledge that thou wilt provide a surety, appoint and admit one to plead for me, and that thou wilt hear my cause, and determine it; or *put now*, or *put, I pray thee*[t], thy heart and mind to me and my case, to my petition and request, and grant it: *put me in a surety with thee*: appoint, provide, and place a surety for me with thee, and let him appear to do his work and office: such an one Jesus Christ is; he is of God the Father's appointing to be the Mediator between God and men, and who himself voluntarily engaged and agreed to be the surety of the better testament; and this was known to the Old-Testament saints, and to Job; and his prayer was the prayer of faith: and this work and office Christ performs; he was surety for his people from eternity, he drew nigh to God on their account, and struck hands with his father, or covenanted and agreed with him about the salvation of his people, and the manner of it; he gave his word, his bond, to his father for them, that he would save them; and upon that suretyship-engagement of Christ all the Old-Testament saints were pardoned, justified, and glorified; he promised and bound himself to pay all their debts, to satisfy for all their sins, to bring in an everlasting righteousness for them, and to bring them all safe to heaven and happiness; in order to which, he put himself in their room and stead, and laid down his life a ransom for them; upon which Job might say, and so may every believer, what follows, *who* is *he* that *will strike hands with me?* that will enter the lists, litigate and dispute the point with me, or bring any charge or accusation against me, having such a surety to answer for me, such an advocate to plead my cause, such a Mediator between God and man, who has made reconciliation for sin, brought in everlasting righteousness, and satisfied law and justice, see Rom. viii. 33, 34. or else the sense is, *who is he*, besides him that is a surety of God's appointing and providing, *can strike hands with me?* or be a surety for me? there is no other Mediator, Saviour, or Redeemer, besides him; if he had not undertaken the cause of his people, and the redemption of them, it must have ceased for ever, no other was equal to such a work; so that here is another reason used with the Lord to provide a surety, since no other could to any purpose.

Ver. 4. *For thou hast hid their heart from understanding*, &c.] That is, the hearts of his friends, and therefore they were unfit to undertake his cause, or be sureties for him, or be judges in it. It is the same thing as to hide understanding from their hearts, which God sometimes does in a natural sense; when men like not the knowledge of him, as attainable by the light of nature, he gives them up to reprobate minds, minds void of knowledge and judgment in things natural; and sometimes, in a spiritual sense, he hides men's hearts from the knowledge of things divine and evangelical, and even this he does from the wise and prudent of this world; yea, sometimes he hides the knowledge of his providential dealings with men from his own people, as he did from Asaph, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and others; and, as it seems, from Job's friends, who therefore mistook his case, and were very unfit and insufficient to determine it: *therefore shalt thou not exalt* them; to such honour and dignity, to be umpires, arbitrators, or judges in the case of Job; this God had reserved for another, Elihu, or rather himself, who decided the controversy between Job and his friends, and declared in his favour, and that they had not spoken the thing that was right of him, as his servant Job had done, ch. xlii. 7.

Ver. 5. *He that speaketh flattery to* his *friends*, &c.] As Job's friends did to him when they promised great outward prosperity, and a restoration to his former state, and to a greater affluence upon his repentance and reformation; or when they spoke deceitfully for God, pretending great regard to the honour of his justice and holiness, and therefore insisted on it that he must be a wicked man and an hypocrite, that was afflicted by him, as Job was: *even the eyes of his children shall fail*; so hateful are some sins to God, and particularly deceitful tongues, and flattering lips, that he will punish them in their posterity; the eyes of their children shall fail for want of sustenance, and whilst they are looking in vain for salvation and deliverance out of trouble, see Exod. xx. 4.

Ver. 6. *He hath made me also a by-word of the people*, &c.] Either Eliphaz, or God; for whatsoever befell him, whether more immediately by the hand of God, or by any instrument, he ascribes it to him, as being suffered in Providence to befall him; as when he became a by-word or proverb to the people in common, to whom an example might be set by one or more of Job's friends. The name of Job is to this day a by-word or proverb among men, both for his poverty and his patience; if a man is described as very poor, he is said to be as poor as Job; or if very patient under his afflictions, he is said to be as patient as Job: but as neither of these are to the disgrace of Job, something else seems rather intended here, even something to his reproach; as when a man was represented as a very wicked man, or an hypocrite, it used to be said, such an one is as wicked a creature, and as arrant an hypocrite, as Job: *and afore-time I was as a tabret*; the delight of the people, who, when he appeared in the public streets, came out and went before him, singing, and dancing, and beating on tabrets, and such-like musical instruments, to express their joy upon the sight of him; but now it was otherwise with him, and he whom they could not sufficiently

[s] תלן pernoctat, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.

[t] שימה נא pone nunc, Montanus; pone quæso, Pagninus, Piscator, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt; sub. cor tuum, Vatablus.

extol and commend, now knew not well what to say bad enough of him; such a change in the sentiments and conduct of men must needs be very chagrining: or *afore-time I was as a lord*, as Ben Gersom, from the use of the word in Dan. iii. 2. as he supposes; he was like a lord or nobleman, or as one in some high office, and now as the off-scouring of all things; or it denotes what he was *before them*, the people, in their sight at present, and should be: the word used is *Tophet*, which Aben Ezra takes to be the name of a place, and as it seems of that place where children were offered to Molech, and which place was in being, and such practices used by the Canaanites in the times of Job; and this place, which was also called the valley of Hinnom, being afterwards used for hell, led the Targum to paraphrase the words thus, *and hell from within shall I be;* and so Sephorno, in appearance hell to all that see me; and in general it may signify that he was, or should be, avoided, as any unclean place, very ungrateful and disagreeable, as that place was; or as any thing abominable, and to be loathed and rejected, and this way go several interpreters[s]; though some think respect is had to the punishment of tympanization, in which sufferers were beat upon in several parts of their bodies, as if men were beating upon a tabret or drum, which gave great pain and torment, see Heb. xi. 35, 37. and with such-like cruelty and indignity Job suggests he was or should be used; and therefore begs for a surety, for one to interpose and plead on his behalf, let the carriage of men to him be what it will, that is here referred to; compare with this Psal. lxix. 11.

Ver. 7. *Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow*, &c.] Through excessive weeping, and the abundance of tears he shed, so that he had almost lost his eyesight, or however it was greatly weakened and impaired by that means, which is often the case, see Psal. vi. 7. and xxxi. 9. *and all my members are as a shadow;* his flesh was consumed off his bones, there were nothing left scarcely but skin and bone; he was a mere anatomy, and as thin as a lath, as we commonly say of a man that is quite worn away, as it were; is a walking shadow, has scarce any substance in him, but is the mere shadow of a man: the Targum interprets it of his form, splendour, and countenance, which were like a shadow; some interpret it *my thoughts*[t], and understand it of the formations of his mind, and not of his body, which were shadows, empty, fleeting, and having no consistence in them through that sorrow that possessed him.

Ver. 8. *Upright* men *shall be astonished at this*, &c.] Such as were upright in heart, and in their walk and conversation, sincere and honourable in their profession of religion, these would be amazed at the afflictions of Job, and the unkindness of his friends; it is hereby suggested, that it would be then, and in ages to come, a matter of surprise to truly gracious persons, when they should hear of such sore afflictions laid upon so good a man, and be told what censures, calumnies, and reproaches, were cast upon him by his friends; this would be so astonishing, that they would not know how to believe it, and still more at a loss how to account for it, that such things should be permitted in Providence, there being reason to believe the truth of them: *and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite;* that is, such, who though they are not free from sin, yet live holy and harmless lives and conversations among men, so that they are not chargeable with any gross iniquity, or what is scandalous and unbecoming their character; these shall rise up with indignation against such persons as pretend to a great deal of sanctity and devotion, and yet have no charity or love to an afflicted saint, but censure and reproach him, and add affliction to his affliction. Thus Job retorts the charge of hypocrisy his friends brought against him upon them; for he seems tacitly to design them, and delivers these words as a kind of solace to himself; that though he was thus used by them at that time, yet good men in future time would have different apprehensions of him, and rise up and vindicate his name and character.

Ver. 9. *The righteous also shall hold on his way*, &c.] He that is righteous, not in appearance but really, not in a legal but in an evangelic sense; who is justified by the righteousness of Job's living Redeemer, who lives by faith on his righteousness, and in consequence of that in holiness of life and conversation; such an one being in Christ the way of righteousness and salvation, and walking in the paths of faith, holiness, and truth, and in all the tracks of religious worship, private and public, he will persevere therein, and will not on any account depart out of the right way into which he has been led and directed. This is opposed to a going back, as some do, and to a turning to the right hand or the left, as others, and to a standing still, being stumbled, offended, and discouraged; and it supposes a progress, a going forward in the way, so as not to be moved out of it by their own, or the afflictions of others, by the reproaches and persecutions of men, the temptations of Satan, the snares, riches, honours, and pleasures of the world, or through darkness, desertion, and unbelief; they may indeed have many slips and falls, and be almost, but not altogether, out of the way, and never finally or to perdition; which is owing not to their conduct and care, might and strength, but to the power of God, and the supplies of his grace, to Christ and his strength, and to the Spirit and his influence, guidance, and direction: *and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger;* or *add strength*[u]; increase in it. This character is opposed to one of an immoral life and conversation, and describes one that is not guilty of any notorious crime, that does not live in any known sin, but in the general course of his life is upright and sincere, holy, harmless, and inoffensive; such a man as he is already a partaker of spiritual grace and strength, and so, as he wants more, it is given him; his spiritual strength is renewed, he goes from one degree of it to another, and even whilst walking in the way of God he finds an increase of it; yea, that itself is strength unto him; as his day is his strength is, to assist him in religious services, to enable him to resist his ene-

[s] Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.

[t] יצרי cogitationes meæ, Pagninus, Bolducius, Codurcus, so Ben Gersom.

[u] יסיף אמץ addet fortitudinem, Pagninus, Montanus.

mies, and endure afflictions, and continue in the good ways of God.

Ver. 10. *But as for you all, do ye return, and come now,* &c.] This is an address to his three friends, all and every one of them, who he perceived were nettled with his reply, and were either departing, or preparing for a rejoinder; and being conscious of his innocence, and satisfied of the goodness of his cause, and having nothing to fear from them, boldly challenges them to go on with the dispute; for though they were three to one, he was a match for them all; or else he calls upon them to turn and repent of what they had said to him, to relinquish the bad notions and ill opinion they had of him, and to retract their hard speeches and unjust censures, and return to a friendly and amicable conversation; or however, that they would come and sit down quietly, and patiently hear what he had further to say to them for their information and instruction, which they stood in great need of: *for I cannot find one wise man among you:* that took his case right, was capable of judging of it, and speaking pertinently to it, and of administering comfort to him in it; they were physicians, but not skilful ones; comforters, but miserable ones; had not the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season; disputants, but wranglers, and knew not where the pinch of the controversy lay; and their arguments were weak and worthless, and their judgment and sense of things not deserving any regard, see 1 Cor. vi. 5.

Ver. 11. *My days are past,* &c.] *Or passed away,* or *passed over*[w]; not that they passed over the time fixed and appointed by God, for there is no passing the bound settled by him, ch. xiv. 5. but either the common term of man's life was passed with Job, or he speaks of things in his own apprehension; he imagined his death was so near, that he had not a day longer to live; his days, as he before says, were extinct, were at an end, he should never enjoy another day; and therefore it was folly to flatter him with a promise of long life, or encourage him to expect it; which he may mention as a proof of there being not a wise man among them, since they all suggested this in case of repentance; or his meaning is, that his good days, or days of goodness, as Jarchi interprets it, were past; his days of prosperity were at an end, and evil days were come upon him, in which he had no pleasure; nor had he any reason to believe it would be otherwise with him: *my purposes are broken off:* Job doubtless had formed in his mind great designs of good things, natural, civil, and religious, concerning the enlargement of his temporal estate, the settlement of his children in the world, making provision for the poor, supporting and enlarging the interest of true religion, the reformation of his Heathenish neighbours, and the spread of divine truths among them; but now they were all frustrated, he was not in a capacity of carrying them into execution, and was obliged to drop them, and think no more of them, nor was there with him any prospect of ever renewing them; they were *rooted up*[x], or plucked up, as some render the word, so that there was no likelihood of their ever rising up again, and coming to any effect; even *the thoughts of my heart;* or *the possessions*[y] of it, as the thoughts are; they are the things of a man, which especially belong to him; they are the inheritance of his mind, what none have a right unto, and a claim upon, but himself, nor can any know but himself, and to whom he discovers them; now the thread of these is broken off at death, they then cease; not that the mind or soul of man ceases to be, or ceases to be a thinking being, it still thinks; but only its thoughts are not employed about the same things in a future state, or in the state after death, as in this, see Psal. cxlvi. 4.

Ver. 12. *They change the night into day,* &c.] Meaning either his friends, by what they had said unto him, or the thoughts of his heart, which comes to the same sense; these being in the night-season employed about what had been said to him in the day, insomuch that he could get no sleep, the night was as broad day unto him; or they put the day before the night, contrary to the order of nature, as Noldius[z] observes, whereas the night is before the day, Gen. i. 5. his friends promising him long days, and an age clearer than noon-day, as bright as the morning, ch. xi. 17. when the night of death was coming on, and he was hastening to the dark and silent grave: *the light is short because of darkness:* the morning-light, or light of the day, when that comes continues but for a short time, because of the darkness of the evening, which quickly follows; or because of the darkness of affliction, which fills it up, and makes it uncomfortable; or the light of prosperity, could it be enjoyed, is but short, because of the darkness of adversity; or *the light is near*[a], as in the original text; though Jarchi interprets the word *short* as we do; Noldius renders it, *the light is rather nearer than darkness*[b]; after the night has been spent without sleep, the morning-light is nearer than darkness; that may soon be expected, and so an end to sleep and rest.

Ver. 13. *If I wait, the grave is mine house,* &c.] Not that Job put an *if* upon, or made a doubt of waiting upon God in private or public; or of waiting for him, his gracious appearances to him, answers of prayer, performance of promises, and deliverance out of trouble; and especially of waiting his appointed time till his change came, and hoping and expecting eternal life and happiness; all which he determined to do, and did, see ch. xiii. 15, 16. and xiv. 14. and xix. 25, 26, 27. but he says this with respect to the advice of his friends, which should it be taken, the issue of it would be no other than what he here suggests; they had intimated, that if he repented and reformed, he might hope for and expect a peaceable tabernacle, and a prosperous habitation, a fine house, and affluent circumstances, ch. v. 24. and viii. 6. Now, says he, should I listen to this, and endeavour to cherish some hope and expectation of such things, and put myself in a waiting posture for them, alas! how soon would

[w] עברו transierunt, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
[x] נתקו evulsæ sunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator; radicitus evulsæ sunt, Michaelis.
[y] מורשי possessiones, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt; hæreditariæ possessiones, Schultens; so Drusius & Michaelis.
[z] Ebr. Part. Concord. No. 1931.
[a] קרוב propinquam, Pagninus, Montanus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.
[b] Ib. p. 642.

it be over, for what other house can I rationally expect but the grave? and this is what I have concluded upon; I think of no other house than that, which is man's long home, the house appointed for all living; there I shall dwell, and make my abode until the morning of the resurrection, and I look for no other; and if I should, I am well assured I should be disappointed: *I have made my bed in the darkness*; in the dark grave, where the light of the body is extinct, and where the light of the sun comes not; in houses there are divers apartments, some for work and business, as is the shop; others for eating and drinking, as the dining-room; and others for sleep and rest, as the bed-chamber; now in the house of the grave there is no mention of any but the latter; for there is no work and device in the grave, nor eating and drinking there; but it is a bed where the weary saint lies down and rests upon from all his toil and labour, until he awakes at the resurrection: now Job had settled the matter with himself, he had laid it out in his own mind, and taken a kind of pleasure in the prospect of it; that he had got a house to remove into, when he was dislodged from the earthly house of his tabernacle, and where he had made himself, in his own thought, an easy bed, on which he should lay his weary limbs, and take his sleep and rest, until the heavens be no more.

Ver. 14. *I have said to corruption, thou art my father*, &c.] Not to the corruptible seed, of which he was begotten; nor to the corruption or purulent matter of his boils and ulcers, and the worms his flesh was now clothed with, ch. vii. 5. but to that corruption his body would turn to in the grave, lying long enough to see it, which Christ's body did not, Psal. xvi. 10. that is, *to the pit of corruption*[c], as it may be rendered, meaning the grave, so called because in it dead bodies corrupt and putrefy: in houses are families consisting of various persons, of different relations, who dwell together in friendship and harmony, very lovingly and familiarly, as father and mother, brother and sister; so in the grave, the dwelling-house of men, there are inhabitants that dwell together, as if they were familiar friends and acquaintance; and with these Job claims kindred, such as corruption, rottenness, dust and worms, and these he speaks unto, not only very familiarly, but very respectfully; the note of Bar Tzemach is, "I honour the grave as a son "a father, that it may receive me quickly;" yea, he speaks as not ashamed of the relation, but is fond of it: *I called* or *cried*[d], that is, aloud, with great vehemency and affection: *to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister*; these are the rather mentioned, because the relation is near, and they are very loving and tender, and abide in the house, see Prov. vii. 5. he calls these his mother and sister, as the above Jewish commentator observes, because he might lie in their bosom: by all this Job would represent how familiar death and the grave were to him, and how little he dreaded them; yea, how desirable they were to him, since he should be at home, and among his relations and friends.

Ver. 15. *And where is now my hope?* &c.] Not the grace of hope, which was in his heart; and though it might sometimes be low in exercise, it could not be lost; it is an anchor, sure and steadfast, and is one of the graces that always abides, and never disappoints and makes ashamed; nor the object of hope, eternal glory and happiness in another world, that is laid up in heaven, and for which he was looking and waiting by faith; but his hope of outward happiness, and of being restored to his former state of prosperity, or a better, which his friends encouraged him to; this had no place in him, nor did he see any reason to cherish it; all ground and foundation of it was removed, as he apprehended; there was nothing on which he could build such an hope as that, see ch. vi. 11. and xix. 10. as for *my hope, who shall see it?* that is, which his friends would have him hope for, a fine house, a large estate, a numerous family, honour and respect among men, long life, and an abundance of outward peace and happiness; this he was firmly persuaded he should never see, being just going into the grave, nor his friends that suggested these things to him, nor any body else; though indeed what he himself truly hoped for might be rightly thus described, being things not seen by the eye of the body, nor by carnal sense and reason, but are the invisible glories and realities of another world, for *hope that is seen is not hope*, &c. Rom. viii. 24, 25. 2 Cor. iv. 18. Heb. xi. 1. but Job does not design these, but the former.

Ver. 16. *They shall go down to the bars of the pit*, &c.] He himself, and his friends, and the hopes they would have him entertain; these should all go down together to the grave, and there lie barred and locked up; these hopes, so as never to rise more, and the bodies of himself, and his friends, till loosed by him who has the keys of hell and death: or *the bars shall go down to the grave*; the members of his body, as Jarchi, which are the bars of it, as some in Bar Tzemach; the strength and support of it, as particularly the bones, these shall go down to the grave, and there turn to rottenness and dust; and therefore, as if he should say, as he elsewhere does, *what is my strength, that I should hope?* ch. vi. 11. *when our rest together is in the dust*; which is man's original, and to which he returns, and in which the dead lie and sleep until the resurrection; and where they are at rest from all adversity and affliction of body, mind, and estate; from all the troubles and vexations occasioned by wicked men, and from all disputes, wranglings, contentions, and animosities among friends, which would be the case of Job, and his friends, when their heads were laid in the dust, and which he supposed would quickly be; and therefore it was in vain for them to feed him with hopes of outward happiness, and for him to entertain them; it best became them both to think of death and the grave as near at hand, where their controversies would be buried, and they would be good friends, and lie quietly together, and take their rest until they should awake and rise to everlasting life.

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[c] לשחת foveam, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Drusius, &c.

[d] קראתי vocavi, Montanus; clamavi, Mercerus.

CHAP. XVIII.

IN this chapter is Bildad's second reply to Job, in which he falls with great fury upon him, very sharply inveighs against him, and very highly charges him; the charges he brings against him are talkativeness and inattention to what was said to him, ver. 1, 2. contempt of his friends, impatience under his affliction, and pride and arrogance, as if the whole world, the course of nature and providence, and God himself, all must give way to him, ver. 3, 4. nevertheless, he is assured of the miserable state of a wicked man, sooner or later, which is described by the extinction of his light of prosperity, ver. 5, 6. by the defeat of his counsels, being insnared in a net laid for him, ver. 7—10. by the terrible judgments of the sword, famine, and pestilence, by one or the other of which he is brought to death, the king of terrors, ver. 11—14. by the destruction of his habitation and of his posterity, so that he has none to bear his name, or perpetuate his memory, ver. 15—17. by his being driven out of the world, leaving no issue behind him, to the astonishment of all that knew him, ver. 18—20. and the chapter is closed with this observation, that this is the common case of wicked and irreligious persons, ver. 21.

Ver. 1. *Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said.*] Who, next to Eliphaz, spoke before, and now in his turn attacks Job a second time, and more roughly and severely than before; now he gives him no advice or counsel, nor any instructions and exhortations for his good, nor suggests that it might be better times with him again, as he had done before; but only heaps up charges against him, and describes the miserable circumstances of a wicked man, as near to Job's as he could; thereby endeavouring to confirm his former position, that wicked men are punished of God, and to have this conclusion drawn from it, that Job must needs be a wicked man, since he was so greatly afflicted.

Ver. 2. *How long* will it be ere *ye make an end of words?* &c.] Because these words are expressed in the plural number, some think more persons than one are addressed, either Eliphaz and Job together, who are complained of as taking up all the time, and having all the talk to themselves, that another could scarce put in a word; Bildad could say this with a better grace, because his discourses were but short; or else all his friends, whom he blames for not stopping Job's mouth at once, and for lengthening out the dispute with him; as if he should say, why are you so complaisant to him, to wait till he has done speaking, ere you reply? why don't you, without any ceremony, interrupt him, and not suffer him to go on with his prate, a man that is so insufferably rude as to reckon us all as beasts? and to what purpose is it to talk to such a man, that is so hardened and incorrigible, so proud and conceited? it is all labour in vain, and mere beating the air; it is high time to have done talking, and to put an end to the dispute, when things are at such a pass with him as they are: or else the words are directed to Job, and his friends that were with him, who might now and then speak a word in his behalf, though their words are not recorded; or, however, by their looks or gestures might shew their approbation of Job's defences: that there were others present besides Job and his three friends, it is probable; yea, it is certain that Elihu was present all the while, but he was not altogether of Job's mind; nor does it appear that he had any to take his part, for his brethren, acquaintance, kinsfolk, and familiar friends, stood at a distance from him, and his maids and men-servants used him ill; and even his own wife was not very kind to him, as he declares in the following chapter; wherefore it seems best of all to understand these words as spoken to Job alone, the plural being used for the singular, according to the idiom of the tongue in which they were spoken, and so are a charge of loquacity against him for talking too much, and too long, unless it had been to better purpose; and in like manner Bildad begins his first reply to Job, ch. viii. 2. a late interpreter renders the words, *how long will you lay snares with words*[e]? use cautious words, set snares with words to catch, lie upon the catch, and lay hold upon a word, and improve it to disadvantage, which is imprudently or inadvertently dropped: *mark, and afterwards we will speak;* or *let us speak*[f]; after we have well considered things, got a right understanding of them, and thoroughly digested them, and have well concerted things, and have thought very closely what reply to make to them; and so the words are a tacit reflection of Bildad's on his other two friends, that they spoke before they thought, and therefore some things impertinently, which Job took the advantage of against them; wherefore it would be right, for the future, to mark and consider things well before-hand, and then speak, as they then would with greater propriety, and more to the purpose: public speakers especially, or such who are engaged in public service, or in a public dispute, should meditate before-hand what to say, lest they deliver what is crude and indigested, and may be turned against them. Our Lord indeed directed his disciples, when called before kings and governors for his sake, not to premeditate what they should answer; but that was an extraordinary case, and they were promised to have extraordinary assistance, whereby some great ends were to be answered, the confusion of their enemies, and the confirmation of the Christian religion. But the words seem rather directed to Job, and to carry in them a charge of inattention to what was said to him by his friends; and therefore Bildad exhorts him to mark and observe what they said to him, to listen attentively to that, and well consider it, and then it would be an encouragement to them to proceed in discoursing with him. Job is represented like some

[e] Schultens.

[f] ואחר נדבר & postea loquamur, Piscator, Mercerus, Cocceius.

hearers, that stop their ears to the voice of the charmer charming ever so wisely; or that are careless and inattentive to what they hear, and let it pass, and never think of it more; whereas hearers of the word should be swift to hear, and listen with attention, and take care that they let not slip what they have heard, and that they meditate upon it in order to get instruction by it, and when they hear in such a manner it is a encouragement to speak; or else the sense is, *act wisely*[g], like an honest man, and shew yourself to be a wise man, a man of understanding, that well weighs and considers things, and rightly takes them in, and receives instruction by them, and talks like a sensible man: *then afterwards we will speak;* or otherwise, if you go on to talk in the foolish manner you do, it is to no purpose to carry on the dispute; the best way is to put an end to it at once.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore are we counted as beasts,* &c.] This seems to refer to ch. xii. 7. where Job sends them to the beasts, to get knowledge and instruction; and therefore it was concluded he reckoned them as such, and put them on a level with them, yea, made them inferior to them; or to ch. xvii. 4, 10. where they are represented as destitute of wisdom and understanding, and therefore it is supposed were counted by Job no other than as beasts. Man, by the fall, is indeed become like them, and some are more brutish than they, and all are brutish as to spiritual knowledge and understanding; and those that are most sensible of themselves are ready to acknowledge their ignorance, that they are more brutish than any, and especially are as a beast before God; and particularly with respect to knowledge of the methods of Providence, in regard to his dealings with the righteous and wicked; see Psal. lxxiii. 22. and which was the case in controversy between Job and his friends; but yet self-sufficient persons don't care to have their understandings in any thing called in question, but like the Pharisees say, *are we blind also?* John ix. 40. and take it very hard that they should be reckoned like beasts, void of understanding, when they are the people, and wisdom will die with them: and *reputed vile in your sight?* as wicked and profligate persons, the most abandoned of mankind, such as are justly despised by good men, see Psal. xv. iv. Dan. xi. 21. or *unclean*[h], filthy, polluted, and defiled, as all men are by nature, and as they are in all the powers and faculties of their souls; nor can they make themselves clean, their hearts or their hands; nothing short of the grace of God, and blood of Christ, can cleanse from sin; yet self-righteous persons think themselves clean and pure when they are not washed from their sins, and take it ill of others to be reputed unclean persons: or *shut*[i], stopped up, as the hearts of men are from God and Christ, and the true knowledge of them, and divine things, until opened by him who has the key of the house of David, and opens, and no man shuts; or *hidden*[k], referring to ch. xvii. 4. having a covering over their hearts, and a vail over the eyes of their understandings, so that the things of Providence were hid from them, as sometimes the things of grace are from the wise and prudent; but to be thought that this was their case is resented by Bildad.

Ver. 4. *He teareth himself in his anger,* &c.] Or *his soul*[l], meaning Job, and referring to what he had said in ch. xvi. 9. Now, says Bildad, it is neither God nor man that tears you, it is you yourself; representing Job as a madman, rending his clothes, tearing his flesh, and even his very soul; for by his passion which he expressed, whether to God or his friends, it did himself the most hurt, he broke his peace, and spoiled his comfort, and ruined his health, and made himself the most unhappy of mankind, by giving loose to his passion, to his wrath and anger, which slays and kills a man, ch. v. 2. here a charge of impatience is suggested, contrary to the character given of Job, James v. 11. *shall the earth be forsaken for thee?* through fear of thee, because of thy rage and fury; dost thou think that the inhabitants of the earth will flee before thee, at thy storming, rage, and wrath? before God none can stand when he is angry: there is no abiding his indignation when his fury is poured out like fire, and persons of the greatest rank will flee to the rocks and mountains to hide them from his face and fury; but what dost thou think, or make thyself to be, to be as Deity, that the inhabitants of the earth should flee before thee, and forsake it? or when thou diest, dost thou think that all the inhabitants of the earth will die with thee, and so it will be forsaken for thy sake? taking the hint from what Job had said, ch. xvii. 16. or dost thou think thyself a man of so much importance and consequence in the earth, that when thou diest there will not be a man left of any worth and notice, that all had as good die with thee? or will God drop the government of the world on thy account? will he no more employ his care and providence in concerning himself in the affairs of the world, but let all things go as they will, and so the earth, as to his providential regards to it, be forsaken for thy sake? will God neither do good to good men, nor punish bad men? which must be the case according to thy doctrine; but will God counteract this method of his providence, he has always taken in the earth, that thou mayest appear not to be an evil man, as might be concluded from thine afflictions, but a good man notwithstanding them? *and shall the rock be removed out of his place?* which is not usual, nor can it be done by man; it may be done by God, who touches the mountains, and they smoke, and at whose presence they drop and move, as Sinai did, and as the mountains and hills will flee away at the presence of the Judge of all the earth, when he appears; but no such phenomenon can be expected upon the presence and sight of a man; much less can God himself, who is often called a Rock, and is immovable, unalterable, and unchangeable in his nature, perfections, purposes, and the counsels of his will, be made to act contrary to either of them; nor will he do it for the sake of any man; he does all things after the counsel of his own will; he takes a constant course in Providence, in the government of the world, and

[g] תבינו discite agitis, Schultens.
[h] נטמינו immundi, Drusius, Piscator, Michaelis; so Broughton.
[i] Clausi sumus, Montanus; obturati sumus, Hebraei in Mercer.
[k] So the Targum.
[l] נפשו animam suam, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

canst thou think that he will go out of his usual way for thy sake, in punishing wicked men, and rewarding good men? you may as soon imagine that a rock will be removed out of its place as the ordinary course of Providence will be altered on thy account; to suppose this is presumption, pride, and arrogance, which is what Bildad means to fasten upon Job.

Ver. 5. *Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out,* &c.] Or *nevertheless*[m]; notwithstanding all this disregard and inattention to us, and contempt of us, and all the rage, and wrath, and pride, and haughtiness discovered, as if the laws of nature, and stated methods of Providence, must all give way to justify a man in such circumstances as shew him to be wicked; this will certainly be his case, his *light shall be put out;* meaning not the light of his eyes, or his corporeal light, which sometimes has been the case of wicked men, as was of the Sodomites, since this, through accident, or old age, is common to good and bad men; but rather moral light, the light of nature, with which every man is enlightened that comes into the world; by which he can discern things natural and civil, and in some degree things moral and religious, though in a very dim manner; and which, when it is abused, may be taken away, and men be given up to judicial blindness, and to a reprobate mind, a mind void of sense and judgment. Cocceius thinks light of doctrine may be intended, speculative and notional light and knowledge of divine things, as of God, and his perfections, which may be more clearly discerned by revelation than by the light of nature; and of Christ, his person, offices, and grace; and of the Gospel, and the several doctrines of it, which men may be enlightened into, and yet be wicked men, as Balaam, and others; which knowledge may be lost, and light put out, as in the man that had but one talent, and neglected it, and in the idle shepherd, Matt. xxv. 29. Zech. xi. 17. to which may be added the light of joy, or a flash of natural affections that sometimes is to be observed in hypocritical persons, or notional professors, which in time is lost, and comes to nothing, as in Herod and the stony-ground hearers, Mark vi. 20. Matt. xiii. 20. but as for the true spiritual light, and experimental knowledge, that can never be lost or put out, but shines more and more unto the perfect day: but it seems best by *light* here to understand outward prosperity, for as darkness is often put for adversity, so light for prosperity in civil things, see Esth. viii. 16. but then, though this in wicked men is often put out, and they are reduced to distressed circumstances, yet not always; and it sometimes is the case of good men, and was the case of Job, which Bildad had his eye upon, see ch. xxix. 2, 3. *and the spark of his fire shall not shine:* all his carnal reasonings, the effects of the light of nature, and all his schemes, especially religious ones built upon them, shall all come to nothing, and be of no effect or use unto him, see Isa. l. 11. or the sense is, that he shall be reduced to so low a condition in things civil, that he shall have no light nor heat, nor joy and comfort, in this sense; no, not so much as a spark of outward happiness shall be left him.

Ver. 6. *The light shall be dark in his tabernacle,* &c.] Not the light of the eye, in the tabernacle of his body, rather the light of nature and reason in him; and when that *light* that is *in* a man becomes *darkness,* as our Lord says, *how great is that darkness!* Matt. vi. 23. but best of all it designs the light of prosperity in his house and family, which should be quite obscured; *and his candle shall be put out with him;* which sometimes signifies the spirit of man, his rational soul, called the candle of the Lord, Prov. xx. 27. which, though it dies not when man dies, yet its light is extinct with respect to the things of this life, and all its thoughts and reasonings are no more about civil matters, and the affairs of this world; in that sense this light is put out, and those thoughts perish with him, Psal. cxlvi. 4. but more frequently it is used for outward prosperity, which if it continues with a man as long as he lives, as it often does, yet, when he dies, it ceases and is no more; it does not descend with him into the grave, and he cannot carry it into another world, but it is put out in obscure darkness; see ch. xxi. 17. Prov. xx. 20.

Ver. 7. *The steps of his strength shall be straitened,* &c.] As a man in health can take large and strong steps, and travel in the greatness of his strength; so in prosperity he can and does take large steps in obtaining fame and reputation among men, in amassing substance to himself, and towards settling his family in the world; he is like one in a large place, and walks at liberty, goes in and out at pleasure, and none can control him; he walks in pride, and with an high and lifted-up head, and with contempt of others, and his will is his law, and he does as he pleases; but in adversity, as his strength is weakened in the way, he cannot take the strides he did, his way is hedged up with thorns, he is pressed on every side, and surrounded with troubles, so that, let him turn himself which way he will, he can find no way to escape: *and his own counsel shall cast him down;* as Ahithophel's and Haman's did, which issued in their ruin; what wicked men sometimes plot and devise, with a view to their own good, and the injury of others, proves the destruction of themselves; when they have contrived to raise themselves upon the ruins of others, it has been the means of casting them down from the state and condition they were in, instead of raising to an higher, even down to desolation, and into the most miserable circumstances.

Ver. 8. *For he is cast into a net by his own feet,* &c.] He goes into it of himself, incautious and imprudent; the counsels, schemes, and methods he takes to hurt others, issue in his own ruin; the pit he digs for them, he falls and sinks into himself; and the net which he has spread and hid for others, in it is his own foot taken; and the ways and means he takes to do himself good, to amass riches and advance his family, being illicit ones, prove snares and nets unto him, those leading him into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which bring him to perdition, Psal. ix. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 9. even the various sins and transgressions he commits are snares unto him, by which he is enticed and drawn in: for in *the transgression of an evil man there is a snare,* Prov. xxix. 6. these promise him peace, and pleasure,

[m] [illegible] attamen, nihilominus, Cocceius, Schultens; so the Targum.

and liberty, but give neither; they are nets in which he is entangled, and cords by which he is held, Psal. ix. 15, 16. into which his own feet carry him: some render it, *he goes with a net at his feet* [n], or with his feet in a net; he can't go where he would, or do as he pleases; he is restrained by the providence of God; as the devils are held in chains, so the feet of wicked men are entangled in a net, that they cannot move and act as they are desirous of: *and he walketh upon a snare;* laid for him, and hidden to him, and therefore walks on boldly and unconcerned, not being apprehensive of any danger, though greatly exposed to it; he walks on as on firm and good ground, and in a broad road, but destruction and misery are in his ways; yet he walks on of himself willingly, and with all his strength, pleasing himself in the path he treads, not dreaming of the mischief that awaits him; or *upon a thicket* [o] of thorns and briers, his sins and iniquities with which he is entangled, and out of which he can't extricate himself, or afflictive providences with which his way is hedged up; though the former sense seems best; Mr. Broughton renders it, *a platted gin.*

Ver. 9. *The gin shall take him by the heel,* &c.] And hold him fast, so that he shall not be able to get away, especially out of such as are set by God himself; for God has his nets, and snares, and gins for wicked men, and such plenty of them, that he even is said to rain them on them; yea, he himself is a gin and a snare unto them, and out of his hands there is no escaping, wherefore it is a terrible thing to fall into them, see Ezek. xii. 13. and xxxii. 3. Psal. xi. 6. Isa. viii. 14, 15. and *the robber shall prevail against him;* either robbers literally taken, such as the Sabeans and Chaldeans, to whom Bildad may have reference, who prevailed against Job, and plundered him of his substance; and such as these, as the word signifies, are *thirsty ones* [p], who thirst after the wealth and riches of men, and after their blood for the sake thereof, bloodthirsty ones; Mr. Broughton renders it, *the savage,* barbarous, wild, and uncivilized, that lived in desert places, and were like wild beasts, let their hair grow long, to make them look more terrible and formidable, which some take to be the signification of the word, and render it *horrid* [q] or terrible, see the note on ch. v. 5. or else the devil may be meant, who is like a roaring lion, terrible and frightful, and who, as he was a murderer from the beginning, so a thief and robber, that comes to kill and destroy, and whom God suffers to prevail over the children of disobedience, and in whom he works powerfully, being the strong man armed, that has possession of them and their goods, and keeps them in peace; and who has his snares, which he lays suited to the tempers and dispositions of men, and in which they are taken alive, as beasts of prey, and are detained by him at his pleasure, 2 Tim. ii. 26.

Ver. 10. *The snare is laid for him in the ground,* &c.] Or *hidden* [r] there; for, as Solomon says, *in vain the net is spread in sight of any bird,* Prov. i. 17. and in vain it is to lay a snare publicly in the sight of any creature, it will not then come near it, but shun and avoid it; and therefore it is laid under ground, or hid in the earth, or in some private place, where the creature it is designed for may be thought to come, or into which it is decoyed; or *the cord* [s], that which is fastened to the snare or net, and which the fowler holds in his hand, and pulls with, as he finds occasion and opportunity offers; but this is hid as much as possible, that it may not be seen: *and a trap for him in the way;* in which he is used to walk, by the roadside, or in it; Mr. Broughton renders it, *a pitfall on the way-side,* such as is dug for beasts to fall into and be taken. The whole of this is designed to shew how suddenly and secretly wicked men are taken in nets, and snares, and gins, either of their own or others laying, and, whilst they are crying Peace, peace, sudden destruction comes upon them; see Eccl. ix. 12. 1 Thess. v. 3.

Ver. 11. *Terrors shall make him afraid on every side,* &c.] Make him a *Magor Missabib,* as Pashur was a terror to himself, and all his friends about him; these terrors may be either the terrors of the judges of the earth upon wicked men, who are, or should be, a terror to evil-doers, and of whom wicked men are afraid, lest they should be taken and punished by them; to this sense is the note of Sephorno: or else the terrors of a guilty conscience, which drive a man to his wits' end, that he knows not what to do, nor whither to go; these terrify him night and day, and make an hell upon earth unto him; or the terrors of the righteous law of God broken by him, its menaces and curses threatening him with death and everlasting damnation; or the terrors of the judgments of God on earth, which by their forerunners appear to be coming on it, by reason of which men's hearts fail for fear of them; or terrible apprehensions of the wrath of God for sin, here and hereafter, together with the terrors of death, which fall upon them, and of an awful judgment yet to come. Now Bildad had observed, that Job had said some things concerning the terrors he was sometimes possessed of, ch. vi. 4. and vii. 14. and ix. 28. and therefore would suggest from hence that he must be a wicked man, since this is the case of such; but it is easy to observe that good men are sometimes surrounded with terrors as well as others, so that this is no proof of a man's character and state, see Psal. lxxxviii. 15, 16. Lam. ii. 22. *and shall drive him to his feet;* to take to his feet and run, in order to get rid of his terrors if possible, but in vain; these cause him not to run to God, to his feet, to the throne and footstool of his grace, but from him, to the rocks and mountains to hide him from his wrath, though there is no going from his spirit, nor fleeing from his presence; and terrors will also have such an effect upon wicked men as to cause them to flee from men, as in Cain, who not only went from the presence of the Lord, but from the society of men, and became a fugitive and vagabond, and afraid of every one he met with, lest he should kill him; and sometimes wicked men flee when none pursue, and even at the sound of a shaking leaf, Prov. xxviii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 36. or *shall*

[n] כי שלח ברשת ברגליו nam it cum reti in pedibus suis, Cocceius.
[o] על שבכה in perplexo, Cocceius.
[p] צמים sitibundos, Montanus; sitibundus, Tigurine version.
[q] Horridus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Schmidt.

[r] טמון absconditus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, &c.
[s] חבלו funis ejus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Mercerus, Drusius, Cocceius, Schmidt.

scatter him at his feet [t], either at the feet of the robber, or cause him to fall to the ground, in the place where his feet stood. Mr. Broughton renders it, *shall press him at his feet*, shall follow at his heels, and keep close to him wherever he goes, and overtake and seize him.

Ver. 12. *His strength shall be hunger-bitten*, &c.] Or *shall be famine* [u], or hunger, that is, shall be weakened by it: famine is a sore evil, and greatly weakens the natural strength of men; want of food will soon bring down the strength of the strongest man, when the stay and the staff, the sustenance and support of man's nature is taken from him: many of the Jewish writers, by *his strength*, understand his children, who are, as Jacob said of Reuben, his might, and the beginning of his strength, Gen. xlix. 3. and when grown up are his protection and defence; and for these to be distressed with hunger, or destroyed by famine, is a sore judgment; so the Targum paraphrases it, his first-born son; Jarchi interprets it, his son; and Ben Gersom, his seed or offspring: *and destruction shall be ready at his side*: or *to his rib* [w]; that is, his wife, as the Targum and Jarchi explain it, the Jews calling a man's wife his rib, because the woman was originally made out of one of the ribs of man; and if this could be thought to be the sense of the word here, and what is given by them of the former clause, both make up a complete account of the destruction of a wicked man's family, his wife and children: but rather it signifies some calamity, distress, and trouble at hand, ready prepared for wicked men, just going to be inflicted on them; for God has stores of vengeance for them, and has made ready his bow, and prepared instruments and arrows of death and destruction for them, as well as there is everlasting fire prepared, and blackness of darkness reserved for them in the world to come: for it can hardly be thought that this should be understood literally of any disease in the side, as the pleurisy, &c. which is threatening, or any mortal wound or stab there, such as Joab gave Amasa under the fifth rib.

Ver. 13. *It shall devour the strength of his skin*, &c.] Or *the bars of his skin* [x], the strength and support of his body, for which his skin may be put, as the bones; or *the branches of his skin* [y], the veins, which like so many branches run under, and may be seen through the skin: now these, *it*, famine, or want of food, devours, and destroys the strength and beauty of the skin, cause it to be black like an oven, Lam. iv. 8. and v. 10. bring a man to a mere skeleton, to skin and bones, waste and consume the members of his body, his flesh, and blood, and bones: the Targum, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra, by *his bars* or *branches* understand his children, which are his bars, the strength of him, and are to him as branches to a tree, proceeding from him; and if we render it, as some do, *he shall devour* [z], or *eat*, that is, the wicked man, it points to us the most horrible scene in a famine, which is shocking and shuddering, and yet what has been, as in the sieges of Samaria and Jerusalem, a parent's eating and devouring his own children, 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. Lam. iv. 10. but rather the *it is the first-born of death*, in the next clause, which is to be supplied from thence here: even *the first-born of death shall devour his strength*; and so Mr. Broughton translates the whole verse, "a "strange death shall eat all the branches of his body, "all its branches shall it eat;" which the Targum interprets of the angel of death, him which has the power of death: but rather it signifies not what presides over death, but what death first produces, which are corruption and rottenness, dust and worms; these are the first-born of death, or the first-fruits and effects of it, and which devour and destroy not the skin only, but the whole body and all its members: or *the first-born death* [a]; death, which is a first-born, it is the first-born of sin; sin is its parent, lust conceives sin, and that brings forth death; death is the child of sin, and is its first-born, and sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and this is what devours and destroys the strength of men. Some understand by first-born death a premature one, death before the usual time or common course of nature; wicked men don't live out half their days; and when they are taken off in their youth, in the prime of their days and strength, and amidst all their wealth, riches, and pleasures, this is the first, or first-born death, as that is a secondary one which is late, in the time of old age. This is the ingenious thought of Pineda; but, perhaps, rather, as the first-born is the chief and principal, so here may be meant the chiefest of deaths, the most hard, cruel, and severe; the first of those, that death has under it, which are principally the sword, famine, pestilence, and the noisome beast, see Rev. vi. 8. it is commonly thought that famine is intended, spoken of in the context; but why not rather some thing distinct from it, and particularly the pestilence? since that is emphatically called death by the Jews, and in the passage last referred to, and is the terror by night, and the arrow that flies by day, even the pestilence that walks in darkness, and the destruction that wastes at noonday; by means of which thousands and ten thousands of wicked men fall at the sides of good men, when it does not affect them: and so may be the evil particularly threatened to a wicked man here, see Psal. xci. 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 14. *His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle*, &c.] That which his confidence was placed in, his wealth and riches, his family, particularly his children, in all which he placed his confidence of future prosperity and happiness; these should be all taken away from him, and his house cleared of them all; or his good, sound, and healthful constitution, on account of which he promised himself long life, this he should be deprived of, and it should be taken out of the tabernacle of his body; or his hope and confidence of eternal happiness in another world, this should perish, and be as the giving up of the ghost: or the words may be rendered, *he shall be rooted out of his tabernacle*, which

[t] הפיצהו dispergent eum, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Mercerus, Piscator, Schmidt.

[u] רעב fames, Beza.

[w] לצלעו costæ ejus, Montanus, Vatablus, Grotius, Schultens.

[x] בדי עורו vectes cutis suæ, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schultens, Michaelis.

[y] Ramos cutis, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Mercerus, Schmidt; ramos corporis ipsius, Cocceius.

[z] יאכל comedet, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus.

[a] בכור מות primogenita mors, V. L.

was *his confidence* [b]; that is, his soul shall be taken out of his body by death, in which it dwelt as in a tabernacle, and where he hoped to have had a long continuance; death is a rooting of a man out of it, and even out of the world, see Psal. lii. 5. *and it shall bring him to the king of terrors;* either famine, by which his strength is weakened, or destruction that is at his side, or the first-born of death, or his vain confidence: or this may be the sense, *thou* (O God) *will bring him,* or *cause him to go to the king of terrors* [c]; to death; all men are brought unto it, but not all unto it as a king of terrors; as good men, such as Simeon, the Apostle Paul, and others, but wicked men. Death is a king, it reigns, it has a large empire, even the whole world; its subjects are numerous, all, high and low, rich and poor, great and small; and the duration of its reign is long, it reigned from Adam to Moses, from Moses to the coming of Christ, and from thence to this day, and will to the end of the world, and it reigns with an irresistible power: and this king is a king of terrors to wicked men; it is, as Aristotle [d] calls it, the most terrible of terribles; it is terrible to nature, being a dissolution of it; and it must be terrible to mere natural men, who have nothing to support them under it, and no views beyond the grave to comfort them, and cause them to go cheerful through it; but, on the other hand, have not only the bitterness of death to endure, but have terrible apprehensions of a future judgment that comes after it. Some render it, *the king of darkness* [e], extreme darkness, blackness of darkness, utter darkness, which wicked men at death are brought unto. Jarchi interprets it of the king of demons, the devil; and to be brought to him is to be brought to hell and eternal damnation: so some render it, *terrors shall bring him to his king* [f], the devil; or rather, *terrors shall come upon him like a king* [g], in a very grand, powerful, and formidable manner.

Ver. 15. *It shall dwell in his tabernacle,* &c.] What shall dwell in it is not said; there are various conjectures about it, and different supplements are made; the Targum is, "his wife shall dwell in a tabernacle "not his;" and to the same purpose Jarchi; as if it was one part of the punishment of a wicked man, that he should leave a widow behind him, and no house of his own for her to dwell in; but this is the case of the widows of many good men, who themselves, in their life-time, have no houses of their own, and some no certain dwelling-places, yea, have lived in caves and dens of the earth; the mother of our Lord, who seems to have been a widow at his death, was taken by one of his disciples to his own home, which shews she had none of her own. The Vulgate Latin version is, "his neighbours shall dwell in his tabernacle;" which some understand of their coming into it after his death, to mourn and bewail him; but as such a visit of his family upon his decease cannot be called dwelling, so this is rather a benefit and favour to his family, than a distress: rather it may signify, that such neighbours whom he had oppressed, and who hated him for his tyranny and cruelty, now should dwell in his house; what he had built, strangers should inhabit, which is a punishment of sin and sinners, Deut. xxviii. 30. Aben Ezra supplies it thus, a strange or evil beast shall dwell in it, as they do in desolate places; and it is frequently given as a sign and token of desolation in countries, cities, and palaces, that they are become the habitations of wild and savage creatures, see Isa. xiii. 19—22. and xxiv. 11, &c. Zeph. ii. 14. but it seems best to supply it from the context, either thus, famine, hunger, want of food, shall dwell in it; poverty and want shall come like an armed man into it, and take possession; there shall appear all the marks and signs of penury and distress; or destruction ready at his side shall take up its abode in it, and it shall be called the house of destruction, as a certain city is called the city of destruction, because devoted to it, Isa. xix. 18. or the first-born of death, some deadly disease, as the pestilence; or death itself, the king of terrors, who is sometimes represented as a person coming up into the windows of a palace, and entering it, and cutting off great numbers; so that it goes ill with him that is left in a tabernacle, where he has his habitation, Jer. ix. 21. Job xx. 26. or terror, as Ben Gersom; every one of the terrors before mentioned, so that no body will care to dwell in it, but forsake it as an haunted house: in short, from the whole it may be gathered, that the curse of God should alight upon it, and remain in it, as it does in the house of the wicked; the same with the flying roll in the vision of Zechariah, the curse of God's righteous law, which enters into the house of the thief and perjurer, and consumes it, Prov. iii. 33. Zech. v. 4. the reason follows, *because it is none of his;* not by right, being bought or built with mammon of unrighteousness, with money not honestly got, and therefore shall not prosper; or because it is no longer his, he being taken from it by death, the king of terrors, and that not knowing or owning him any more as its master or proprietor, and therefore strangers shall dwell in it; or because there is none that shall be after him, because he shall have none left, or he shall have no survivor [h], all his family being taken away by death; and therefore nothing but desolation and destruction shall be seen in it, see Amos vi. 9, 10. *brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation;* that is, his house should be burnt down by lightning, which is often sulphurous, and sometimes very sensibly has the smell of brimstone in it [i]. Bildad may refer either to the fire of heaven that destroyed Job's sheep, which was of this kind; or rather to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, by a shower of fire and brimstone from heaven, a fact well known in those times. Moreover, brimstone scattered upon the wicked man's dwelling-place may denote the desolation of it, that it should lie in ruins, and be unfit to be inhabited; and the desolation of places is sometimes signified by their being salt, brimstone and burning pitch, Deut. xxix. 23. Isa. xxxiv. 9. yea, this may be carried further, and denote the eternal damnation of all in his house, seeing the burning of

[b] Michaelis.
[c] De Dieu.
[d] Ethic. l. 3. c. 9.
[e] למלך בלהות ad regem caliginum, Cocceius.
[f] Schmidt.
[g] Instar regis, Schultens; quasi rex, V. L.
[h] So Syr. Ar. & Schmidt.
[i] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 35. c. 15.

Sodom with brimstone was an example to ungodly men suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, Jude, ver. 7. and which is sometimes expressed by brimstone, and a lake burning with fire and brimstone, Rev. xx. 10. and xxi. 8. and xiv. 10, 11. Some[k] think respect is had to the lustration of houses with sulphur, to drive away demons, and remove impurity, to make them fit to dwell in[l]; and others think it refers to the burning of sulphur in houses at funerals, to testify and exaggerate mourning[m].

Ver. 16. *His roots shall be dried up beneath,* &c.] Wicked men are sometimes compared to trees; to trees of the wood, barren, and unfruitful; to trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; and sometimes to green bay-trees, very flourishing for a while, and which on a sudden perish, and come to nothing, see Cant. ii. 3. Jude, ver. 12. Psal. xxxvii. 35, 36. and such a simile is here used; and by his *roots* may be meant his family, from whence he sprung, which now should be extinct with him, see Isa. xi. 1. Dan. xi. 7. or his substance, which being greatly increased, he seemed to take root in the earth, and not only to be in a prosperous, but in a stable settled condition; but now, Ephraim-like, he should be smitten, and his root dried up; all his wealth, and all the resources of it, should be exhausted, be no more, see Jer. xii. 2. Hos. ix. 16. *and above shall his branch be cut off*: his children that sprung from him, as branches from a tree, and were his glory and beauty, these should be cut off; referring no doubt in both clauses to Job's present circumstances, whose root in the time of his prosperity was spread out by the waters, but now dried up, and on whose branches the dew lay all night, but now cut off, ch. xxix. 19. so the Targum, "his children shall be cut off out of the earth, and "from heaven his destruction shall be decreed;" both clauses signify the utter destruction of the family of the wicked man, root and branch, see Mal. iv. 1. It is a beautiful description of a tree struck with thunder and lightning, and burnt and shattered to pieces, and agrees with the preceding verse.

Ver. 17. *His remembrance shall perish from the earth,* &c.] Not only are the wicked forgotten of God in heaven, and are as the slain he remembers no more, unless it be to pour out his wrath upon them, and punish them for their sins, for which great Babylon will come up in remembrance before him; but of men on earth, and in the very places where they were born, and lived all their days, Eccl. viii. 10. and ix. 5. yea, those places, houses and palaces, towns and cities, which they have built to perpetuate their memory among men, perish and come to nought, and their memorial with them, Psal. ix. 5, 6. and xlix. 11. *and he shall have no name in the street;* much less in the house of God, still less in heaven, in the Lamb's book of life; so far from it, that he shall have none on earth, no good name among men; if ever his name is mentioned after his death, it is with some brand of infamy upon him; he is not spoken of in public, in a court of judicature, nor in any place of commerce and trade, nor in any concourse of people, or public assembly of any note, especially with any credit or commendation; such is the difference between a good man and a wicked man, see Prov. xi. 7.

Ver. 18. *He shall be driven from light into darkness,* &c.] Either from the light of outward prosperity, formerly enjoyed by him, into the darkness of adversity; or rather from the light of the living, the light of the present life, to the darkness of death, and the grave, the land of darkness, and of the shadow of death, ch. x. 21, 22. and even into utter darkness, blackness of darkness, the darkness of hell, eternal darkness; opposed to the light of the divine Presence, and the inheritance of the saints in light, possessed by them to all eternity; which the wicked man is deprived of, and will have no share in, but shall be driven from the presence of God, and by him; for so the words may be rendered, *they shall drive him*[n], God, Father, Son, and Spirit; God by the east wind and storm of his wrath shall carry him away, and hurl him out of his place, and shall cast the fury of his wrath on him, and not spare, nor shall he flee out of his hands, though he fain would, ch. xxvii. 21, 22. or the angels, good or bad, shall drive him into endless torments, or shall, by the divine order, take him and cast him into outward darkness, where are weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; thus are the wicked driven against their will, and must go whether they will or no, and, like beasts to the slaughter, are driven in their wickedness, in order to suffer the punishment due unto it, when the righteous hath hope in his death, Prov. xiv. 32. *and chased out of the world;* or cast out of it, as an unclean or excommunicated person, of which the word here is sometimes used[o]; and not only chased out of his own place, out of his own house, and out of his own country, but even out of the world, so as to have no place any more in it, see ch. xx. 8, 9.

Ver. 19. *He shall neither have son nor nephew among his people,* &c.] Neither son, nor son's son, or grandson; so the Targum, Jarchi, and Bar Tzemach; that is, he shall be childless, and have no heirs, successors, or survivors, to inherit his estate, bear and perpetuate his name among the people of his country, city, or neighbourhood. Bildad respects no doubt the present case of Job, who had lost all his children; but he was mistaken if he thought he should die so, for he had after this as many children as he had before: *nor any remaining in his dwellings;* being all dead, or fled from them, through the terror, desolation, and destruction in them. Aben Ezra and Bar Tzemach interpret them places in which he was a sojourner or stranger; and Mr. Broughton, nor remnant in his pilgrimage.

Ver. 20. *They that come after him shall be astonished at his day,* &c.] At the day of his calamity and distress, ruin and destruction, see Psal. xxxvii. 13. Obad. ver. 12. it would be extremely amazing to them how it should be, that a man who was in such flourishing and prosperous circumstances, should be brought at once, he and his family, into such extreme poverty, and into

[k] Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol 4. p. 709, 710.
[l] Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 25. c. 15. Theocrit. Idyll. 25. ver. 95. Homer. Odyss. 22 prope finem.
[m] Vid. Menochium de Repub. Heb. l. 8, c. 6. col. 792.
[n] יהדפהו expellent eum, Pagninus, Montanus; so Tigurine version, Vatablus, Mercerus, Drusius, Schultens, Coccejus, Schmidt.
[o] ינדהו excommunicabunt eum, Schmidt, Michaelis; so Codurcus.

such a distressed and forlorn condition; they should be, as it were, thunderstruck at it, not being able to account for it: by these are meant such as are younger than the wicked man, and that continue longer than he, yet upon the spot when his calamity befell; or else posterity in after-times, who would be made acquainted with the whole affair, and be surprised at the relation of it: *as they that went before were affrighted*; not that lived before the times of the wicked man, for they could not see his day, or be spectators of his ruin, and so be affrighted at it; but his cotemporaries, who are said to be those that went before, not with respect to the wicked man, but with respect to younger persons or posterity that were after; so Bar Tzemach interprets it, which were in his time, or his cotemporaries; and Mr. Broughton, "the present took an horror;" a late learned commentator[p] renders the words, western and eastern; as if all people in the world, east and west, would be amazed and astonished at the sudden and utter destruction of this wicked man.

Ver. 21. *Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, &c.*] As before described; as that the light should be dark in them; a wicked man's confidence should be rooted out of them; every thing shocking and dreadful should dwell in them; brimstone should be scattered on them, they should be utterly consumed, and none remaining in them, ver. 6, 14, 15, 19. The Targum represents these as the words of the persons astonished and affrighted, who at the sight of such a dismal spectacle should utter them, prefacing them thus, "and they shall say, but these are the dwellings, &c." and *this* is the *place* of him that *knoweth not God*; the place that he shall be driven to when chased out of the world, even a place of darkness and misery, ver. 18. or *this is the case of him that knoweth not the Omnipotent*, as Mr. Broughton translates the words; that is, which is above described in the several particulars of it; this is sooner or later the case of every wicked man, as Bildad supposed it now was Job's case, at least in part, or would be hereafter: one *that knows not God*, is the periphrasis of a wicked man, that has no knowledge of God, at least no practical knowledge of him, that lives without God in the world, or like an atheist; such shall be punished with everlasting destruction by him, see 2 Thess. i. 8, 9. either one whom *God knows not*[q], so some render the words; for though God by the perfection of his omniscience knows all men, good and bad, yet there are some he knows not so as to approve of, love, and delight in, see Matt. vii. 23. or rather that have no knowledge of God, who though they may know there is a God, yet do not worship and glorify him as God; and though they may profess to know him, yet in works they deny him, and however have no spiritual and experimental knowledge of him; don't know him in Christ, as the God of all grace, and as their God in him; they don't know him, so as to love him, fear, worship, and obey him.

CHAP. XIX.

THIS chapter contains Job's reply to Bildad's second speech, in which he complains of the ill usage of his friends, of their continuing to vex him, and to beat, and bruise, and break him in pieces with their hard words, and to reproach him, and carry it strange to him, ver. 1—3. which he thought was very cruel, since, if he was mistaken, the mistake lay with himself, ver. 4. and if they were determined to go on at this rate, he would have them observe, that his afflictions were of God, and therefore should take care to what they imputed them, since he could not get the reasons of them, or his cause to be heard, though he vehemently and importunately sought it, ver. 5—7. and then gives an enumeration of the several particulars of his distress, all which he ascribes to God, ver. 8—12. and he enlarges upon that part of his unhappy case, respecting the alienation of his nearest relations, most intimate acquaintance and friends, from him, and their contempt of him, and the like treatment he met with from his servants, and even young children, ver. 13—19. all which, with other troubles, had such an effect upon him as to reduce him to a mere skeleton, and which he mentions to move the pity of these his friends, now conversing with him, ver. 20—22. and yet after all, and in the midst of it, and which was his great support under his trials, he expresses his strong faith in his living Redeemer, who should appear on the earth in the latter day, and be his Saviour, and in the resurrection of the dead through him, which he believed he should share in, and in all the happiness consequent on it; and he wishes this confession of his faith might be written and engraven, and be preserved on a rock for ever for the good of posterity, ver. 23—27. and closes the chapter with an expostulation with his friends, dissuading them from persecuting him any longer, since there was no reason for it in himself, and it might be attended with bad consequences to them, ver. 28, 29.

Ver. 1. *Then Job answered and said.*] Having heard Bildad out, without giving him any interruption; and when he had finished his oration, he rose up in his own defence, and put in his answer as follows.

Ver. 2. *How long will ye vex my soul, &c.*] Which of all vexation is the worst; not only his bones were vexed, but his soul also, as David's was, Psal. vi. 2, 3. His body was vexed with boils from head to feet; but now his soul was vexed by his friends, and which denotes extreme vexation, a man's being vexed to his very heart: there are many things vexatious to men, especially to good men; they are not only vexed with pains of the body, as others, and with loss of worldly substance; but even all things here below, and the highest enjoyment of them, as wealth, wisdom, honours, and pleasures, are all vanity and vexation of

[p] Schultens.

[q] לא ידע אל quem non agnoscit Deus fortis, Junius.

spirit, as they were to Solomon; but more especially truly good men are vexed with the corruptions of their hearts, which are as pricks in their eyes and thorns in their sides, and with the temptations of Satan, which are also thorns in the flesh and fiery darts, and with the conversation of wicked men, as was the soul of righteous Lot, and with the bad principles and practices of professors of religion; and sometimes, as Job was, they are vexed by their own friends, who should be their comforters, but prove miserable ones, as his did, and even vexatious, and continued so to the wearing him out almost; and so some render the words, *how long will ye weary my soul*[c]? with repeating their insinuations that he was a wicked and hypocritical man, and therefore was afflicted of God in the manner he was; and which, knowing his own innocency, extremely vexed him: *and break me in pieces with words?* not his body, but his spirit; which was broken, not by the word of God, which is like an hammer that breaks the rocky heart in pieces; for such a breaking is in mercy, and not an affliction to be complained of; and such as are thus broken are healed again, and bound up by the same hand that breaks; who has great regard to broken spirits and contrite hearts; looks to them, and dwells with them, in order to revive and comfort them: but by the words of men; Job was smitten with the tongues of men; as Jeremiah was, and was beaten and bruised by them, as any thing is beaten and bruised by a pestle in a mortar, as the word[d] signifies, and is sometimes rendered, Isa. liii. 5, 10. these must be not soft but hard words, not gentle reproofs, which being given and taken in love, will not break the head, but calumnies and reproaches falsely cast, and with great severity, and frequently, which break the heart. See Psal. lxix. 20.

Ver. 3. *These ten times have ye reproached me*, &c.] Referring not to ten sections or paragraphs, in which they had done it, as Jarchi; or to the five speeches of his friends, in which their reproaches were doubled; or to Job's words, and their answer, as Saadiah; for it does not denote an exact number of their reproaches, which Job was not so careful to count; but it signifies that he had been many times reproached by them; so Aben Ezra, and in which sense the phrase is often used, see Gen. xxxi. 7. Numb. xiv. 22. it is the lot of good men in all ages to be reproached by carnal and profane sinners, on account of religion, and for righteousness-sake, as Christians are for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; and which Moses esteemed greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt; but to be reproached by friends, and that as an hypocrite and a wicked man, as Job was, must be very cutting; and this being often repeated, as it was an aggravation of the sin of his friends, so likewise of his affliction and patience: *ye are not ashamed*, so *that ye make yourselves strange to me*; they looked shy at him; would not be free and friendly with him, but carried it strange to him, and seemed to have their affections alienated from him. There should not be a strangeness in good men one to another, since they are not aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, to the grace of God, and communion with him; since they are fellow-citizens, and of the household of God; belong to the same city, share in the same privileges, are of the same family, children of the same father, and brethren one of another, members of the same body, heirs of the same grace and glory, and are to dwell together in heaven to all eternity; wherefore they should not make themselves strange to each other, but should speak often, kindly, and affectionately, one to another, and freely converse together about spiritual things; should pray with one another, and build up each other on their most holy faith, and by love serve one another, and do all good offices mutually that lie in their power, and bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ: but, instead of this, Job's friends would scarcely look at him, much less speak one kind word to him; yea, they *hardened* themselves *against* him, as some[e] render the word; had no compassion on him or pity for him in his distressed circumstances, which their relation to him obliged unto, and was due unto him on the score of friendship; nay, they *mocked* at him, which is the sense of the word, according to Ben Gersom[f]; and of this he had complained before, ch. xii. 4. and xvii. 2. and with some[g] it has the signification of impudence and audaciousness, from the sense of the word in the Arabic language, see Isa. iii. 9. as if they behaved towards him in a very impudent manner: or, though they *knew* him, as the Targum paraphrases it, yet they were *not ashamed* to reproach him; though they knew that he was a man that feared God; they knew his character and conversation before his afflictions came on, and yet traduced him as an hypocrite and a wicked man. Whatever is sinful, men should be ashamed of, and will be sooner or later; not to be ashamed thereof is an argument of great hardness and impenitence; and among other things it becomes saints to be ashamed of their making themselves strange to one another. Some render it interrogatively[h], *are ye not ashamed?* &c. you may well be ashamed, if you are not; this is put in order to make them ashamed.

Ver. 4. *And be it indeed that I have erred*, &c.] Which is a concession for argument-sake, but not an acknowledgment that he had erred; though it is possible he might have erred, and it is certain he did in some things, though not in that respect with which he was charged; *humanum est errare*, all men are subject to mistakes, good men may err; they may err in judgment, or from the truth in some respect, and be carried away for a while and to some degree with the error of the wicked, though they shall be turned from it again; they may err in practice, and wander from the way of God's commandments; and indeed their strayings and aberrations of this sort are so many, that David says, *who can understand his errors?* Psal. xix. 12. and they may err in words, or make a mistake in speech; but then no man should be made an offender for a word; for he must be a perfect man that is free from mis-

[c] תוגיון defatigabitis, Schmidt, Michaelis.
[d] תדכאונני obtundetis, Vatablus, Piscator, Schmidt; so Michaelis, Schultens.
[e] תהכרו לי Indurastis facies vestras contra me, Vatablus; so Broughton.
[f] Erubescitis subsannare me, Pagninus.
[g] Drusius; so Schultens.
[h] So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

takes of this kind: now Job argues that supposing this to be his case in any of the above instances; yet, says he, *mine error remaineth with myself;* I only am chargeable with it, and answerable for it; it is nothing to you, and why should you trouble yourselves about it? it will not be imputed to you, nor will you suffer on account of it; or, admitting I have imbibed an error, I do not publish it abroad; I keep it to myself; it lies and lodges in my own breast, and nobody is the worse for it: or *let it remain*, or *lodge with me*[k]; why should my mistakes be published abroad, and all the world be made acquainted with them? or else this expresses his resolution to abide by what his friends called an error; and then the sense is, if this is an error which I have asserted, that God afflicts both good and bad men, and that afflictions are no argument of a man's being an hypocrite and a wicked man, I am determined to continue in it; I will not give it up, I will hold it fast; it shall remain with me as a principle never to be departed from; or it may be rather his meaning is, that this notion he had imbibed would remain with him, and was likely to do so, for any thing they had said, or could say to the contrary.

Ver. 5. *If indeed ye will magnify* yourselves *against me*, &c.] Look and talk big, set up themselves for great folk, and resolve to run him down; open their mouths wide against him, and speak great swelling words in a blustering manner; or magnify what they called an error in him, and set it out in the worst light they could: and *plead against me my reproach;* his affliction which he was reproached with, and was pleaded against him as an argument of his being a wicked man; if therefore they were determined to go on after this manner, and insist on this kind of proof, then he would have them take what follows.

Ver. 6. *Know now that God hath overthrown me*, &c.] He would have them take notice that all his afflictions were from the hand of God; and therefore should take care to what they imputed any acts of his, whose ways are unsearchable, and the reasons of them not to be found out; and therefore, if a wrong construction should be put upon them, which may be easily done by weak-sighted men, it must be displeasing to him. Job had all along from the first ascribed his afflictions to God, and he still continued to do so; he saw his hand in them all; whoever were the instruments, it was God that had overthrown him, or cast him down from an high to a very low estate; that had taken away his substance, his children, and his wealth: or *hath perverted me*[l]; not that God had made him perverse, or was the cause or occasion of any perverseness in him, either in his words or in his actions, or had perverted his cause, and the judgment of it; Job could readily answer to those questions of Bildad, *doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?* and say, no, he doth not; but he is to be understood in the same sense as the church is, when she says, see Lam. iii. 9. *he hath made my path crooked;* where the same word is used as here; and both she and Job mean that God had brought them into cross, crooked, and afflictive dispensations: *and hath compassed me with his net;* and which also designs affliction, which is God's net, which he has made, ordained, and makes use of; which he lays for his people, and takes them in, and draws them to himself, and prevents them committing sin, and causes to issue in their good; see Lam. i. 13. Ezek. ii. 13.

Ver. 7. *Behold, I cry out of wrong*, &c.] Or of *violence*[m], or injury done him by the Sabeans and Chaldeans upon his substance, and by Satan upon his health; this he cried out and complained of in prayer to God, and of it as it were in open court, as a violation of justice, and as being dealt very unjustly with: *but I am not heard;* his prayer was not heard; he could get no relief, nor any redress of his grievances, nor any knowledge of the reasons of his being thus used; see Hab. i. 2. *I cry aloud, but* there is *no judgment;* notwithstanding his vehement and importunate requests; and which were repeated time after time, that there might be a hearing of his cause; that it might be searched into and tried, that his innocence might be cleared, and justice done him, and vengeance taken on those that wronged him; but he could not obtain it; there was no time appointed for judgment, no court of judicature set, nor any to judge. Now seeing this was the case, that the hand of God was in all his afflictions; that he had complained to him of the injury done him; and that he had most earnestly desired his cause might be heard, and the reasons given why he was thus used, but could get no answer to all this; therefore it became them to be cautious and careful of what they said concerning the dealings of God with him, and to what account they placed them; of which he gives a particular enumeration in the following verses.

Ver. 8. *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass*, &c.] A metaphor taken from travellers, who not only meet with obstacles and obstructions in their way, which make it difficult; but sometimes with such enclosures and fences, that they are at a full stop, and cannot pass on, and know not what course to steer: the people of God are not inhabitants of this world, but pilgrims, strangers, and sojourners in it, and travellers through it; they are bound for another country, and are travelling to it; and though their way for the most part is indeed troublesome, but generally passable, or made so; yet sometimes not only is their way hedged up with afflictions, and they hedged about with them, that they cannot easily get out, and get through and pass on; and it is with much difficulty, and with being much scratched and torn, they do brush through; but they also at other times find God has built up a wall against them, and enclosed them with hewn stones, and so fenced up their way that they cannot pass on; such difficulties present as seem insurmountable, and they are at a stand, and know not what way to take; which was now Job's case, see Lam. iii. 5, 7, 9. and this may not only respect the way of his walk in this world, but his way to God, either to

[k] אתי תלין mecum maneat, Beza; to the same sense Mercerus, Schmidt, Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Michaelis, Schultens.

[l] עותני pervertit me, Montanus, Mercerus; so Vatablus, Drusius, Schultens.

[m] חמס violentiam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c. injuriam, Montanus.

the throne of his grace, or the tribunal of his justice: the way to God, as on a throne of grace, is only through Christ, the living way; which, though more clearly revealed under the Gospel dispensation, and therefore called a new way, yet was known under the former dispensation, and made use of; in which saints may have access to God with boldness and confidence: but sometimes this way seems by unbelief to be fenced up, though it is always open; and especially when God hides his face, and is not to be seen, nor is it known where to find him, and how to come up to his seat; and which also was Job's case, ch. xxiii. 3. and whereas he was very desirous of having his cause heard and tried at the tribunal of God, his way was so shut up, that he could not obtain what he so much desired, and knew not therefore how to proceed, and what course to take: *and he hath set darkness in my paths;* and was like a traveller in a very dark night, that cannot see his way, and knows not what step to take next; so good men, though they walk not in the ways of darkness, in a moral sense, as unregenerate men do; yet even while they are walking in the good ways of truth and holiness, and while they are passing through this world, God sometimes withdraws the light of his countenance from them, so that they walk in darkness, and have no light, which is very uncomfortable walking; and when God may be said to put darkness into their paths, he not granting them the light of grace and comfort they have sometimes enjoyed; and so it is with them when under such dark dispensations of Providence, as that they cannot see the end of God in leading them in such ways; and then their case is such as it now was Job's; that they cannot see any way of getting out of it; as the Israelites at the Red sea, and Paul and the mariners when in a storm, and all hope of being saved was gone.

Ver. 9. *He hath stripped me of my glory,* &c.] The metaphor of a traveller may be still continued, who falling among thieves is stripped of his clothes, to which the allusion may be: Job was not stripped of his glory in a spiritual sense, not of the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness, nor of the graces of the Spirit, which makes saints all-glorious within; but in a civil sense, and is to be understood not merely of his rich apparel, or of his robe, which he might wear as a civil magistrate, as an ensign of honour, and which made him look glorious; but either of his wealth, riches, and substance, which are a man's glory, and which he too often and too much glories in, though Job might not; see Psal. xlix. 16. Gen. xxxi. 1. or of his children, Hos. ix. 11. Esth. v. 11. and indeed of every thing that made him look magnificent among men; as an abundance of this world's good, a numerous family, fine clothes, sumptuous living, and a stately palace; all which Job might have had, but was now stripped of all by one means or another; and whoever were the instruments, he ascribes it all to God, as being according to his sovereign will and pleasure; and these things are very properly and significantly expressed by clothes a man is stripped of, because they are outward things, as garments are, adorn and make externally glorious, as they do, and of which a man may be as soon and as easily deprived as to be stripped of his clothes by one or more of superior power to him: *and taken the crown from my head;* meaning much the same as before, either his wealth and riches, which are the crown of a wise man, Prov. xiv. 24. or his children, which are the crown of old men, Prov. xvii. 6. or every thing that gave him honour, reputation, and esteem with men; all was taken away from him, and his honour laid in the dust. Some from hence have wrongly concluded that Job was a king, and wore a royal diadem, of which he was now deprived, mistaking him for Jobab, a king of Edom, Gen. xxxvi. 33. but he had and wore a better diadem, and which he did not lose, but held fast, even his righteousness, justice, and integrity, ch. xxix. 14. and much less could the crown of life, righteousness, and glory, to which he was entitled, be taken from him.

Ver. 10. *He hath destroyed me on every side,* &c.] To be *troubled on every side* is much, as the apostles were, 2 Cor. iv. 8. but to be destroyed on every side, and all around, is more, and denotes utter destruction; it may have respect to the ruin of his substance and family, which were all demolished at once; his oxen and asses, which were on one side, his camels on another, his sheep on another, and his children on another, and all destroyed in one day, and perhaps in a few hours; and also to his body, which God had made, and had fashioned together round about; but now he had suffered it to be smitten with ulcers from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet; and this earthly tabernacle of his was demolishing on every side, and just falling down: for the allusion is either to the demolition of a building, or to the rooting up of a tree, and so continued in the next clause; comparing himself to a tree, that is dug about on all sides, and its roots laid bare, and these and all their fibres cut off, so that it is utterly destroyed from growing any more, but becomes dead; and this Job thought to be his case: and *I am gone;* or am a dead man, just going out of the world, the way of all flesh; and because of the certainty of it, and of its being very quickly, in a few minutes, as it were, he speaks of it as if it already was: wherefore it follows, *and my hope he hath removed like a tree;* not like a tree that is cut down to its roots, which remain in the ground, and may sprout out again, ch. xiv. 7. nor like a tree that is taken up with its roots, and removed to another place, and planted in another soil, where it may grow as well or better; but like a tree cut off from its roots, or pulled up by the roots, and laid upon the ground, when there can be no hope of its ever growing again; and so the hope of Job was like that; not his hope of salvation, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal life, which was strong and firm, ch. xiii. 15, 16. and xix. 25, 26, 27. nor can a good and well-grounded hope be removed; not the grace of hope, which is an abiding one; nor the ground of hope, which is Christ and his righteousness, upon which hope, as an anchor, being cast, is sure and steadfast; nor the object of hope, eternal glory and happiness laid up in heaven: but this is to be interpreted of Job's hope of a restoration to outward happiness, which his friends would have had him entertain, in case of repentance and reformation; but Job, as he was not sensible of his need of the one, as his friends understood it, he had no hope of the other, see ch. vi. 11. and xvii. 15.

Ver. 11. *He hath also kindled his wrath against me, &c.*] In this and some following verses the metaphor is taken from a state of warfare, in which enemies are engaged in an hostile way; in which way Job apprehended God was come forth against him; he imagined that the wrath of God, which is comparable to fire for its force and fury, was kindled against him; that it began to appear, and was bursting out in a flame upon him, and all around him, to consume him; he thought his afflictions were in wrath, which is often the mistaken apprehension of good men, see Psal. xxxviii. 1. and lxxxviii. 7, 16. and that the terrors of it were set in battle-array against him, ch. vi. 4. *and he counted me unto him as* one of *his enemies*; all men are by nature enemies to God, yea, enmity itself, and so are his own people whilst unregenerate, until the enmity of their hearts is slain, and they are reconciled to God by his spirit and grace; but as Job was truly a gracious man, and possessed of the fruits of the spirit, he must among the rest of his graces have the love of God in his heart; and he was sensible and conscious to himself that he was no enemy to God, and could appeal to him, as the searcher of hearts, that he knew he loved him; nay, he could not believe that God reckoned him his enemy, when he had given such a testimony of him, and of his fear of him, that there was none like him; and when Job so strongly trusted in him for salvation, and believed he should enjoy him for ever: but his sense is, that God treated him, by afflicting him in the manner he did, as if he was one of his enemies; had he really been one, he could not have used him, he thought, more roughly and severely; so that, judging according to the outward appearance of things, it might be concluded, as it seems it was by his friends, that he was a wicked man, an hypocrite, an enemy to God and godliness; but whereas Job thought that God dealt with him as with an enemy, he was mistaken; since when God afflicts his people, he deals with them as with sons, Heb. xii. 7.

Ver. 12. *His troops come together, &c.*] Afflictions which are many, and of which it may be said, as was at the birth of Gad, who had his name from the word here used, *a troop cometh*; Gen. xxx. 11. and these sometimes come together, or follow so quick one upon another, that there is scarce any interval between them, as did Job's afflictions; and they are God's hosts, his troops, his soldiers, which are at his command; and he says to them, as the centurion did to his, to the one, Go, and he goes, and to another, Come, and it comes: *and raise up their way against me*; as an army, when it comes against a place, throws up a bank to raise their artillery upon, that they may play it to greater advantage; or make a broad causeway, for the soldiers to march abreast against it; or an high cast-up way, as the word [y] signifies, over a ditch or dirty place in a hollow, that they may the better pass over: some read it, *they raise up their way upon me* [z]; he opposing and standing in the way was crushed down by them, and trampled upon, and over whom they passed as on an highway, and in a beaten path; see Isa. li. 23. but most render it, *against me*; for Job looked upon all his afflictions, as Jacob did, to be against him, to militate against him, and threaten him with ruin, when they were all working for him, even for his good: *and encamp round about my tabernacle*; as an army round about a city when besieging it. Job may have respect to the tabernacle of his body, as that is sometimes so called, 2 Cor. v. 1. 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. and to the diseases of it; which being a complication, might be said to encamp about him, or surround him on all sides.

Ver. 13. *He hath put my brethren far from me, &c.*] As it is one part of business in war to cut off all communication between the enemy and their confederates and auxiliaries, and to hinder them of all the help and assistance from them they can; so Job here represents God dealing with him as with an enemy, and therefore keeps at a distance from him all such from whom he might expect comfort and succour, as particularly his brethren; by whom may be meant such who in a natural relation are strictly and properly brethren; for such Job had, as appears from ch. xlii. 11. who afterwards paid him a visit, and shewed brotherly love to him; but for the present the affliction that God laid upon him had such an influence on them as to cause them to stand aloof off, and not come near him, and shew any regard unto him; and as this was the effect of the afflicting hand of God, Job ascribes it to him, and which added to his affliction; see Psal. lxix. 8. *and mine acquaintance are verily estranged from me*: such as knew him in the time of his prosperity, and frequently visited him, and conversed with him, and he with them; but now, things having taken a different turn in his outward circumstances, they carried it strange to him, as if they had never been acquainted with him: *si fueris felix*, &c.

Ver. 14. *My kinsfolk have failed, &c.*] Or *ceased* [a], not to be, or that they were dead, which is sometimes the sense of the word; but they ceased from visiting him, or doing any good office for him; those that were *near* [b] him, as the word used signifies; that were near him in relation, and were often near him in place, in his own house, in company and conversation with him, now ceased to be near him in affection; or to come nigh him, to converse with him and comfort him, and sympathize with him, which might be expected from persons nearly related: *and my familiar friends have forgotten me*; such as were well known to him, and he to them, and who not long ago were very loving and friendly to him, and very freely and familiarly conversed with him; but now they forgot him; the friendship that subsisted between them, the friendliness with which they had visited him, and the favours they had received from him; they so slighted and neglected him, that it seemed as if he was forgotten, as a dead man, out of mind; or as if they did not remember that there ever was, or at least that there now was, such a man in the world as Job: these could not be true friends; for *a friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity*, Prov. xvii.

[y] ויסלו aggerant, Cocceius, Schultens; straverunt, Montanus, Schmidt; a מסלה via strata & elevata, Mercerus, Drusius.

[z] עלי super me, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[a] חדלו desierunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Mercerus, Drusius, Piscator, Schmidt, Michaelis; cessant, Schultens.

[b] קרובי propinqui mei, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

17. a real friend loves, and continues to love, in adversity as well as in prosperity; and such an one, who sometimes sticks closer to a man than a brother, is born and designed to be of service to him in a time of trouble; but so it was ordered by divine Providence, and according to the will of God, that Job should meet with such treatment from his brethren, relations, acquaintance, and familiar friends, for the trial of his faith and patience.

Ver. 15. *They that dwell in mine house*, &c.] Not his neighbours, as the Septuagint; for though they dwelt near his house, they did not dwell in it; nor inmates and sojourners, lodgers with him, to whom he let out apartments in his house; this can't be supposed to have been his case, who was the greatest man in all the east; nor even tenants, that hired houses and lands of him; for the phrase is not applicable to them; it designs such who were inhabitants in his house. Job amidst all his calamities had an house to dwell in; it is a tradition mentioned by Jerom [c], that Job's house was in Carnea, a large village in his time, in a corner of Batanea, beyond the floods of Jordan; and he had persons dwelling with him in it, who are distinct from his wife, children, and servants after mentioned; and are either *strangers* [d], as the word sometimes signifies, he had taken into his house in a way of hospitality, and had given them lodging, and food, and raiment, as the light of nature and law of God required, Deut. x. 18, 19. Job xxxi. 32. or else proselytes, of whom this word [e] is sometimes used, whom he had been the instrument of converting from idolatry, superstition, and profaneness, and of gaining them over to the true religion; and whom he had taken into his house, to instruct them more and more in the ways of God, such as were the trained servants in Abraham's family: these, says he, *and my maids, count me for a stranger;* both the one and the other, the strangers he took out of the streets, and the travellers he opened his doors unto, and entertained in a very generous and hospitable manner; the proselytes he had made, and with whom he had taken so much pains, and to whom he had shewn so much kindness and goodness, and been the means of saving their souls from death; and his maidens he had hired into his house, to do the business of it, and who ought to have been obedient and respectful to him, and whose cause he had not despised, but had treated them with great humanity and concern; the Targum wrongly renders the word, *my concubines:* yet these one and another looked upon him with an air of the utmost indifference, not as if he was the master of the house, but a stranger in it, as one that did not belong unto it, and they had scarce ever seen with their eyes before; which was very ungrateful, and disrespectful to the last degree; and if they reckoned him a stranger to God, to his grace, to true religion and godliness, this was worse still; and especially in the proselytes of his house, who owed their conversion, their light and knowledge in divine things, to him as an instrument: *I am an alien in their sight;* as a foreigner, one of another kingdom and nation, of a different habit, speech, religion, and manners; they stared at him as if they had never seen him before, as some strange object to be looked at, an uncommon spectacle, that had something in him or about him unusual and frightful; at least contemptible and to be disdained, and not to be spoke to and familiarly conversed with, but to be shunned and despised.

Ver. 16. *I called my servant*, &c.] His man-servant, whom he had hired into his house, and who waited upon his person, and had been his trusty and faithful servant, and was dear unto him, and he had shewn him much respect and kindness in the time of his prosperity; him he called to him, to do this and that and the other thing for him as usual; and of whose assistance and service he might stand in more need, being so greatly afflicted in body as well as in other things; and who ought to have been obedient to his call in all things, and have served him with all readiness and cheerfulness, with all heartiness, sincerity, integrity, and faithfulness; and given him the same honour and reverence as before; but instead of all this, it is observed, *and he gave me no answer;* whether he would or would not do what he ordered him to do; he took no notice of him, he turned a deaf ear to him, and his back upon him; he came not near him, but kept his place where he was, or walked off without shewing any regard to what he said to him; he neither answered him by words, nor by deeds; neither signified his readiness to do what he was ordered, nor did it. In some cases it is criminal in servants to answer again, when they thwart and contradict their masters, or reply in a saucy, surly, and impudent manner; but when they are spoke to about their master's business, it becomes them to answer in a decent, humble, and respectable way, declaring their readiness to do their master's will and pleasure: *I entreated him with my mouth;* which is an aggravation of his insolence and disobedience; such was the low condition Job was reduced unto, and such the humility of his mind under his present circumstances, that he laid aside the authority of a master, and only entreated his servant, and begged it as if it was a favour, to do this or the other for him; nor did he signify this by a look and cast of his eye, or by a nod of his head, or by the direction of his hand; but with his mouth he spake unto him, and let him know what he would have done; and this not in an authoritative, haughty, and imperious manner; but with good words, and in submissive language, as if it was something he was beholden to his servant for, rather than obedience to be performed.

Ver. 17. *My breath is strange to my wife*, &c.] Being corrupt and unsavoury, through some internal disorder; see ch. xvii. 1. so that she could not bear to come nigh him, to do any kind office for him; but if this was his case, and his natural breath was so fetid, his friends would not have been able to have been so long in the same room with him, and carry on so long a conversation with him; rather therefore it may signify the words of his mouth, his speech along with his breath, which were very disagreeable to his wife; when upon her soliciting him to curse God and die,

[c] De loc. Heb. fol. 89. M.
[d] גרי peregrini, Schmidt, Schultens,
[e] Apud Rabbinos, passim.

he told her she talked like one of the foolish women; and when he taught her to expect evil as well as good at the hand of God, and to bear afflictions patiently: or else the sense may be, *my spirit*[f], his vital spirit, his life, was wearisome and loathsome to his wife; she was tired out with him, with hearing his continual groans and complaints, and wished to be rid of him, and that God would take away his life: or else, as some render it, *my spirit is strange* to me, *because of my wife*[g]; and then the meaning is, that Job was weary of his own life, he loathed it, and could have been glad to have it taken from him, because of the scoffs and jeers of his wife at him, her brawls and quarrels with him, and solicitations of him to curse God and renounce religion: *though I entreated her for the children's sake of mine own body;* this clause creates a difficulty with interpreters, since it is generally thought all Job's children were dead. Some think that only his elder children were destroyed at once, and that he had younger ones at home with him, which he here refers to; but this does not appear: others suppose these were children of his concubines; but this wants proof that he had any concubine; and besides an entreaty for the sake of such children could have no influence upon his proper wife: others take them for grandchildren, and who, indeed, are sometimes called children; but then they could not with strict propriety be called the children of his body; and for the same reason it cannot be meant of such that were brought up in his house, as if they were his children; nor such as were his disciples, or attended on him for instruction: but this may respect not any children then living, but those he had had; and the sense is, that Job entreated his wife, not for the use of the marriage-bed, as some suggest[h]; for it can hardly be thought, that, in such circumstances in which he was, there should be any desire of this kind; but to do some kind office for him, as the dressing of his ulcers, *&c.* or such things which none but a wife could do well for him; and this he entreated for the sake of the children he had had by her, those pledges of their conjugal affection; or rather, since the word has the signification of deploring, lamenting, and bemoaning, the clause may be thus rendered, *and I lamented the children of my body*[i]: he had none of those indeed to afflict him; and his affliction was, that they were taken away from him at once in such a violent manner; and therefore he puts in this among his family trials; or this may be an aggravation of his wife's want of tenderness and respect unto him; that his breath should be unsavory, his talk disagreeable, and his sighs and moans be wearisome to her, when the burden of his song, the subject of his sorrowful complaints, was the loss of his children; in which it might have been thought she would have joined with him, being equally concerned therein.

Ver. 18. *Yea, young children despised me,* &c.] Having related what he met with within doors from those in his own house, the strangers and proselytes in it, his maidens and men-servants, and even from his own wife, he proceeds to give an account of what befell him without; young children, who had learned of their parents, having observed them to treat him with contempt, mocked and scoffed at him, and said, there sits old Job, that nasty creature, with his boils and ulcers; or using some such contemptuous expression, as *wicked man;* so some translate the word[k]; he was scorned and contemned by profane persons, who might twit him with his religion, and ask, where was his God? and bid him observe the effect and issue of his piety and strict course of living, and see what it was all come to, or what were the fruits of it: the Vulgate Latin version renders it *fools*, that is, not ideots, but such as are so in a moral sense, and so signifies as before; and as these make mock at sin, and a jest of religion, it is no wonder that they despised good men: the word is rendered by a learned man[l], the *most needy clients*, who were dependent on him, and were supported by him; but this coincides with ver. 15. *I arose, and they spoke against me:* he got up from his seat, either to go about his business, and do what he had to do; and they spoke against him as he went along, and followed him with their reproaches, as children will go after persons in a body they make sport of; or he rose up in a condescending manner to them, when they ought to have rose up to him, and reverenced and honoured him; and this he did to win upon them, and gain their good will and respect; or to admonish them, chastise and correct them, for their insolence and disrespect to him; but it signified nothing, they went on calling him names, and speaking evil against him, and loading him with scoffs and reproaches.

Ver. 19. *All my inward friends abhorred me,* &c.] Or *the men of my secret*[m]; who were so very familiar with him, that he imparted the secrets of his heart, and the most private affairs of life, unto them, placing so much confidence in them, and treating them as his bosom-friends; for this is always reckoned a great instance of friendship, Job xv. 15. and yet their minds were set against him; their affections were alienated from him; they abhorred the sight of him, and declined all conversation with him, even all of them; not one shewed respect unto him: *and they whom I loved;* or *this whom I loved*[n]; this and that and the other particular friend, that he loved more than others: though all men are to be loved as the creatures of God, and as fellow-creatures, and especially good men, even all the saints; yet there are some that engross a greater share of love than others, among natural and spiritual relations; as Joseph was more loved by his father than the rest of his children; and, even by our Lord, John was loved more than the other disciples: and so Job, he had some particular friends that he loved above

[f] רוחי spiritus meus, Junius & Tremellius, Vatablus, Schmidt, Schultens; anima mea, Cocceius.
[g] לאשתי propter uxorem meam, Schmidt.
[h] R. Levi Ben Gersom; so some in Vatablus.
[i] וחנותי deploro, Cocceius; & miserans lugeo, Schmidt; & miseret me, Michaelis; comploro, Schultens.

[k] עוילים iniqui, Pagninus, Montanus; homines nequam, Tigurine version; so Ben Gersom.
[l] Clientes egentissimi, Schultens.
[m] מתי סודי viri secreti mei, Montanus; homines secreti mei, Cocceius, Schmidt; viri arcani mei, Beza, Mercerus; homines arcani mei consilii, Michaelis.
[n] וזה & quem, V. L. & hic seu is quem, Mercerus, Drusius.

others; and yet these not only turned away from him in the time of his adversity, and turned their backs on him, and would have nothing to say to him for his comfort, nor afford him any relief of any kind in his distress, but *were turned against him*, and became his enemies; and, as David says of some that he had a love for, *for my love, they are my adversaries*, Psal. cix. 4.

Ver. 20. *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh*, &c.] Or, *as to my flesh*[o], as Mr. Broughton and others render the words; as his bones used to stick to his flesh, and were covered with it, now his flesh being consumed and wasted away with his disease, they stuck to his skin, and were seen through it; he was reduced to skin and bone, and was a mere skeleton, what with the force of his bodily disorder, and the grief of his mind through the treatment he met with from God and men, see Lam. iv. 8. *and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth;* meaning not, as some understand it, his lips, which covered his teeth; for those cannot be properly called the skin of them; rather the fine polish of the teeth, which fortifies them against the hurt and damage they would receive by what is ate and drank; though it seems best to interpret it of the skin of the gums, in which the teeth are set; and the sense is, that Job had escaped with his life, but not with a whole skin, his skin was broken all over him, with the sores and ulcers upon him, see ch. vii. 5. only the skin of his teeth was preserved, and so Mr. Broughton renders it, *I am whole only in the skin of my teeth;* everywhere else his skin was broken; so the Targum, "I am left in the skin of my teeth." Some have thought that Satan, when he smote Job from head to feet with ulcers, spared his mouth, lips, and teeth, the instruments of speech, that he might therewith curse God, which was the thing he aimed at, and proposed to bring him to, by getting a grant from God to afflict him in the manner he did.

Ver. 21. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me*, &c.] Instead of calumny and censure, his case called for compassion; and the phrase is doubled, to denote the vehemence of his affliction, the ardency of his soul, the anguish of his spirits, the great distress he was in, and the earnest desire he had to have pity shewn him; and in which he may be thought not only to make a request to his friends for it, but to give them a reproof for want of it: *O ye my friends:* as they once shewed themselves to be, and now professed they were; and since they did, pity might be reasonably expected from them; for even common humanity, and much more friendship, required it of them, that they should be pitiful and courteous, and put on bowels of mercy and kindness, and commiserate his sad estate, and give him all the succour, relief, and comfort they could, see ch. vi. 14. *for the hand of God has touched me:* his afflicting hand, which is a mighty one; it lay hard and heavy upon him, and pressed him sore; for though it was but a touch of his hand, it was more than he could well bear; for it was the touch of the Almighty, who *toucheth the hills, and they smoke;* and if he lays his hand ever so lightly on houses of clay, which have their foundation in the dust, they cannot support under the weight of it, since they are crushed before the moth, or as easily as a moth is crushed.

Ver. 22. *Why do ye persecute me as God*, &c.] As if they were in his stead, or had the same power and authority over him, who is a sovereign Being, and does what he pleases with his creatures, and is not accountable to any for what he does; but this is not the case of men, nor are they to imitate God in all things; what he does is not in all things a warrant to do the like, or to be pleaded and followed as a precedent by them; they should be merciful as he is merciful, but they are not to afflict and distress his people because he does, and which he does for wise ends and reasons; for such a conduct is resented by him, see Zech. i. 15. God persecuted or pursued and followed Job with one affliction after another, and hunted him as a fierce lion does his prey, ch. x. 16. but this was not a reason why they should do the same. Some read the words, *why do ye persecute me as those*[p]? you that profess to be my friends, why do ye persecute me as those before mentioned, as those wicked men? or *with those*, with such reproaches and calumnies; but the original will not bear it: *and are not satisfied with my flesh?* It was not enough that he was afflicted in his body, and his flesh was ulcerated from head to feet, and was clothed with worms and clods of dust; they were not content that his children, which were his own flesh, were tore away from him, and destroyed; and that his substance, which is sometimes called the flesh of men, see Mic. iii. 3. and Rev. xvii. 16. was devoured, and he was spoiled and plundered of it; but they sought to afflict his mind, to wound his spirit, by their heavy charges and accusations, by their calumnies and reproaches, and hard censures of him; he suggests, that they dealt with him more cruelly than savage beasts, who, when they have got their prey, are satisfied with their flesh; but they, who would be thought to be his friends, were not satisfied with his.

Ver. 23. *O that my words were now written*, &c.] Not his things[q], as some render it, his affairs, the transactions of his life; that so it might appear with what uprightness and integrity he had lived, and was not the bad man he was thought to be; nor the words he had delivered already, the apologies and defences he had made for himself, the arguments he had used in his own vindication, and the doctrines respecting God and his providence which he had laid down and asserted; and was so far from being ashamed of them, or retracting them, that he wishes they had been taken down in writing, that posterity might read and judge of the controversy between him and his friends; but rather the words he was about to deliver in the following verses, expressing his faith in Christ, in the resurrection of the dead, and in a future state of happiness and glory; these he wishes were *written*, that they might remain as a standing testimony of his faith and hope; for what is written abides, when that which is only spoken is soon forgot, and not easily recalled: *O that they were printed in a book!* not writ-

[o] בעורי ובבשרי cuti meæ ut carni meæ, Tremellius, in one edition of his version.

[p] So Ben Gersom.

[q] מלי res meæ, Polychronius apud Pinedam in loc.

ten on loose sheets, which might be lost, but in a book bound up, or rolled up in a volume, as was the custom of ancient times; though this cannot be understood of printing properly taken, which has not been in use but little more than three hundred years, but of engrossing, as of statutes and decrees in public records; and the word for *statutes* comes from this that is here used.

Ver. 24. *That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!*] Or that they were written *with an iron pen and lead, that they were cut or hewn out in a rock for ever;* not with both an iron and leaden pen, or pencil; for the marks of the latter are not durable, and much less could it be used on a rock according to our version; but the sense seems to be, that they might be written with an iron pen, which was used in writing, Jer. xvii. 1. upon a sheet of lead, as the Vulgate Latin version; for it was usual in ancient times, as Pliny [r] and others relate, for books to be made of sheets of lead, and for public records to be engrossed, as in plates of brass, so sometimes in sheets of lead, for the perpetuity of them; or else it refers to the cutting out of letters on stones, as the law was on two tables of stone, and filling up the incisions or cuttings with lead poured into them, as Jarchi suggests: so Pliny [s] speaks of stone pillars in Arabia and the parts adjacent, with unknown characters on them; also this may have respect to the manner of writing on mountains and rocks formerly, as the Israelites at or quickly after the times of Job did. There are now, in the wilderness through which the Israelites passed, hills called Gebel-el-mokatab, the written mountains, engraved with unknown ancient characters, cut into the hard marble rock; supposed to be the ancient Hebrew written by the Israelites for their diversion and improvement, which are observed by some modern travellers [t]. In the last age, Petrus a Valle and Thomas a Novaria saw them; the latter of which transcribed some of them, some of which seemed to be like to the Hebrew letters now in use, and others to the Samaritans; and some agreed with neither [u]; and Cosmas the Egyptian [x], who wrote A. D. 535, declares on his own testimony, that all the mansions of the Hebrews in the wilderness were to be seen in stones with Hebrew letters engraved on them, which seemed to be an account of their journeys in it. The inscription on a stone at Horeb, brought from thence by the above-mentioned Thomas a Novaria, and which Kircher [w] has explained thus, "God shall make a virgin conceive, "and she shall bring forth a son," is thought by learned men to be of a later date, and the explication of it is not approved of by them [x]. Job may have in view his sepulchre hewn out of a rock, as was usual, and as that was our Lord was laid in; and so his wish might be that the following words were his funeral epitaph, and that they might be cut out and inscribed upon his sepulchral monument, his rocky grave; that every one that passed by might read his strong expressions of faith in a living Redeemer, and the good hope he had of a blessed resurrection.

Ver. 25. *For I know*, &c.] The particle ו, which is sometimes rendered by the copulative *and*, by an adversative *but*, and sometimes as a causal particle *for*, should not be rendered here by either; but as an explanative, *to wit*, or *namely*, as it is by Noldius [y], in connexion with the preceding words; in which Job wishes some words of his were written in a book, or engrossed on sheets of lead, or were cut out on some rock, and particularly were engraved on his tombstone; *namely*, these following, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, &c.; and to this agrees Broughton, *how that my Redeemer liveth;* let these be the words written, engraved, and cut out there: by my Redeemer, he means not any mere man that should rise up and vindicate him; for the account of his then living, and of his standing on the earth in the latter day, will not agree with such an one; nor God the Father, to whom the character of a Redeemer is seldom or ever given, nor did he ever appear or stand on earth, nor was his shape seen at any time, John v. 37. but the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our *Goel*, the word here used, our near kinsman, and so our Redeemer, to whom the right of redemption belonged; and who was spoken of by all the holy prophets, from the beginning of the world, as the Redeemer of his people, who should redeem them from all their sins; from the law, its curses and condemnation; from Satan, and his principalities and powers; from death and hell, and everlasting destruction; and that by giving himself a ransom for them; all which was known in the times of Job, ch. xxxiii. 24. and known by him, who speaks of him as *living;* he then existed not only as a divine Person, as he did from all eternity, but in his office-capacity as Mediator, and under the character of a Redeemer; for the virtue of his future redemption reached to all the ages before it, from the foundation of the world; besides, the epithet *living* points at him as the *living God*, as he is, Heb. iii. 12. and so equal to the work of redemption, and able to redeem, and mighty to save; of whom it is said, not that he has lived, or shall live, but *liveth;* ever lives; and so an expression of the eternity of Christ, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever; and who, though he died in human nature, yet is alive, and lives for evermore; he has life in and of himself, as he is God over all blessed for ever; and has life in him for all his people, as Mediator; and is the author of spiritual life in them, and the donor of eternal life to them; and because he lives, they shall live also. Now Job had an interest in him as the living Redeemer, and knew he had, which is the greatest blessing that can be enjoyed; an interest in Christ is of infinitely more worth than the whole world, and the knowledge of it exceeds all others; this knowledge was not merely speculative, nor only approbational and fiducial, though such Job had, ch. xiii. 15, 16. but the knowledge of assurance

[r] Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 11. Alex. ab Alex. l. 2. c. 30. Pausaniæ Messenica, sive, l. 4. p. 266. & Bœotica, sive, l. 9. p. 588.

[s] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 28 & 29.

[t] See a Journal from Cairo, &c. in 1722, p. 45, 46. and Egmont and Heyman's Travels, vol. ii. p. 171, 181.

[u] Antiqu. Eccles. Orient. p. 147.

[x] Apud Montfaucon, tom. 2. p. 205.

[w] Prodrom. Copt. c. 8. p. 201, 207.

[x] Vide Hottinger. Præfat. ad Cipp. Hebr. p. 6, 7, 8. Wagenseil. Carmin. Lipman. Confut. p. 429, &c.

[y] ואני nempe ego, Nold. Ebr. Concord. Partic. p. 696. No. 1750.

of interest; to know Christ as a Redeemer of men, and not our Redeemer, is of no avail; the devils know him to be a Redeemer, but not theirs: men may have an interest in Christ, and as yet not know it; interest is before knowledge; it is neither knowledge nor faith that gives interest, but God of his grace gives both interest and knowledge: and such a knowledge as here expressed is a peculiar favour; it is owing to an understanding given to know him that is true, and that we are in him that is true; and to the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Christ, and to the testimony which he bears; and such knowledge will support under the greatest afflictions and sorest trials; under the ill usage of friends, and the loss of nearest and dearest relations, and in the views of death and eternity; all which was Job's case: *and* that *he shall stand at the latter* day *upon the earth;* appear in the world in human nature; be the seed of the woman, and born of one, be made flesh, and dwell among men, and converse with them, as Jesus did; who stood upon the land of Judea, and walked through Galilee, and went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men; and this was in the last days, and at the end of the world, Heb. i. 1. and ix. 26. as a pledge of this there were frequent appearances of the son of God in an human form to the patriarchs; nor need it seem strange that Job, though not an Israelite, had knowledge of the incarnation of Christ, when it is said to[z] be the opinion of the Indian Brachmans that God often appeared in the form and habit of some great men, and conversed among men; and that Wistnavius, whom, they say, is the second Person of the triune God, had already assumed a body nine times, and sometimes also an human one; and that the same will once more be made by him; and Confucius, the Chinese philosopher[a], left it in writing, that the Word would be made flesh, and foresaw the year when it would be: or, *he shall rise the last out of the earth*[b]; and so it may respect his resurrection from the dead; he was brought to the dust of death, and was laid in the grave, and buried in the earth, and was raised out of it; and whose resurrection is of the greatest moment and importance, the justification, regeneration, and resurrection of his people depending on it: but this is not to be understood as if he was the last that should rise from the dead; for he is the first-fruits of them that sleep, and the first-born from the dead, the first that rose to an immortal life; but that he who, as to his divine nature, is the first and the last; or that, in his state of humiliation, is the last, the meanest, and most abject of men[c]; or rather, who, as the public and federal head of his people, is the last Adam, 1 Cor. xv. 45. and who did rise as such for their justification, which makes the article of his resurrection an unspeakable benefit: or, *he shall stand over the earth in the latter day*[d], in the last times of all, in the close of time, at the end of the world, at his appearing and kingdom, when he shall come to judge the quick and dead; those that will be alive, and those that will be raised from the dead, who will meet him in the air over the earth, and shall be for ever with him; and even then *he shall stand upon the earth;* for it is expressly said, that when he shall come, and all the saints with him, *his feet shall stand on the mount of Olives,* Zech. xiv. 4, 5. or, *he shall stand against the earth at the latter day*[e]; in the resurrection-morn, and shall exercise his authority over it, and command the earth and sea to give up their dead; and when at his all-commanding voice the dead shall come out of their graves, as Lazarus came out of his, he shall stand then upon the dust of the earth, and tread upon it as a triumphant Conqueror, having subdued all his enemies, and now the last enemy, death, is destroyed by the resurrection of the dead: what a glorious and enlarged view had Job of the blessed Redeemer!

Ver. 26. *And* though *after my skin* worms *destroy this* body, *&c.*] Meaning not, that after his skin was wholly consumed now, which was almost gone, there being scarce any left but the skin of his teeth, ver. 20. the worms in his ulcers would consume what was left of his body, which scarce deserved the name of a body, and therefore he points to it, and calls it *this*, without saying what it was; but that when he should be entirely stripped of his skin in the grave, then rottenness and worms would strip him also of all the rest of his flesh and his bones; by which he expresses the utter consumption of his body by death, and after it in the grave; and nevertheless, though so it would be, he was assured of his resurrection from the dead: *yet in my flesh shall I see God;* he believed, that though he should die and moulder into dust in the grave, yet he should rise again, and that in true flesh, not in an aerial celestial body, but in a true body, consisting of flesh, blood, and bones, which spirits have not, and in the same flesh or body he then had, his own flesh and body, and not another's; and so with his fleshly or corporeal eyes see God, even his living Redeemer, in human nature; who, as he would stand upon the earth in that nature, in the fulness of time, and obtain redemption for him, so he would in the latter day appear again, raise him from the dead, and take him to himself, to behold his glory to all eternity: or *out of my flesh*[f], out of my fleshly eyes; from thence and with those shall I behold God manifest in the flesh, my incarnate God; and if Job was one of those saints that rose when Christ did, as some say[g], he saw him in the flesh and with his fleshly eyes.

Ver. 27. *Whom I shall see for myself,* &c.] For his pleasure and profit, to his great advantage and happiness, and to his inexpressible joy and satisfaction, see Psal. xvii. 15. and xvi. 11. *and mine eyes shall behold, and not another;* or *a stranger*[h]; these very self-same eyes of mine I now see with will behold this glorious Person, God in my nature, and not the eyes of another, of a strange body, a body not my own; or as I have seen him with my spiritual eyes, with the eyes of faith

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[z] Huet. Alnetan. Quæst. l. 2. c. 13. p. 234.

[a] Martin. Sinic. Hist. l. 4. p. 131.

[b] ואחרון על עפר יקום qui postremus ex pulvere (terra) surget, Nold. ib.

[c] Novissimus i. e. miserrimus & abjectus, Bolducius; sic ultimus miserorum, Ciceron. Orat. pro Flacco 24.

[d] Supra pulverem, Cocceius, Schultens.

[e] Adhibebit suam vim pulveri, Tigurine version.

[f] מבשרי e carne mea, Tigurine version, Mercerus, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt, Schultens; so Gussetius, p. 446.

[g] Suidas in voce Ἰώβ, & Sept. in ch. xlii. 17.

[h] זר alienus, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus; extraneus, Drusius.

and knowledge, as my living Redeemer, so shall I see him with my bodily eyes after the resurrection, and enjoy uninterrupted communion with him, which a stranger shall not; one that has never known any thing of him, or ever intermeddled with the joy of saints here, such shall not see him hereafter, at least with pleasure; like Balaam, they may see him, but not nigh, may behold him, but afar off: though *my reins be consumed within me;* or *in my bosom;* the word *though* may be left out, and be read, *my reins are consumed within me;* or, *within my bosom*[i]; and both being the seat of the affections and desires, may signify his most earnest and eager desire after the state of the resurrection of the dead; after such a sight of God in his flesh, of the incarnate Redeemer, he believed he should have, insomuch that it ate up his spirits, as the Psalmist says, zeal for the house of God ate up his, Psal. lxix. 9. it was not the belief of restoration of health, and to his former outward happiness, and a deliverance from his troubles, and a desire after that, which is here expressed; for he had no faith in that, nor hope, nor expectation of it, as appears by various expressions of his; but much greater, more noble, more refined enjoyments, were experienced by him now, and still greater he expected hereafter; and his words concerning these were what he wished were written, and printed, and engraven; which, if they only respected outward happiness, he would never have desired; and though he had not his wish in his own way, yet his words are written and printed in a better book than he had in his view, and will outlast engravings with an iron pen on sheets of lead, or marble rocks. The Vulgate Latin version seems to incline to this sense, "this here is laid up in my bosom," that is, of seeing God in my flesh; so the Tigurine version, rather as a paraphrase than a version, *which is my only desire.*

Ver. 28. *But ye should say,* &c.] Here Job directs his friends what use they should make of this confession of his faith; they should upon this say within themselves, and to one another, *why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?* Why should we pursue him with hard words, and load him with censures and reproaches, as if he was an hypocrite, when it appears, by what he says, that he has truth in the inward parts, the true grace of God is in him; that he is rooted in the love of God, and in the person of the Redeemer; that he has the Spirit of God in him, and the divine seed which has taken root in him, and brings forth fruit: or that *the root of the word*[k] is in him; the word of God has a place in him, and is become the ingrafted word; the root-doctrines, the principal and fundamental truths of religion, are believed and professed by him, such as respect the incarnation of the Messiah, his resurrection from the dead, and coming to judgment, the resurrection of all the dead in the same body, a future state of happiness, in which saints will enjoy the beatific vision; since these things are firmly believed by him, though he may differ from us in some points about the methods of divine Providence, let us cease from persecuting him any further; see Rom. x. 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 29. *Be ye afraid of the sword,* &c.] Not of the civil magistrate, nor of a foreign enemy, but of the avenging sword of divine justice; lest God should whet the glittering sword of his justice, and his hand should take hold of judgment, in order to avenge the wrongs of the innocent; unless the other should also be considered as his instruments: *for wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword,* or *sins of the sword*[l]: the sense is, either that the wrath of men, in persecuting the people of God, puts them upon the commission of such sins as deserve to be punished with the sword, either of the civil magistrate, or of a foreign enemy, or of divine justice; or else the wrath of God brings on more punishments for their sins by means of the sword; and to this sense is the Targum, "when God "is angry for iniquities, he sends those that slay with "the sword:" *that ye may know* there is a *judgment;* that is executed in the world by the Judge of all the earth, who will do right; and that there is a future judgment after death, unto which every thing in this world will be brought, when God will judge the world in righteousness by Christ, whom he has ordained to be Judge of quick and dead; and which will be a righteous judgment, that none can escape; and when, Job suggests, the controversy between him and his friends would be determined; and it would be then seen who was in the right, and who in the wrong; and unto which time he seems willing to refer his cause, and to have no more said about it; but his friends did not choose to take his advice; for Zophar the Naamathite starts up directly, and makes a reply, which is contained in the following chapter.

CHAP. XX.

ZOPHAR and his friends, not satisfied with Job's confession of faith, he in his turn replies, and in his preface gives his reasons why he made any answer at all, and was so quick in it, ver. 1, 2, 3. and appeals to Job for the truth of an old established maxim, that the prosperity of wicked men and hypocrites is very short-lived, ver. 4, 5. and the short enjoyment of their happiness is described by several elegant figures and similes, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9. such a wicked man being obliged, in his life-time, to restore his ill-gotten goods, and at death to lie down with the sins of his youth, ver. 10, 11. his sin in getting riches, the disquietude of his mind in retaining them, and his being forced to make restitution, are very beautifully expressed by the simile of a sweet morsel kept in the mouth, and turned to the gall of asps in the bowels, and then vomited up,

[i] בחקי in sinu meo, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
[k] שרש דבר radix verbi, Montanus, Mercerus, Schmidt, Michaelis; radix sermonis, Cocceius; fundamenta negotii salutis, Tigurine version.

[l] עונות חרב iniquitates gladii, Montanus, Schmidt, Michaelis; so Cocceius, Schultens.

ver. 12—16. the disappointment he shall have, the indigent and strait circumstances he shall be brought into, and the restitution he shall be obliged to make for the oppression of the poor, and the uneasiness he shall feel in his own breast, are set forth in a very strong light, ver. 17—22. and it is suggested, that not only the hand of wicked men should be upon him, but the wrath of God also, which should seize on him suddenly and secretly, and would be inevitable, he not being able to make his escape from it, and which would issue in the utter destruction of him and his in this world, and that to come, ver. 23—28. And the chapter is concluded with this observation, that such as before described is the appointed portion and heritage of a wicked man from God, ver. 29.

Ver. 1. *Then answered* Zophar *the* Naamathite, *&c.*] Notwithstanding the sad distressed condition Job was in, an account of which is given in the preceding chapter, enough to pierce a heart of stone, notwithstanding his earnest request to his friends to have pity on him, and notwithstanding the noble confession of his faith he had made, which shewed him to be a good man, and the excellent advice he gave his friends to cease persecuting him, for their own good, as well as for his peace; yet, regardless of these things, Zophar starts up and makes a reply, and attacks him with as much heat and passion, wrath and anger, as ever, harping upon the same string, and still representing Job as a wicked man and an hypocrite; and said as follows.

Ver. 2. *Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer,* &c.] Or *to return* [a] and appear upon the stage again, and enter the lists once more with his antagonist; he suggests as if he had intended to have said no more in this controversy, but observing what Job had said last, could not forbear replying: *therefore* because he had represented him and his friends as cruel persecutors of him, as men devoid of all humanity, pity, and compassion, and endeavoured to terrify them with the punishments of the sword, and the judgment of God to come; these occasioned many *thoughts* in him, and those thoughts obliged him to give an answer; they came in so thick and fast upon him, that out of the abundance, his heart suggested to him he could not but speak, he was full of matter, and the spirit within him, the impulse upon his mind, constrained him to make a reply; and he seems desirous of having it understood that his answer proceeded from thought; that he did not speak without thinking, but had well weighed things in his mind; and what he was about to say was the fruit of close thinking and mature deliberation: *and for* this *I make haste:* because his thoughts crowded in upon him, he had a fulness of matter, an impulse of mind, promptitude and readiness to speak on this occasion, and for fear of losing what was suggested to him, he made haste to give in his answer, perhaps observing some other of his friends rising up before him. The Targum is, "because my "sense is in me;" and so other Jewish writers [b]; he apprehended he had a right sense of things, and understood the matter in controversy full well, and therefore thought it incumbent on him to speak once more in it: Gussetius [c] renders it, *because of my disquietude;* the uneasiness of his mind raised by what Job had said, that he would have them know and consider there was a judgment; and he intimates he had considered it, and was fearful that should he be silent, and make no reply, God would condemn him in judgment for his silence; and therefore he was in a hurry to make answer, and could not be easy without it; and for his reasons for so doing he further explains himself in the following verse.

Ver. 3. *I have heard the check of my reproach,* &c.] He took it that Job had reproached him and his friends, by representing them as hardhearted men, and persecuting him wrongly in a violent manner; and he had observed the *check* or reproof given for it, by bidding them beware of the sword, and lest the punishment of it should be inflicted on them; and if that should not be the case, yet there was a righteous judgment they could not escape. Now Zophar heard this, but could not hear it with patience; he could not bear that he and his friends should be insulted, as he thought, in this manner; and therefore it was he was in such haste to return an answer; though some [d] think he here pretends to a divine oracle, like that which Eliphaz makes mention of in the beginning of this dispute, ch. iv. 12, *&c.* which he had from God, and from which he had heard the *correction* of his *reproach* [e], or a full confutation of the thing Job had reproached him with; and being thus divinely furnished, he thought it his duty to deliver it: *and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer;* or his rational spirit, his natural understanding, furnished him at once with an answer; he had such a clear insight into the controversy on foot, and such a full view of it, that he thought himself capable of speaking very particularly to the matter in hand, and to the conviction and confusion of Job; nay, his conscience, or the spirit of his conscience, as Mr. Broughton renders it, not only readily dictated to him what he should say, but obliged him to it; though some think he meant the Holy Spirit of God, by which he would be thought to be inspired; that he *out* of his *understanding* [f], enlightened by him, caused him to answer, or would answer for him, or supply him with matter sufficient to qualify him for it; and this he might observe to Job, in order to raise his attention to what he was about to say.

Ver. 4. *Knowest thou* not *this of old,* &c.] Or *from eternity* [g], from the beginning of time, ever since the world was; as if he should say, if you are the knowing man you pretend to be, you must know this I am about to observe; and if you don't know it, you must be an ignorant man, since it is an ancient truth, confirmed by all experience from the creation; not that Job could know it so early, he was not the first man that

[a] ישיבוני reducunt me, q. d. in scenam; Cocceius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius.

[b] Ben Gersom, Bar Tzemach, Sephorno; and so Montanus.

[c] Ebr. Comment. p. 246.

[d] Schmidt.

[e] מוסר כלמתי correctionem ignominiæ meæ, Pagninus, Montanus; so Schmidt, Michaelis.

[f] מבינתי ex intelligentia mea, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus, Drusius, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[g] מני עד ab æterno, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Codurcus, Schmidt, Michaelis.

was born, nor was he made before the hills, but was of yesterday, and comparatively knew nothing: but the sense is, that this about to be delivered was an old established maxim, of which there had been numerous instances, *since man*, or *Adam, was placed upon earth*; referring to the putting of Adam in Eden to dress the garden, and keep it; and every man, ever since, is placed on earth by the ordination, and according to the will of God, where and for purposes he pleases: the instances Zophar might have in view are perhaps the expulsion of our first parents out of paradise, the vagabond state of Cain, the destruction of the old world by a flood, and of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire from heaven; which shew that God, sooner or later, gives manifest tokens of his displeasure at sin and sinners, by his punishment of them for it. What he means is as follows.

Ver. 5. *That the triumphing of the wicked is short*, &c.] Their outward prosperity and felicity, of which they make their boast, and in which they glory and triumph for a while; at first Job's friends set out with this notion, that the wicked never flourished and prospered, but it always went ill with them in Providence; but being beat out of that, they own they may be for a small time in flourishing and prosperous circumstances, but it is but for a small time; which may be true in many instances, but it is not invariable and without exception the case: the sense is, it is but a little while that they are in so much mirth and jollity, and triumph over their neighbours, as being in more advantageous circumstances than they; this is said in the original text to be *from near*[h]; it is but a little while ago when it began; and, as the Targum paraphrases it, it will be quickly ended: *and the joy of the hypocrite* but *for a moment*; the word *wicked*, in the former clause, may signify the same person here called the *hypocrite*; but inasmuch as that signifies one restless and troublesome, one that is ungodly, and destitute of the fear of God, that has nothing in him but wickedness, who is continually committing it, and is abandoned to it; it might be thought not to hit the character of Job, whom Zophar had in his view, and therefore this is added as descriptive of him: an hypocrite is one who seems to be that he is not, holy, righteous, good, and godly; who professes to have what he has not, the true grace of God, and pretends to worship God, but does not do it cordially, and from right principles; and who seeks himself in all he does, and not the glory of God: now there may be a joy in such sort of persons; they may hear ministers gladly, as Herod heard John, and receive the word with joy, as the stony-ground hearers did; they may seem to delight in the ways and ordinances of God, and even have some tastes of the powers of the world to come, and some pleasing thoughts and hopes of heaven and happiness; as well as they triumph in and boast of their profession of religion and performance of duties, and rejoice in their boastings, which is evil; but then this is like the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, or like the crackling of thorns under a pot, which make a great noise and blaze, but soon over, Eccl. vii. 6. and so their joy in civil as well as religious things. It is possible Zophar might be so ill-natured as to have reference to Job's triumph of faith, ch. xix. 25. and by this would suggest, that his faith in a living Redeemer, and the joy of it he professed, would be soon over and no more; which shews what spirit he was of.

Ver. 6. *Though his excellency mount up to the heavens*, &c.] Though, in worldly grandeur and glory, he should arrive to such a pitch as the Assyrian monarch was ambitious of, as to ascend into heaven, exalt his throne above the stars of God, and be like the Most High; or be comparable to such a tree, by which the greatness of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom is expressed, the height whereof reached unto heaven, Isa. xiv. 12, 14. Dan. iv. 11. *and his head reach unto the clouds*; being lifted up with pride, because of his greatness, and looking with contempt and scorn on others; the Septuagint version is, *if his gifts ascend up to heaven*, &c. which well agrees with an hypocrite possessed of great gifts, and proud of them; as Capernaum was highly favoured with external things, as the presence of Christ, his ministry and miracles, and so said to be exalted unto heaven, yet, because of its impenitence and unbelief, should be brought down to hell, Matt. xi. 23.

Ver. 7. Yet *he shall perish for ever like his own dung*, &c.] Not only in this world, but in the world to come, both in his outward substance here, and in his body in the grave, and in his soul to all eternity, and that in the most shameful and disgraceful manner; he shall perish in his own corruption, and like his own dung inevitably, which is never returned to its place again: dead bodies were reckoned by the ancients as dung, and the carcasses of men are rather to be cast out than dung[i]; and the Arabians used to bury in dunghills even their kings[k]; to which some[l] think the allusion is: *they which have seen him shall say, where* is *he?* such as formerly gazed at him, in his prosperity, with wonder and amazement at his grandeur and greatness, now being removed from his outward splendour, or from the world, by death, ask where he is, not being able to see him in his former lustre, nor in the land of the living; see ch. xiv. 10.

Ver. 8. *He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found*, &c.] Either as a dream which is forgotten, as Nebuchadnezzar's was, and can't be recovered; or as the matter and substance of a dream, which, though remembered, is a mere illusion; as when a hungry or thirsty man dreams he eats or drinks, but, awaking, finds himself empty, and not at all refreshed; what he fancied is fled and gone[m], and indeed never had any existence but in his imagination, Isa. xxix. 8. *yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night*; either the same as a nocturnal dream, or what a man fancies he sees in his dream; or like a mere spectre or apparition, which is a mere phantom, and, when followed and pursued, vanishes and disappears; so such a man before described is chased out of

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[h] מקרוב de propinquo, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[i] Heraclitus apud Strabo. Geograph. l. 16. p. 539.

[k] Strabo, ib.

[l] Pineda in loc.

[m] Σκιας οναρ ανθρωπος, Pindar. Pythia, Ode 8.

the world, and is seen in it no more, see ch. xviii. 18. the first clause, according to Sephorno, refers to the generation of the flood, and the second to the slaying of the first-born of Egypt in the night.

Ver. 9. *The eye also* which *saw him shall* see him *no more*, &c.] In this world, concerned in the affairs of life, and busy in worldly employments, and especially in the grandeur he sometimes was, if not removed by death; but the former sense seems most agreeable by what follows, *neither shall his place any more behold him;* the men of his place, as Ben Gersom, those that lived in the same place he did; or he shall not be seen, and known, and acknowledged any more as the master, owner, and proprietor of the house he formerly dwelt in; this seems to be taken from Job's own words in ch. vii. 10. The above Jewish commentator interprets this verse of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, whom Moses and the Israelites would see no more, Exod. x. 29. and xiv. 13.

Ver. 10. *His children shall seek to please the poor*, &c.] In this and some following verses the miserable state of a wicked man is described, and which begins with his children, who are often visited in wrath for their parents' sins, especially when they tread in their steps, and follow their example; and it is an affliction to parents to see their children in distress, and particularly on their account, and even to be threatened with it. According to our version, the sense of this clause is, that after a wicked man's death his children shall seek to gain the good will and favour of the poor who have been oppressed by him, that they may not reproach them, or take revenge on them, or apply to the civil magistrate to have justice done them; but Jarchi renders the words, "the poor shall oppress *or* "destroy his children;" and so the margin of our Bible, who, being enraged with the ill usage of their parents, shall fall upon them in great wrath, and destroy them, Prov. xxviii. 3. and the same Jewish writer restrains the words to the men of Sodom, who were oppressive and cruel to the poor; or rather the sense is, that the children of the wicked man shall be reduced to such extreme poverty, that they shall even seek relief of the poor, and supplicate and entreat them to give them something out of their small pittance; with which others in a good measure agree, who render the words, *his children shall please*, being *poor*[n]; it shall be a pleasure and satisfaction to those they have been injurious to, to see their children begging their bread from door to door, see Psal. cix. 5, 10. *and his hands shall restore their goods:* or *for his hands*, &c.[o]; and so are a reason why his children shall be so reduced after his death as to need the relief of others, because their parent, in his life-time, was obliged to make restitution of his ill-gotten goods, so that in the end he had nothing to leave his children at his death; for this restitution spoken of is not voluntary, but forced. Sephorno thinks reference is had to the Egyptians lending jewels and other riches to the Israelites, whereby they were obliged to repay 600,000 men for their service.

Ver. 11. *His bones are full* of the sins *of his youth*, &c.] Man is born in sin, and is a transgressor from the womb; and the youthful age is addicted to many sins, as pride, passion, lust, luxury, intemperance, and uncleanness; and these are sometimes brought to mind, and men are convinced of them, and corrected for them, when more advanced in years; and if not stopped in them, and reformed from them, they are continued in an old age; and the effects of them are seen in bodily diseases, which a debauched life brings upon them, not only to the rottenness and consumption of their flesh, but to the putrefaction of their bones; though this may be understood of the whole body, the bones, the principal and stronger parts, being put for the whole, and denote that general decay and waste which gluttony, drunkenness, and uncleanness, bring into, see Prov. v. 11—14. Some interpret this of *secret* sins[p], as the word is thought to signify, which, if not cleansed from and pardoned, will be found and charged on them, and be brought into judgment, and they punished for them, Psal. xc. 8. Eccl. xii. 14. *which shall lie down with him in the dust:* to be in the dust is to be in the state of the dead, to lie in the grave, where men lie down and sleep as on a bed; and this is common to good and bad men, all sleep in the dust of the earth, but with this difference, the sins of wicked men lie down with them; as they live in sin, they die in their sins; not that their sins die with them, and are no more, but they continue on them, and with them, and will rise with them, and will follow them to judgment, and remain with them after, and the guilt and remorse of which will be always on their consciences, and is that worm that never dies: of such it is said, that they *are gone down to hell with their weapons of war;* with the same enmity against God, against Christ, and his people, and all that is good, they had in their life-time: and *they have laid their swords under their heads;* in the grave, and shall rise with the same revengeful spirit they ever had against the saints, see Rev. xx. 8, 9. *but their iniquities shall be upon their bones;* both them, and the punishment of them, Ezek. xxxii. 27. The Jewish commentator last mentioned interprets the whole verse of Balaam, who died at the age of 33, and whose prosperity died with him, he leaving nothing to his children; and so he interprets the following verses of the curse he was forced to hide, which he would gladly have pronounced, and of the riches he received from Balak falling into the hands of the Israelites.

Ver. 12. *Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth*, &c.] Which may respect some particular sin, and by the context it seems to be the sin of covetousness, or of getting riches in an unlawful way, which is very sweet and pleasing to wicked men, whilst they are in such pursuits that succeed; and so Mr. Broughton renders it by *wrong;* though it may be applied to sin in general, which is *wickedness*, or an evil[q], being contrary to the pure and holy nature, will, and law of God; and it is evil in its effects on men, it having deprived them of the image and glory of God, and exposed them to his

[n] בניו ירצו דלים filii ejus placabunt, mendici, Montanus.
[o] So the English annotator.
[p] עלומיו ejus occultis, Montanus, Vatablus, Schmidt.

[q] רעה malum, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.

wrath, to the curses of his law, and to eternal death. Now this is *sweet* to an unregenerate man, who minds and savours the things of the flesh, whose taste is not changed, but is as it was from his birth, and who calls sweet bitter, and bitter sweet; such a man has the same delight in sin as a man has in his food, drinks up iniquity like water, and commits sin with greediness; for it is natural to him, he is conceived, born, and brought up in it; besides, some sins are what are more particularly called constitution-sins, which some are peculiarly addicted to, and in which they take a peculiar delight and pleasure; these are like the right hand or right eye, and they can't be persuaded, at any rate, to part with them: though *he hide it under his tongue;* not for the sake of concealing it, nor by denying, dissembling, or excusing it, but for the sake of enjoying more pleasure in it; as a gluttonous man, when he has got a sweet morsel in his mouth, don't let it go down his throat immediately, but rolls it under his tongue, that he may have all the pleasure of it he can; so a wicked man devises sin in his heart, keeps it on his mind, revolves it in his thoughts, and his meditation on it is sweet; and he is so far from hiding it from others, that he openly declares it, freely tells of it, and takes pleasure in so doing: *fools make a mock at sin;* it is their diversion and recreation.

Ver. 13. Though *he spare it,* &c.] Not that he feeds sparingly on it, for he eats of it freely and plentifully, with great eagerness and greediness; it designs the gratefulness of it to him: he does not spit it out as loathsome, having tasted of it, but retains it as sweet and pleasant; he spares it as Saul did Agag, and as a man spares his only son; sin being a child, a brat of a wicked man, and therefore it is dear unto him: *and forsake it not;* as he never will, until he is fully convinced of the evil of it, and it becomes exceeding sinful to him, and so loathsome and disagreeable; and he is restrained from it by the grace of God, and enabled by it to desert it, for such an one only finds mercy, Prov. xxviii. 13. *but keep it still within his mouth;* like an epicure, that will not suffer his food quickly to go down his throat into his stomach, that he may have the greater pleasure in tasting, palating, and relishing it; as Philoxenus, who wished his throat as long as a crane's, that he might be the longer in tasting the sweetness of what he ate and drank; so the wicked man keeps sin within his mouth, not by restraining his mouth from speaking evil, rather by a non-confession of it, but chiefly by continuing and persisting in it, that he might have all the pleasure and satisfaction he has promised himself in it.

Ver. 14. Yet *his meat in his bowels is turned,* &c.] Or *his bread* [r], to which sin is compared, being what the sinner lives in, and lives upon; what he strengthens himself in and with, and by which he is nourished unto the day of slaughter, and by means of which he grows and proceeds to more ungodliness, though in the issue he comes into starving and famishing circumstances; for this is bread of deceit, and proves to be ashes and gravel-stones; it promises pleasure, profit, liberty, and impunity, but is all the reverse; as meat turns in a man's stomach when it don't digest with him, or rather his stomach turns against that, and instead of its being pleasant and agreeable to him, it distresses him and makes him uneasy; sin being compared to meat in the bowels, denotes the finishing of sin after it has been conceived in the mind, and completed in the act: it is *the gall of asps within him;* which is bitter, though not poison; which yet Pliny [s] suggests, but it seems [t] it is not fact. Sin is an evil and bitter thing, and produces bitter sorrow, and makes bitter work for repentance in good men, Jer. ii. 19. Matt. xxvi. 75. and fills with distress inexpressible and intolerable in wicked men, as in Cain and Judas in this world, and with black despair, weeping, and gnashing of teeth, and dreadful horrors of conscience, in the world to come, to all eternity; the effect of it is eternal death, the second death, inevitable and everlasting ruin and destruction.

Ver. 15. *He hath swallowed down riches,* &c.] Not his own, but another's, which he has spoiled him of and devoured, with as much eagerness, pleasure, and delight, as a hungry man swallows down his food; having an excessive and immoderate love of riches, and an insatiable desire after them, which make him stick at nothing, though ever so illicit, to obtain them; and when he has got them into his possession, thinks them as safe as the food in his belly, and never once dreams of refunding them, which yet he must do, as follows: *and he shall vomit them up again;* that is, make restoration of them, not freely, but forcedly, with great reluctance, much pain of mind, and gripes of conscience: *God shall cast them out of his belly;* he shall oblige him to cast them up again, by working upon his heart, making his mind uneasy, loading his conscience with guilt, so that he shall have no rest nor peace until he has done it; though they are as meat in his belly within him, they shall not remain with him; though they are in his house, in his coffers, or in his barns, they shall be fetched out from thence.

Ver. 16. *He shall suck the poison of asps,* &c.] Or *the head of asps* [u]; for their poison lies in their heads, particularly in their *teeth* [w]; or rather is a liquor in the gums, yellow like oil [x]; according to Pliny [y], in copulation the male puts his head into the mouth of the female, which she sucks and gnaws off through the sweetness of the pleasure, then conceives her young, which eat out her belly; this is to be understood not of the man's sin, then it would have been expressed either in the past or present tense, as if that was sweet unto him in the commission of it, sucked in like milk from the breast, or honey from the honeycomb; such were his contrivances and artful methods, and the success of them in getting riches, but in the issue proved like the poison of asps, pernicious and deadly to him, which caused him to vomit them up again; for poison excites vomiting: but of the punishment of his sin; for putting men to death by the poison of asps was a punishment inflicted by some people upon malefactors; and however, it is certain death, and immediately and quickly dispatches, and without sense; so the wages of sin is

[r] לחמו panis ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Schmidt.
[s] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 37.
[t] Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 711. Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 819.

[u] ראש פתנים caput aspidum, V. L. Montanus.
[w] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 37. Ælian. Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 4.
[x] Philosoph. Transact. ut supra.
[y] Ib. c. 62.

death, and there is no avoiding it, and it comes insensibly on carnal men; they are not aware of it, and in no pain about it, until in hell they lift up their eyes as the rich man did: *the viper's tongue shall slay him;* though it is with its teeth it bites, yet, when it is about to bite, it puts out its tongue, and to it its poison is sometimes ascribed; though it is said [z] to be quite harmless, and therefore not to be understood in a literal sense, but figuratively of the tongue of a detractor, a calumniator and false accuser, such an one as Doeg; but cannot be the sense here, since the fall of the person here described would not be by any such means; but the phrase, as before, denotes the certain and immediate death of such a wicked man; for the bite of a viper was always reckoned incurable, and issued in sudden death, see Acts xxviii. 3—6.

Ver. 17. *He shall not see the rivers,* &c.] Of water, or meet with any to assuage his thirst, which poison excites, and so makes a man wish for water, and desire large quantities; but this shall not be granted the wicked man; this might be illustrated in the case of the rich man in hell, who desired a drop of cold water to cool his tongue, but could not have it, Luke xvi. 24. though rather plenty of good things is here intended, see Isa. xlviii. 18. as also the following expressions: *the floods, the brooks of honey and butter;* or *cream;* which are hyperbolical expressions, denoting the great profusion and abundance of temporal blessings, which either the covetous rich man was ambitious of obtaining, and hoped to enjoy, seeking and promising great things to himself, which yet he should never attain unto; or else the sense is, though he had enjoyed such plenty, and been in such great prosperity as to have honey and butter, or all temporal good things, flowing about him like rivers, and floods, and brooks; yet he should *see* them *no more,* so Broughton reads the words; and perhaps Zophar may have respect to the abundance Job once possessed, but should no more, and which is by himself expressed by such-like metaphors, ch. xxix. 6. yea, even spiritual and eternal good things may be designed, and the plenty of them, as they often are in Scripture, by wine, and milk, and honey; such as the means of grace, the word and ordinances, the blessings of grace dispensed and communicated through them; spiritual peace and joy, called the rivers of pleasure; the love of God, and the streams of it, which make glad his people; yea, eternal glory and happiness, signified by new wine in the kingdom of God, and by a river of water of life, and a tree of life by it, see Isa. lv. 1. and lxvi. 12. Joel. iii. 18. Psal. xxxvi. 8. and xlvi. 4. Rev. xxii. 1, 2. which are what carnal men and hypocrites shall never see or enjoy; and whereas Zophar took Job to be such a man, he may have a principal view to him, and object this to the beatific vision of God, and the enjoyment of eternal happiness he promised himself, ch. xix. 26, 27. Bar Tzemach observes, that these words are to be read by a transposition thus, *he shall not see rivers* of water, *floods of honey, and brooks of butter.*

Ver. 18. *That which he laboured for shall he restore,* &c.] This explains what was before figuratively expressed by vomiting, ver. 15. and is to be interpreted either of that which another laboured for; so the Targum paraphrases it, "another's labour;" and Mr. Broughton renders it, *he shall restore what man's pain gat:* and then the sense is, that that which another got by his labour, coming by some means or another into the hand of this rapacious, covetous, wicked man, he shall be obliged to restore to him again; or the hire of the labourer being detained in his hands, he shall be forced to give it to him, as the Egyptians, by lending the Israelites their jewels of gold and silver, restored to them the wages due to them for all their labour among them for many years; or else this is to be understood of what the wicked man himself had laboured for, who with much toil and labour, as well as trick and artifice, had got the wealth of others into his hands; but should be obliged to make restoration of it again, and along with that also what he had laboured for, and had got even in an honest and lawful way, the mammon of unrighteousness corrupting and marring his whole substance: *and shall not swallow it down;* or *not have time to devour it,* as Mr. Broughton; he shall be obliged so soon to restore it, that it shall be as if he had never had it; he shall have no enjoyment of it, at least no comfort, pleasure, and satisfaction in it: *according to* his *substance* shall *the restitution* be; the law of Moses required, in some cases, fourfold, in others five-fold, and sometimes seven-fold was exacted; and if a man had not sufficient to pay, all his substance was to go towards payment, and by this means what he lawfully got went along with that which was obtained in an illicit way, as before, see Exod. xxii. 1. Prov. vi. 31. *and he shall not rejoice* therein; not in the restitution he is forced to make, it being greatly against his will; nor in his ill-gotten substance, at least but for a little while, as in ver. 5. he shall neither enjoy it, nor have delight and pleasure in it, nor glory of it, as men are apt to do; Mr. Broughton reads this in connexion with the preceding clause thus, "and never rejoice in the wealth for which he "must make recompense."

Ver. 19. *Because he hath oppressed* and *forsaken the poor,* &c.] Having oppressed, crushed, and broken the poor to pieces, he leaves them so without pity and compassion for them, and without giving them any relief; he first by oppression makes them poor, or however poorer still, and then leaves them in such circumstances; for this does not suppose that he once was a favourer of them, and afforded them assistance in their necessities, and afterwards forsook them; but rather, as Ben Gersom gives the sense, he does not leave the poor until he has oppressed and crushed them, and then he does; Mr. Broughton's reading of the words agrees with the former sense, *he oppresseth and leaveth poor:* because *he hath violently taken away an house which he built not;* an house which did not belong to him, he had no property in or right unto, which, as he had not bought, he had not built; and therefore could lay no rightful claim unto it, and yet this he took in a violent manner from the right owner of it, see Mic. ii. 2. or *and,* or *but shall not build it* [a], or

[z] Scheuchzer, ut supra, p. 719.

[a] ולא יבנהו & non ædificabit eam, Pagninus, Montanus; & non ædificat eam, Cocceius, Schultens; non autem, Beza; sed non, Schmidt, Michaelis.

buildeth it not; he took it away with an intention to pull it down, and build a stately palace in the room of it; but either his substance was taken from him, or he taken away by death before he could finish it, and so either through neglect, or want of opportunity, or of money, did not what he thought to have done.

Ver. 20. *Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly,* &c.] Or happiness in his children, so some in Bar Tzemach; rather shall have no satisfaction in his substance; though his belly is filled with hid treasure, it shall give him no contentment; he shall be a stranger to that divine art, but ever have a restless craving after more, which is his sin; but rather punishment is here meant, and the sense is, that he shall have no quiet in his conscience, no peace of mind, because of his sin in getting riches in an unlawful way: *he shall not save of that which he desired;* of his desirable things, his goods, his wealth, his riches, and even his children, all being gone, and none saved; respect may be had particularly to Job's case, who was stripped of every thing, of all his substance and his children.

Ver. 21. *There shall none of his meat be left,* &c.] Not in his belly, all shall be cast up; none of his substance left for himself or others; none of his riches for his children or heirs, all being consumed: or this may respect either the profuseness or niggardliness of his living, that he should live in great luxury himself, but take no care of the poor; or else keep so mean a table, that there would be nothing left for the poor, not so much as a few crumbs to fall from it; but the first sense seems best; though some render the words, *there shall be none left for his meat* [b], or his substance; he shall leave no children, have no heirs, all his family shall be cut off, see ch. xviii. 19. *therefore shall no man look for his goods;* for there shall be none to look for them; or rather there shall be none to look for, all being gone: a man in good circumstances of life, his heirs expect to enjoy much at his death, but when he is stripped of all, as Job was, his relations and friends are in no expectation of having any thing at his death; and therefore don't think it worth their while to look out, or make an inquiry whether there is any thing for them or no, see ver. 28.

Ver. 22. *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits,* &c.] For though he may not only have a sufficient competency to live upon, but even a fulness of temporal blessings, have as much as heart can wish, or more, even good things, and plenty of them laid up for many years; yet amidst it all shall be reduced to the utmost straits and difficulties, either through fear of losing what he has, insomuch that his abundance will not suffer him to sleep in the night, nor to enjoy an hour's pleasure in the day; or being so narrow-spirited, notwithstanding his fulness, that he cannot allow himself to eat of the fruit of his labours, and rejoice therein; or fearing, notwithstanding all his plenty, that he shall come to want and poverty; or rather whilst he is in the most flourishing circumstances, and in the height of his prosperity, he is on a sudden, as Nebuchadnezzar was, dispossessed of all, and reduced to the utmost extremity; the Targum is, "when his "measure is filled, he shall take vengeance on him:" *every hand of the wicked shall come upon him:* or of the labourer, as the Targum, the hire of whose labour he has detained, or has taken away from him that which he laboured for; and so Broughton, "the hand of the "injured or grieved;" such as he had been injurious to, and had grieved by his oppressions of them; or rather every troublesome wicked man, the hand of every thief or robber; respect seems to be had to the hand of the Sabeans and Chaldeans, that had been on Job and his substance.

Ver. 23. When *he is about to fill his belly,* &c.] Either in a literal sense, when he is about to take an ordinary meal to satisfy nature; or in a figurative sense, when he is seeking to increase his worldly riches, and his barns and coffers, and endeavouring to get satisfaction therein: God *shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him;* or *send it out on him* [c]; out of the treasures of it, which are laid up with him, Deut. xxxii. 34, 35. into his conscience, and fill him with a dreadful sense and apprehension of it, and that with great force and violence, and cast it, and pour it on him like fire, or any scalding liquor, which is very terrible and intolerable. This intends the indignation of God against sin, and his just punishment of it, according to the rigour of his justice; sometimes it is only a little wrath and displeasure he shews, he does not stir up all his wrath; but here it is threatened he will cast it, and pour it in great plenty, even *the fury* of it, in the most awful and terrible manner: *and shall rain* it *upon him while he is eating;* signifying, that the wrath of God shall be revealed from heaven against him, from whence rain comes; that it shall fall on him from above, unseen, suddenly, and at an unawares, and come with a force and violence not to be resisted, and in great abundance and profusion. The allusion seems to be to the raining of fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah, the inhabitants of which were indulging themselves in gratifying the flesh, when that judgment came upon them, Luke xvii. 28, 29. and so it was with the Israelites, when they sinned against God in the wilderness, Psal. lxxviii. 30, 31. perhaps Zophar may glance at Job's children being slain while they were eating and drinking in their elder brother's house. Some render it, *upon his food* [d]; his meat, a curse going along with it, whilst he is eating it, his table becoming a snare unto him; or upon his wealth and riches, he is endeavouring to fill his belly or satisfy himself with; and others, *upon his flesh,* as the Targum; or *into his flesh;* as Broughton, and so many of the Jewish commentators [e]; meaning his body, filling it with diseases, so that there is no soundness in it, but is in pain, and wasting, and consuming; and Job's case may be referred to, his body being full of boils and ulcers.

Ver. 24. *He shall flee from the iron weapon,* &c.] The sword, for fear of being thrust through with it; the flaming sword of justice God sometimes threatens to take, and whet, and make use of against ungodly men; the sword of God, as Bar Tzemach observes, is

[b] אין שריד לאכלו non erit superstes hæres qui ejus bonis fruetur; so some in Mercer. Drusius.

[c] ישלח בו mittet in eum, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt; so Mercerus, Piscator.

[d] בלחומו in cibum illius, Tigurine version.

[e] Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, Bar Tzemach; in carne ejus, Pagninus, Montanus; super carnem ejus, Beza; in carnem ejus, Drusius, Mercer. Schmidt.

hereby figuratively expressed; fleeing from it, or an attempt to flee from it, shews guilt in the conscience, danger, and a sense of it, and a fear of falling into it, and yet there is no escaping the hand of God, or fleeing from his presence: and *the bow of steel shall strike him through;* that is, an arrow out of a bow, made of steel or brass, of which bows were formerly made, and reckoned the strongest and most forcible, see Psal. xviii. 34. signifying, that if he should escape the dint of a weapon, a sword or spear used near at hand, yet, as he fled, he would be reached by one that strikes at a distance, an arrow shot from a bow; the sense is, that, if a wicked man escapes one judgment, another will be sure to follow him, and overtake him and destroy him, see Isa. xxiv. 17, 18. Amos v. 19.

Ver. 25. *It is drawn, and cometh out of the body,* &c.] That is, the arrow with which a wicked man is stricken through; either it is drawn, and comes out of the quiver, as Broughton; or rather is drawn out of the body of a wicked man, being shot into it, and that in order that he may be cured of his wound if possible, but to no purpose, since it follows: yea, *the glittering* sword *cometh out of his gall;* being thrust into it, which being pierced and poured out, is certain and immediate death, see ch. xvi. 13. Some render it, yea, *the glittering* sword *out of his gall, he shall go away,* or *is gone*[f]; that is, he shall die, or is a dead man, there is no hope of him, when the arrow has transfixed his body, and the sword has penetrated into his gall, and divided that: *terrors* are *upon him;* the terrors of death, the plain symptoms of it being upon him; the terrors of an awful judgment, which follows after it; the terrors of the dreadful sentence of condemnation that will then be pronounced, *go, ye cursed,* &c. and the terrors of hell and eternal death, signified by utter darkness, unquenchable fire, and the never-ceasing torments of it. Some by them understand devils, those terrible spirits which haunt wicked men in their dying moments, and are ready to carry them to the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, where they are to be companions with them for ever. The word is sometimes used of gigantic persons, who are sometimes terrible to others; and since these are mentioned along with weapons of war, Bar Tzemach interprets them of men of strength and power, men of war or soldiers, whose fear falls on others.

Ver. 26. *All darkness* shall be *hid in his secret places,* &c.] In such places of secrecy, where he may promise himself safety, he shall find more calamities of all sorts; or every kind of judgments shall find him out, and come upon him, sometimes signified by darkness, see Isa. viii. 22. or utter darkness, the blackness of darkness; everlasting wrath, ruin, and destruction, are laid up and reserved in God's secret places for him, and lie hid among his treasures of vengeance, which he in due time will bring forth from thence, and punish the guilty sinner with, Jude, ver. 13. Deut. xxxii. 34, 35. or all this shall be because of secret sins, as Ben Gersom interpsets it; and so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *for his store;* that is, for the store of his sins, as he explains it, which, however privately and secretly committed, shall be brought into judgment; and there the hidden things of darkness will be brought to light, and sentence pass upon men for them: *a fire not blown shall consume him;* not blown by man, but by God himself; which some understand of thunder and lightning, such as fell on Job's sheep and servants, and consumed them, and which may be glanced at; and others of some fiery distemper, a burning fever, hot ulcers, carbuncles, &c. such as were at this time on Job's body; but the Targum, better, of the fire of hell; and so many of the Jewish commentators[g], as well as Christian; the Septuagint version renders it, *unquenchable fire;* and so Mr. Broughton; and such the fire of hell is said to be, Matt. iii. 12. Mark ix. 43, &c. and which is a fire kindled by the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, Isa. xxx. 33. *it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle;* not only it shall go ill with the wicked man himself, but with those he leaves behind him, that dwell in the house he formerly lived in, with his posterity; God sometimes punishing the iniquities of the fathers upon the children.

Ver. 27. *The heaven shall reveal his iniquity,* &c.] Either God the Maker and Possessor of heaven, who dwells there, and is sometimes so called, Dan. iv. 26. Luke xv. 18. who sees and knows all things, even those that are most secret, as well as more openly committed, and will make all manifest, sooner or later; or else the angels of heaven, the inhabitants of it, so the Targum; who in the last day will be employed in gathering out of Christ's kingdom all that offend, and do iniquity, Matt. xiii. 41, 42. or the judgments of God descending from heaven, or appear there, and are owing to it; such as drowning the old world by opening the windows of heaven, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire and brimstone from thence, and the destruction of persons by thunder and lightning, and the like; which judgments falling upon men, shew them to be guilty of crimes deserving of the wrath of God, see Rom. i. 18. *and the earth shall rise up against him;* when that becomes barren for the sins of men, and nothing but things hurtful to man rise up out of it; when it discloses the blood of murdered persons, and will at last give up the wicked dead that are buried in it; the Targum is, "the inhabitants of the "earth;" and may be interpreted of their enmity, opposition, and hostility.

Ver. 28. *The increase of his house shall depart,* &c.] Either his children or his substance. Some interpret it, as Kimchi[h] observes, of the walls of his house, because of what follows, *they shall flow away,* &c. as if he should say, the stones of his house shall fall down, and his habitation shall be destroyed, according to Mic. i. 6. where a dilapidation is expressed by a flow, or pouring down of stones: and his goods *shall flow away in the day of his wrath;* in the day of the wrath of God upon him, which will come upon him like water spilt on the ground, of no more use and service to him; the Targum interprets it of oil and wine, which shall flow away and cease, and so Mr. Broughton renders it, *fruits for his house;* all desirable and useful ones, see Rev. xviii. 14.

Ver. 29. *This* is *the portion of a wicked man from*

[f] יהלך abibit e vivis; so some in Michaelis; abit, Schultens.
[g] Jarchi, Sephorno, and others.

[h] Sepher Shorash. rad. יבל.

God, &c.] All before related, and which is very different from the portion of a good man, which is God himself, both here and hereafter; the wicked man has indeed his portion from God, which he has assigned him, but his portion is not himself; nor is it with him, nor with his people, but it is at most and best in this life, and but a worldly one, and hereafter will be with devils and damned spirits; and a dreadful portion it is to be banished from the presence of God to all eternity, and take up an everlasting abode with such company: *and the heritage appointed unto him by God*; it is not only a portion allotted to him, but an inheritance to abide continually with him; and this by the irreversible decree and appointment of God, who has fore-ordained ungodly men to condemnation, and made, appointed, and reserved them to the day of wrath and destruction. Some choose to render the clause, *and the inheritance of his word* or *words*[i] is *unto him by God*; that is, punishment shall be inflicted upon him, and continue with him as an inheritance, because of his words, his indecent words, hard speeches and blasphemies uttered by him; referring, as 'tis thought, to the words which had dropped from the lips of Job.

CHAP. XXI.

THIS chapter contains Job's reply to Zophar's preceding discourse, in which, after a preface exciting attention to what he was about to say, ver. 1—6. he describes by various instances the prosperity of wicked men, even of the most impious and atheistical, and which continues with them as long as they live, contrary to what Zophar had asserted in ch. xx. 5. ver. 7—15. as for himself, he disapproved of such wicked men as much as any, and owns that destruction comes upon them sooner or later, and on their posterity also, ver. 16—21. but as God is a God of knowledge, and needs no instruction from any, and is a sovereign Being, he deals with men in different ways; some die in great ease, and peace, and prosperity, and others in bitterness and distress, but both are alike brought to the dust, ver. 22—26. and whereas he was aware of their censures of him, and their objections to what he had said, he allows that the wicked are reserved to the day of destruction, which is future, and in the mean while lie in the grave, where all must follow; yet they are not repaid or rewarded in this life, that remains to be done in another world, ver. 27—33. and concludes, that their consolation with respect to him was vain, and falsehood was in their answers, ver. 34.

Ver. 1. *But Job answered and said*.] In reply to what Zophar had asserted, concerning the prosperity of the wicked being only for a short time; the contrary to which he most clearly proves, and that in many instances their prosperity continues as long as they live; that they die in it, and it is enjoyed by their posterity after them.

Ver. 2. *Hear diligently my speech*, &c.] The following oration or discourse he was about to deliver concerning the prosperity of wicked men; to which he desires their closest attention, that they might the better understand the force of his reasoning, the evidences and proof of facts he should give; whereby, if their minds were open to conviction, they would clearly see their mistake, and that truth lay on his side: *and let this* be *your consolations*; or *this shall be your consolations*[k]; meaning, either that they would receive instruction and benefit by his discourse, which would yield them pleasure and comfort; and to an ingenuous mind, to be convinced of an error, to have mistakes rectified, and to get knowledge of the truth, it is a real satisfaction, and affords pleasure; or else, that whereas their end in paying him a visit was to comfort him, and they had taken methods, as they thought, in order to it, but in Job's opinion to very little purpose, yea, they were, as he says, miserable comforters; now he observes, that if they would but be silent, and attentively listen to what he had to say, that would be in the room of all comforts they could give unto him; it would be a consolation to him, and be reckoned by him, instead of all they could give, or could propose to him, if he might have but this favour, to be heard with candour, diligence, and attention.

Ver. 3. *Suffer me that I may speak*, &c.] To go on with his discourse, without any interruption, until he had finished it; as he before craves their attention, here he entreats their patience to hear him out, as well as to give him leave to begin; they might by their gestures seem as if they were breaking up and departing; or they raised a tumultuous clamour, to hinder his proceeding to reply; or he might fear, that if he was allowed to speak, they would break in upon him before he had done, as they had already; or *bear me*, as several of the Jewish commentators explain the phrase; though what he was going to say might sit heavy upon their minds, and be very burdensome, grating, and uneasy to them; yet he entreats they would endure it patiently, until he had made an end of speaking: *and after that I have spoken, mock on*; as they had already, ch. xii. 4. and xvii. 2. they had mocked not at his troubles and afflictions, but at his words and arguments in vindication of his innocence; and now all he entreats of them is, that they would admit him to speak once more, and to finish his discourse; and then if they thought fit, or if they could, to go on with their scoffs and derisions of him; if he could but obtain this favour, he should be easy, he should not regard their mockings, but bear them patiently; and he seems to intimate, that he thought he should be able to say such things to them, that would spoil their mocking,

[i] נחלת אמרו hæreditas eloquii ejus, Pagninus, Montanus; verborum ejus, V. L. impie dictorum ejus, Codurcus.

[k] ותהי זאת & hoc erit consolationes vestræ, Beza, Mercerus; so Jarchi; idque pro consolatione vobis, Tigurine version; pro consolationibus vestris, Schultens.

and prevent it for the future; so the Greek version renders it, *thou shalt not laugh;* and the words being singular have led many to think, that Zophar, who spoke last, is particularly intended, though it may respect every one of his friends.

Ver. 4. *As for me, is my complaint to man?* &c.] Job had been complaining, and still was, and continued to do so after this, but not to them, his friends, nor any other man; his complaint was made to God, and of him he thought he was hardly dealt with by him, he could not tell for what; he had desired to know the reason why he contended with him in such a manner, but could get no satisfaction; when his friends came first to visit him, they said nothing to him, nor he to them; and when he did speak, it was not to them, but to God, of whom he complains, and expostulates with him why he had ever been born, or had not died as soon as born, and not have lived to have seen such unhappy days, and endured so much affliction and trouble: *and if* it were so; that he had made his complaint to man, since it would have been in vain, and to no purpose, he should have got no relief, nor obtained any satisfaction: *why should not my spirit be troubled?* or *shortened*[l]; or, as the Targum, be straitened; for as comfort and joy enlarge the heart, trouble contracts and straitens it; or is *my prayer* or [m] *petition to men?* it was not, though he was reduced so low, and was in such a distressed condition; he had asked nothing of men, not of these his friends, neither to give him of their substance, nor to help him out of the hands of his enemies, ch. vi. 21, 23. he had poured out his complaint before God, and had directed his prayer to the God of his life; he had desired to speak to none but the Almighty, and to reason only with him; he had petitioned him to take cognizance of his case, and to admit of a hearing of it before him, and to have it determined by him; he had complained of wrongs and injuries done him, and begged to be redressed and righted, but got no answer; God did not think fit to answer him, but hid himself from him, and continued so to do: *and if*, if this be the case, as it really was, *why should not my spirit be troubled?* is there not reason for it? Some think Job's meaning is, is *my disputation*, as the Vulgate Latin version, or is my discourse concerning human things, things within the compass of human knowledge and reasoning? or, to be attained to by the force of that, without divine revelation? no, it is concerning divine things; concerning the mysteries of Providence, with respect to good and bad men; concerning the living Redeemer, his incarnation, resurrection, *&c.* and faith in him; concerning the general resurrection, the final judgment, and a future state of happiness: or does my complaint, petition, or discourse, savour of that which is human, and is intermixed with human frailty? if it be so, it should be borne with, it should be considered I am but a man, and liable to err; and especially great allowances should be made in my present circumstances, being under such sore afflictions; and it may be reasonably thought, that though the spirit may be willing to behave in a better manner, the flesh is weak, and much must be imputed unto that; and it will not seem so extravagant to indulge a troubled spirit so severely exercised; persons under afflictions generally think they do well to be troubled, and that there is reason enough for it, and ought to be borne with, and not to be reproached and rallied on that account.

Ver. 5. *Mark me*, &c.] Or *look at me*[n]; not at his person, which was no lovely sight to behold, being covered with boils from head to foot, his flesh clothed with worms and clods of dust, his skin broken, yea, scarce any left; however, he was become a mere skeleton, reduced to skin and bone; but at his sorrows, and sufferings, and consider and contemplate them in their minds, and see if there was any sorrow like his, or any one that suffered as he did, and in such pitiful circumstances; or that they would have a regard to his words, and well weigh what he had said, or was about to say, concerning his own case, or concerning the providences of God with respect to good and bad men, and especially the latter: *and be astonished:* at what had befallen him, at his afflictions, being an innocent man, and not chargeable with any crime for which it could be thought that these came upon him; and at the different methods of Providence towards good men and bad men, the one being afflicted, and the other in prosperous circumstances, see ch. xvii. 8. *and lay* your *hand upon* your *mouth;* and be silent, since such dispensations of Providence are unsearchable, and past finding out; and, as they are not to be accounted for, are not to be spoken against: and it would have been well if Job had taken the same advice himself, and had been still, and owned and acknowledged the sovereignty of God, and not opened his mouth in the manner he had done, and cursed the day of his birth, and complained of hard treatment at the hand of God; perhaps his sense may be, that he would have his friends be silent, and forbear drawing the characters of men from the outward dealings of God with them. This phrase is used of silence in ch. xxix. 9. and xl. 4. thus Harpocrates, the god of silence with the Heathens, is always pictured with his hand to his mouth.

Ver. 6. *Even when I remember*, &c.] Either the iniquities of his youth he was made to possess; or his former state of outward happiness and prosperity he had enjoyed, and reviewed his present miserable case and condition, and called to mind the evil tidings brought him thick and fast of the loss of his substance, servants, and children, which were so terrible and shocking; or when he reflected on the instances of Providence he was about to relate in the following verses: *I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh;* which is sometimes the case of good men, both with respect to the judgments of God upon the wicked, and with respect to what befalls, or is coming upon, the people of God, Psal. cxix. 120. Hab. iii. 16. and even the different treatment of good and bad men in this life, as that the one should be severely afflicted

[l] תקצר abbreviabitur, Montanus, Vatablus, abbreviaretur, Drusius, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[m] שיחי precatio mea, Drusius.

[n] פנו אלי respicite ad me, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.

and distressed, and the other be in such prosperous and happy circumstances, is not only a sore temptation to them, but shocks their minds, and makes them shudder and stagger at it, and gives them great pain and uneasiness, Psal. lxxiii. 2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 16. Jer. xii. 1, 2.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore do the wicked live*, &c.] Which question is put either to God himself, as not knowing how to account for it, or to reconcile it to his divine perfections; that he, a holy, just, and righteous Being, should suffer such wretches to live upon his earth, who had been, and still were, continually sinning against him, transgressing his law, and trampling under foot his power and authority; when he, a man that feared the Lord, as God himself had borne witness of him, laboured under such heavy affliction, that he seemed rather to die than live: or else it is put to his friends, to whom he appeals for the truth of it, as Zophar had to him, about the short time of the prosperity of the wicked, ch. x. 4, 5. and desires them to try how they could make such undeniable facts comport with their own principles, that wicked men are always and only afflicted to any great degree, and not holy and good men; but if so, it is asked, why do they *live*, even live at all? why is not their breath stopped at once, that breathe out nothing but sin and wickedness? or why are they *lively?* as Mr. Broughton renders the word; that is, brisk, cheerful, and jocund, live merrily, having an abundance of this world's good things; call upon themselves to eat, drink, and be merry, and indulge themselves in all the gratifications of sensual pleasures and delights; live at ease, in peace and outward comfort, and are not in trouble as other men, having nothing to disturb, disquiet, and distress them; nay, not only live comfortably, but live long: whilst a righteous man perishes or dies in his righteousness, the wicked man prolongs his life in his wickedness, Eccl. vii. 15. as it follows: *become old;* live to a considerable old age, as Ishmael did, to whom he may have respect, as well as to some others within his knowledge; or are *durable* [n], not only in age, as the sinner is supposed to die, and sometimes does die an hundred years old, or more, but in wealth and riches, in outward prosperity; for though spiritual riches are only durable riches, in opposition to temporal ones, yet these sometimes endure with a wicked man, and he endures with them as long as he lives, as may be seen in the instances of wicked rich men in Luke xii. 16—20. and xvi. 19, 22. with which agrees what follows: *yea, are mighty in power?* are in great authority among men, being kings, princes, civil magistrates, see Psal. xxxvii. 35. are advanced to great dignity and honour, as the twelve princes that sprung from Ishmael, and the race of kings and dukes that came from Esau. Mr. Broughton renders it, *be mighty in riches*, greatly increase in them; and so the Targum, possess substance or riches.

Ver. 8. *Their seed* is *established in their sight with them*, &c.] Which is to be understood not of seed sown in the earth, and of the permanence and increase of that, but of their children; to have a numerous progeny, was reckoned a great temporal blessing, and to have them settled happily and comfortably in the world was an additional one; and what contributed still more to their felicity was, that they were well settled during their life, or they yet living, and with their eyes beholding their prosperous and stable condition; and also *with them;* near them, in the same neighbourhood, or at no great distance from them; or even in like circumstances with them, equally as well settled and as prosperous as themselves, as this phrase is sometimes used, see Psal. cvi. 6. *and their offspring before their eyes;* their children's children, as the Targum, and so the Vulgate Latin version; so that prosperity attends not only wicked men and their children, but also their grandchildren, and they live to see these grown up and settled in the world, and in thriving circumstances; all which must give them pleasure, and be matter of honour and glory to them, Prov. xvii. 6. Now this is diametrically opposite to Zophar's notion of the short continuance of the prosperity of wicked men, and of the low and miserable condition of their children, ch. xx. 5, 10, 21, 26, 28.

Ver. 9. *Their houses* are *safe from fear*, &c.] Of enemies besetting them, entering into them, and pillaging and plundering them; of thieves and robbers breaking into them, and carrying off their substance: or *their houses* are *peace* [o]; their families live in peace among themselves, or enjoy all prosperity, which the word peace frequently signifies; they have peace and prosperity within doors, and are free *from fear*, or devoid of fear, from any thing without; *neither* is *the rod of God upon them;* neither his rod of chastisement, which is upon his own people, and with which he scourges every son, though in love, for their good, and which was now upon Job, ch. ix. 34. nor any sore judgment, as famine, plague, sword, or any other; no, not even the common afflictions and troubles that men are exercised with.

Ver. 10. *Their bull gendereth, and faileth not*, &c.] As the wicked man's prosperity is described before by the increase and comfortable settlement of his children and grandchildren, and by the peace and safety of all within doors; here it is further set forth by the increase of his kine in the fields, one part being put for the whole, his oxen and asses, his camels and sheep, things in which the riches of men chiefly lay in those times and countries; and he was reckoned an happy man when these brought forth abundantly; see Psal. cxliv. 13, 14, 15, *their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf;* both male and female succeed in propagating their species, and so in increasing the wealth of their owner; this is sometimes promised as a temporal blessing, Exod. xxiii. 26.

Ver. 11. *They send forth their little ones like a flock*, &c.] Of sheep, which are creatures very increasing, and become very numerous, Psal. cxliv. 13. to which a large increase of families may be compared, Psal. cvii. 41. for this is not to be interpreted of their kine sending or bringing forth such numbers as to be like a flock of sheep; but of the families of wicked men being increased in like manner; and the sending them forth is to be understood either of the birth of their children, being sent out or proceeding from them as plants out

[n] עתקו durant, Mercerus, Cocceius, Michaelis; edurant, Schultens.

[o] שלום pax, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Schultens.

of the earth, or branches from a tree; or of their being sent out not to school to be instructed in useful learning, but into the streets to play, and pipe, and dance; and it may denote, as their number, so their being left to themselves, and being at liberty to do as they please, being under no restriction, nor any care taken of their education; at least in such a manner as to have a tendency to make them sober, virtuous, and useful in life: *and their children dance*; either in an inartificial way, skip and frisk, and play like calves and lambs, and so are very diverting to their parents, as well as shews them to be in good health; which adds to their parents' happiness and pleasure: or in an artificial way, being taught to dance; and it should be observed, it is *their* children, the children of the wicked, and not of the godly, that are thus brought up; so Abraham did not train up his children, nor Job his; no instance can be given of the children of good men being trained up in this manner, or of their dancing in an irreligious way; however, this proves in what a jovial way, and in what outward prosperity and pleasure, wicked men and their families live; which is the thing Job has in view, and is endeavouring to prove and establish.

Ver. 12. *They take the timbrel and harp*, &c.] Not the children, but the parents of them; these took these instruments of music into their hands, and played upon them whilst their children danced; thus merrily they spent their time: or, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra, they lift up the voice with the tabret and harp; that is, whilst they played on these with their hands, they sung songs with their mouths; they used both vocal and instrumental music together, to make the greater harmony, and give the greater pleasure, like those in Amos vi. 5, 6. *and rejoice at the sound of the organ;* a musical instrument, very pleasant and entertaining, from whence it has its name in the Hebrew tongue; but of what form it was cannot be with certainty said; that which we now so call is of later invention, and unknown in those times: probably Job may have respect to Jubal, the inventor of this sort of music, and others of the posterity of Cain before the flood, who practised it, and were delighted in it; in which they were imitated and followed by wicked men after it, and in Job's time, Gen. iv. 21.

Ver. 13. *They spend their days in wealth*, &c.] Or *in good*[p]; not in the performance of good works, or in the exercise of that which is spiritually good; or in seeking after spiritual good things, or eternal happiness; but in earthly good, in the enjoyment of the temporal good things of this life, and which to enjoy in a moderate and becoming manner is not criminal, but commendable; but these men, and such as they, seek no other good but worldly good; their language is, *who will shew us any good?* any outward good; the way to get it, how to come at it, and be put in the possession of it: such place all their happiness in such sort of good, and spend all their time either in getting it, or in enjoying it, and in nothing else; not in spiritual exercises, in prayer, or praise, in their own houses, in private; nor in an attendance on the worship of God in public; it denotes also their continuance in prosperity unto the end of their days; for there is a various reading; we follow the Keri, or margin, but the Cetib, or writing, is, *they become old*[q]; in wealth, or good things, and which is followed by many; they live all their days in the midst of wealth and riches, and die in such circumstances, contrary to what Zophar had asserted in ch. xx. 5. *and in a moment go down to the grave;* the house appointed for all living, man's long home, into which he is said to go down, because let down and interred in the earth; hither wicked men must come, after all their wealth, riches, prosperity, and pleasure; and hither they descend *in a moment;* suddenly, no previous change being made in their outward circumstances; and without any presage or fore-notice of it, without any lingering disease and sickness leading on to it, there being no *bands* in their death, nothing to hinder and restrain from dying; but they drop at once into the grave, without sickness or pain: or *in rest*, or *quietly*[r]; being wholly at ease and quiet, as in ver. 23. not only free from acute pains and grievous distempers, as burning fevers, and violent tortures, and racks of the stone, and other distressing disorders; but without any distress of mind, ignorant of their state and condition, and unconcerned about it; as they are at ease from their youth, and settled on their lees, they remain so, and go out of the world in like manner; and as sheep are laid in the grave, die senseless and stupid, having no thought in their last moments what will become of them in another world: some render it, *they go down to hell*[s]; the state and place of the wicked after death; which, though true, seems not so agreeable to Job's scope and design, which is not to describe the punishment of the wicked, but their easy circumstances in life and in death; and so the Jewish commentators generally understand it. Aben Ezra's note is, "in a moment, without afflic-"tions;" Jarchi, "quietly, without chastisements;" and Bar Tzemach, "without evil diseases;" having nothing to distress them in body or mind, when many a good man lies long on a bed of languishing, tortured with diseases, chastened with sore pain, and his life gradually draws near to the grave, and to the destroyers.

Ver. 14. *Therefore they say unto God*, &c.] Whilst in health and life, amidst all their outward prosperity, and because of it; for worldly riches have this tendency, to make men proud and insolent, and not only to behave ill to their fellow-creatures, and to slight and despise them; but even to forsake God, and lightly esteem their Creator and benefactor; yea, even to kick against him, and oppose him, to set their mouths against him, and speak very contemptuously and blasphemously of him, as in the following words; which though not expressly uttered and pronounced, which yet may have been by some, however are conceived in the mind, and inwardly spoken; and by their lives and conversations outwardly declared and abundantly proclaimed: *depart from us;* not as to his general presence, which cannot be, and without which they

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[p] בטוב In bono, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, &c.

[q] יבלו vetustate terent, Montanus; veterascunt, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus; vetusti fiunt, Cocceius; ad senectam deterunt, Schultens.

[r] ברגע quiete, Pagninus; in quiete, Vatablus.

[s] שאול ad inferna, V. L. ad infernum, Cocceius; in infernum, Schmidt.

would not be able to subsist; God is everywhere, and near to every one, and all live, and move, and have their being, in him; nor as to his spiritual presence, which wicked men know nothing of, and are unconcerned about; but they don't choose to have him so near them as that their minds should be conversant about him; they don't care to have him in their thoughts, they are desirous if possible of banishing him out of their minds; they would live without thinking of God, or thinking that there is a God in the world, for such a thought makes them uneasy; they don't love to have their consciences awakened by him, so as to check and accuse for what they do; they had rather have them cauterized or seared, as with a red hot iron, and be past feeling, that they may go on in their sinful courses without control: this is the just character of a worldling, who is afraid he shall be a loser by God and religion, should he attend thereunto; and therefore, as the Gergesenes for a like reason desired Christ to depart out of their coasts, so such desire God to depart from them; and of the epicure, whose God is his belly, and that only; and most righteously will it be said to such at the last day, *depart from me;* this will be a just retaliation: *for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways;* the ways which God prescribes, directs, and enjoins men to walk in, even the ways of his commandments; these are unknown to men, until shewn and taught them; but wicked men don't desire to be instructed in them; they have no pleasure and delight neither in them, nor in the knowledge of them; they fancy there is no pleasure to be had in them, and they think they have got into a much more pleasant way, which they have chosen, and their souls delight in; though destruction and misery are in it, and it leads into it: they wilfully affect ignorance of the ways of God; they don't care to come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved, their consciences be made uneasy, and they not able to go on so peaceably and quietly in their own ways.

Ver. 15. *What* is *the Almighty, that we should serve him?* &c.] *Who is he*[t]? as some render it; or what is there in him, in his nature, in his excellencies and perfections, that should oblige us to serve him? One would think the attribute of *Almighty,* they own and acknowledge, is sufficient to engage to it, since he is the lawgiver that is able to save and to destroy, even to destroy with an everlasting destruction, both body and soul in hell, who obey him not; but fulness of riches, power, and authority, swell the mind with pride, and put men on asking such questions, and running such lengths as these; see Exod. v. 2. Prov. xxx. 9. The question is big with atheism, and suggests there was nothing in God excellent or worthy of any regard, or on account of which he should be served and worshipped; as if he was a mere idol, which is nothing in the world; and that he was indeed nothing in it, neither did good nor evil, nor concerned himself with the affairs of men; had forsaken the earth, and took no notice of what was doing in it; at least, the question supposes that such think themselves under no obligations to serve him, and shews them to be sons of Belial, without a yoke; that they neither are nor can be subject to the law of God without his grace; they are not willing God should reign over them, nor to be obedient to his commands and ordinances; but are for freeing themselves from all obligations to him, and choose to serve divers lusts and pleasures; be the vassals of sin and Satan, rather than be the worshippers of God: *and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?* Prayer is one part of the service of God, and may be here put for the whole: this, as all the rest, is very disagreeable to a natural man, who, as he is biassed entirely by profit and gain, thinks there is nothing to be got by religious exercises; he observing, that the worshippers of God, as to external things, fare worse than those who do not pray unto him, or do not serve and worship him; see Mal. iii. 14. though there is much profit, and many things, and those most excellent and valuable, got by prayer; for whatsoever good men ask in prayer, believing, they receive, Matt. vii. 7. and xxi. 22. The Targum is, "if we pray in his Word," in the name of the essential Word, the Son of God; whereas to ask or pray in his name is the only way of succeeding; and such, who do ask in faith in his name, have what they ask for, John xiv. 15. and xvi. 23, 24.

Ver. 16. *Lo, their good* is *not in their hand,* &c.] Though it is in their possession for the present, it is not in the power of their hands to keep, nor to carry it with them when they die; God, that gave it, can take it away when he pleases; and therefore it might be profitable to them to serve him and pray unto him: or *their good* is *not by their hand;* they do not obtain their happiness by their works, as in the Tigurine version; and to the same sense Mr. Broughton, "lo, their "wealth cometh not by their own power;" it is not got by their own industry, diligence, care, and labour; by their own wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and cunning; for riches are not always to men of understanding, but come from God, who gives them to whom he pleases, and can take them away again if he thinks fit; and therefore men are dependent upon him for what they have, and should be thankful to him, and serve him, and pray for the continuance of good things to them. Jarchi reads the words by way of interrogation and admiration, lo! is *not their good in their hand?* verily it is, especially in their own opinion; their hands are full of it; they want nothing of God; they see no need of praying to him; hence the above words, which Job expresses his disapprobation of: *the counsel of the wicked is far from me;* the counsels of their hearts; the thoughts of their mind; the words of their mouth; the above impious sayings were such as were detested and abhorred by him; their sense and judgment of things, their choice from deliberate consultation with themselves, preferring temporal good to spiritual good, and earthly things to heavenly ones, outward wealth and riches to the knowledge, service, and worship of God, and communion with him; these were what he disliked; their course of life, which was according to this world, and Satan the god of it, their company and conversation, were such as he carefully shunned and avoided; he chose not to come into their assembly, or to have any fellowship with them; to

[t] מה quis est? V. L.

walk in the counsel of the ungodly, or stand in the way of sinners, these things were an abomination to him; see Psal. i. 1. This Job says to exculpate himself, and wipe off any calumny that might be cast upon him, as if by what he had said, concerning the outward prosperity of the wicked, that he was a patron and defender of them, and an advocate for them.

Ver. 17. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* &c.] Job here returns, as Jarchi observes, to his former account of the constant and continued prosperity of wicked men; and puts questions tending to prove the same. Bildad had said, that the light and candle of the wicked would be put out, ch. xviii. 5, 6. Job, referring to this, asks how often this is the case; meaning, by the candle of the wicked, not his soul or spirit, which cannot be put out, or become extinct, as to be no more; nor the light of nature in his soul, though that may be put out in a great measure, and he be given up to judicial blindness and hardness of heart; but either his natural life, which, like a candle, burns for a while, and then becomes extinct, or rather his outward prosperity and happiness: if the question relates to the former, to the natural life of wicked men, it is not whether they die, that is no question; all die, good and bad; but whether they die in common sooner than others, or whether the instances of the brevity of the life of wicked men were frequent, or but seldom; or, is this always the case? it is not, it is rare, and not common; they live as long as other men, and oftentimes longer; they live and become old, as Job before observes; they prolong their days in their wickedness; or, if this refers to the latter, the prosperity of the wicked, the question is, is that for the most part a short-lived prosperity? it is not, it is but rarely so; wicked men generally spend all their days in wealth, as before observed; so Ramban interprets *how oft*, that is, how seldom; and to the same sense Mr. Broughton, "not so often is the candle of the wicked put out;" and how oft *cometh their destruction upon them?* not eternal, but temporal destruction, calamities and distresses; these are threatened them, but they are not executed on them immediately; and therefore their hearts are set in them to do evil: generally speaking, they have their good things here; they are filled with hidden treasure, which they enjoy whilst they live, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes; they are not destroyed on every side, as Job was; their substance, their cattle, their servants, their children, and their own health. Job asks how often this is their case, as had been his; and his sense is, and what experience testifies, it is but rarely the case of wicked men; he seems to refer to what is said, ch. xviii. 12. God *distributeth sorrows in his anger;* or rather, how oft *doth he distribute sorrows in his anger?* but seldom; he is angry with the wicked every day, and reserves wrath for them, and many sorrows shall be to them, but not for the present; those are future, and even such as of a woman in travail, as the word used signifies, and which shall come upon them suddenly and certainly, and there will be no avoiding them; see Psal. xxxii. 10. Hos. xiii. 13. 1 Thess. v. 3. but does God frequently distribute or portion out sorrows to them now? he does not; they have their portion of good things in this life; does he usually give them sorrow of heart, his curse unto them? he does not; it is very seldom he does; they are not in trouble, nor plagued as other men; they are not men of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; they are generally strangers to them, and live merrily all their days, ver. 12. respect seems to be had to the conclusion of Zophar's speech, ch. xx. 29.

Ver. 18. *They are as stubble before the wind,* &c.] Or how oft *are they as stubble?* &c. or how oft does God do the above things, *so that they are, or become, as stubble before the wind*[u], *and as chaff that the storm carrieth*, or *steals away*[x]? hastily, suddenly, at an unawares like a thief: wicked men are comparable to stubble and chaff; for the vanity of their minds, their emptiness of all good things; for their lightness, the levity and inconstancy of their hearts, their principles and practices; for their uselessness and unprofitableness to God and men, to themselves and their fellow-creatures; for their being fit fuel for everlasting burnings, their end like these being to be burned; and whose destruction is inevitable and irresistible, and can no more be withstood and prevented than stubble and chaff can stand before a strong wind and a stormy tempest: but is this their common case now? are they usually tossed to and fro with the wind of adversity, and the storms of desolating judgments? are they not, on the other hand, seen in great power, and spreading themselves like a green bay-tree; taking root, increasing in outward prosperity, and bringing forth the fruit of it? see Psal. xxxvii. 35. Jer. xii. 2.

Ver. 19. *God layeth up his iniquity for his children,* &c.] This is a prevention of an objection which Job foresaw his friends would make, and therefore takes it up and answers to it; you will say, that, be it so, that the wicked are for the most part prosperous, and their prosperity continues; God does not punish them now for their sins in their own persons, yet he will punish them in their children, for whom he reserves the punishment of their iniquity: this way go many of the Jewish commentators[y], in which they are followed by many Christian interpreters[z]; and, as it seems, very rightly; now this Job grants, that so it is, God takes notice of the iniquities of men, and lays them up in his mind, and puts them down in the book of his remembrance; he reserves the punishment of their iniquities for their children, iniquity being often put for the punishment of it; this is laid up among his stores of vengeance, and is treasured up against the day of wrath; and when they have filled up the measure of their father's sins by their own transgressions, the deserved punishment shall be inflicted, according to Exod. xx. 5. but this will not clear the case, nor support the notions and sentiments of Job's friends, who had all along given out, that wicked men are punished themselves as well as their children; and that, if they are at any time in prosperous circumstances, it

[u] יהיו כתבן ut sint velut palea, Tigurine version; so Broughton, quoties sunt, Junius & Tremellius; quoties fiunt, Piscator, Michaelis.
[x] גנבתו furatus est eam, Montanus; suffuratur, Vatablus; furatur, Drusius, Cocceius, Schultens.

[y] Nachmanides, Jarchi, Ben Gersom, Bar Tzemach.
[z] Beza, Cocceius, Schultens.

is only for a little while; and therefore agreeably to such notions God should take other methods with them, not punish their children only, but themselves, as Job argues in answer to the objection in this and the following verse: *he rewarded him, and he shall know* it; or *he should reward him*, and *he should know* it[a]; and so the word *should* is to be put instead of *shall* in the next verse, which directs to the true sense of these clauses: and the meaning of Job is, that according to the sentiments of his friends, God should reward a wicked man whilst he lives in his own person, and not in his posterity only; he should render to them a just recompense of reward of their evil works, the demerit of their sins; and in such a manner, that they should know it, be sensible of it, and feel it themselves, and perceive the evil of sin in the punishment of it; see Hos. ix. 7.

Ver. 20. *His eyes shall see his destruction*, &c.] Or *should see his destruction*[b]; calamities coming upon himself and upon his children; or otherwise it will not affect him: but when a man has a personal experience of affliction as punishments of his sin, or with his own eyes sees his children in distressed circumstances on his account, this must sensibly affect him, and be a sore punishment to him; as it was to Zedekiah to have his children slain before his eyes, Jer. lii. 10. *and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty;* or *he should drink*[c] of it now, according to the principles of Job's friends, even he in person, and not his posterity only; the wrath of God is on account of sin, and dreadful to bear: if the wrath of a temporal king is as the roaring of a lion, what must be the wrath of the Almighty God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords? this is frequently in Scripture compared to a cup, and is called a cup of trembling, of wrath and fury: and of which all the wicked of the earth shall drink sooner or later, Psal. lxxv. 10. but this they should do now, according to the notions of Job's friends, whereas they do not; waters of a full cup, though not in wrath indeed, are wrung out to the people of God, and, as they apprehend, in wrath, when the wicked drink wine in bowls, and the cup of their prosperity overflows.

Ver. 21. *For what pleasure* hath *he in his house after him*, &c.] As, on the one hand, the prosperity of his children after his decease gives him no pleasure and delight, so, on the other hand, the calamities and distresses of his family for his sins and theirs give him no pain or uneasiness; he knows nothing that befalls them, and it is no part of his concern; and let what will befall them, he cares not for it; he feels it not, he is not sensible of it; and therefore to object that signifies nothing; see ch. xiv. 21. or, *what business has he with his house after death?* the affairs[d] of his family do not at all concern him, one way or another; he is not affected with them; he can neither consider their happiness as a blessing nor their calamities as a punishment to him: *when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?* the years, the months, and the days of the lives of men, are numbered and determined by the Lord, ch. xiv. 5. which, when finished, the thread of life is cut off in the midst, from the rest of the months, which a man or his friends might have expected he would have lived; or rather, *when his number of the months is fully up*[e]; when the calculation of them is complete, and the full number of them is perfected; the sense is, what cares a wicked man for what befalls his family after his death, when he has lived out the full term of life in great outward happiness and prosperity; has lived to be full of days, of months, and years, to a full age, even to an age that may be truly called old age?

Ver. 22. *Shall* any *teach God knowledge?* &c.] Who is a God of knowledge, and knows all things, that teaches men knowledge; will any one take upon him to teach him the path of judgment, and the way of understanding, how he shall govern the world, and dispose of men and things in it? see Isa. xl. 13, 14. Will any one be so bold and audacious as to pretend to direct and instruct him whom he shall afflict, and whom not, and when he shall do it, and in what manner? should not these things be left to him, who does all things after the counsel of his own will? shall his dealings with men in an outward way of providence be the criterions of the characters and estates of men, as if love and hatred were to be known by those things, and therefore God must be taught what he should do in order to fix them? *seeing he judgeth those that are high;* not the high heavens, as the Targum, nor the angels in them, though he has judged them that sinned, and cast them down to hell; but the high ones on earth, kings, princes, and civil magistrates, such as are in high places, and are lifted up with pride above others: God is above them; he is higher than the highest, and judges them; he is the Judge of all the earth, that will do right, the Governor of the universe, and who overrules all things for his own glory and the good of his creatures; and therefore none should pretend to direct him what is fit and proper to be done by him, who is a Sovereign, and distinguishes men in his providence, in life, and at death, as follows; but their characters, as good or bad men, are not to be determined thereby.

Ver. 23. *One dieth in his full strength*, &c.] Man is born a weak feeble creature, and it is by degrees, and through various stages of infancy, childhood, and youth, that he arrives to his full strength in manhood; and, when he does, sometimes so it is, that his strength is not weakened in the course of his life by a train of disorders and diseases, as it is in some; but death seizes and carries him off in the prime of his days, and in the fulness of his strength; for no strength of man, even the greatest, is a security against death: thousands die before they come to their full strength, and multitudes after it begins to decay; and when it is almost wasted, through the force of distempers, or the infirmities of old age, and others, as here, when their strength is in its highest vigour and utmost perfection, and all as God pleases: the words may be rendered *in the strength of his integrity*, or *of his perfection*[f]; in the

[a] ישלם אליו וידע redderet illi, & (hoc) sciret, Beza; retribueret ipsi potius, & sentiret, Cocceius.
[b] יראו עינו כריו videret ejus oculi exitium suum, Beza, Cocceius.
[c] ישתה biberet, Beza, Cocceius.
[d] So Schultens.

[e] חצצו integro numero calculis ducti sunt, Cocceius; cumulatam sortem habuerint, Schultens.
[f] בעצם תמו in fortitudine perfectionis suæ, Pagninus; so Junius and Tremellius, Piscator; in fortitudine integritatis suæ, Montanus, Bolducius; so Drusius, Mercerus.

Targum and Ben Gersom, and so Mr. Broughton, *in his very perfection;* and the word is sometimes used, in a moral and spiritual sense, of the integrity of a man's heart, and the uprightness of his ways and walk, and of the perfection of his state Godward; see ch. i. 1. and ii. 4. and iv. 6. and such a man who is upright in heart and conversation, who is truly gracious, sincerely a good man, and perfect through the complete righteousness of Christ, he dies such, his integrity continues with him to the last; and his graces being brought to maturity, he comes to his grave like a shock of corn in its season, and is found in the perfect righteousness of his living Redeemer: but it seems best to take the words in a natural and literal sense, as before; or to interpret them of the fulness of outward felicity, which some men arrive unto, and die in the midst of, when they have got to the highest pitch of honour and grandeur, and attained to the greatest degree of wealth and riches, it could well be supposed they would; and then, when in the perfection of it, have been taken away by death; both these senses may stand together: it follows, *being wholly at ease and quiet;* in easy circumstances, having an affluence of all good things, and nothing to disturb them, nor are in trouble as others, or plagued as they be; having all that heart can wish, or more, and without any pains of body, at least any long and continued ones; whilst others are attended with them, days, and months, and years, before their death, ch. xxxiii. 19. whereas these go down to the grave in a moment, feeling little or no pain, and are quiet and easy in their minds, thoughtless of a future state, and unconcerned how it will be with them in another world; having no sight nor sense of sin, of the evil nature and just demerit of it, feel not the weight and burden of it in their consciences; have no concern or grief of mind for sins of omission or commission, no godly sorrow for it, or repentance of it, nor any fears of wrath and ruin, hell and damnation; but as they are at ease from their youth, with respect to those things, so they live and so they die, secure, stupid, and senseless. Some interpret this of good men[g]; and it is not to be wondered at that a man that dies in his integrity, in the perfection of grace, holiness, and righteousness, should be at ease and quiet; who has an interest in the God of peace, whose peace is made by the blood of Christ, his Peacemaker, and who has a conscience-peace arising from a comfortable view of the peace-speaking blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of the Mediator; who knows his state is safe, being interested in everlasting love, in an unchangeable covenant in God, as his covenant-God, in Jesus his living Redeemer; and knows where he is going, to heaven, to happiness and glory, to be with God, with Christ, with holy angels and glorified saints: but the former sense seems best, of a man dying in easy circumstances, without pain of body, or distress of mind, whether we understand it of a good man or bad man, though the latter is rather meant.

Ver. 24. *His breasts are full of milk,* &c.] As this is not literally true of men, some versions read the words otherwise; his bowels or intestines are full of fat, as the Vulgate Latin and Septuagint; and others, his sides or ribs are full of fat, as the Syriac and Arabic; the words for side and fat being near in sound to those here used; and so it describes a man fat and plump, and fleshy, when death lays hold upon him, and not wasted with consumptions and pining sickness, as in the case of some, ch. xxxiii. 21. the word for breasts is observed by some[h] to signify, in the Arabic language, vessels, in which liquors are contained, and in the Misnic language such as they put oil in, out of which oil is squeezed; and so are thought here to intend such vessels as are milked into; and therefore render it by milk-pails; so Mr. Broughton, *his pails are full of milk*[i]; which may denote the abundance of good things enjoyed by such persons, as rivers of honey and butter; contrary to Zophar's notion, ch. xx. 17. and a large increase of oil and wine, and all temporal worldly good; amidst the plenty of which such die: *his bones are moistened with marrow;* not dried up through a broken spirit, or with grief and trouble, and through the decays of old age; but, being full of marrow, are moist, and firm and strong; and so it intimates, that such, at the time when death seizes them, are of an hale, healthful, robust, and strong constitution; see Psal. lxxiii. 4. 7.

Ver. 25. *And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul,* &c.] Either another wicked man; for there is a difference among wicked men; some are outwardly happy in life, and in the circumstances of their death, as before described; and others are very unhappy in both; their life is a scene of afflictions which imbitter life, and make death eligible; and in the midst of which they die, as well as oftentimes in bitter pains, and terrible agonies of body, as well as in great distress and horror of mind, and black despair, as Judas and others: *and never eateth with pleasure,* or *of any good,* or *any good thing*[y]; either he has it not to eat, or what he has is not good, but like husks which swine eat, of which the prodigal would fain have filled his belly, when in extreme poverty, such as those words may describe; or else having what is good, has not an heart to eat of it; and so they describe a miser, living and dying such: see Eccl. vi. 2. or rather the case of a man, who, through distempers and diseases of body, has lost his appetite, and cannot with any pleasure taste of the richest dainties; see ch. xxxiii. 20. Some[z] interpret this and the two preceding verses as what should be the case according to the sentiments of Job's friends, who objected, that God punished the iniquities of wicked men, not in their own persons, but in their children; according to which, a wicked man then should die in the perfection of happiness, without weakness or want, in all quietness, ease, peace, and prosperity; and not in poverty and distress: but as the two preceding verses respect a wicked man, and his case and circumstances at death, agreeably to the whole context; so this relates to those of a good man, whom the Lord often deals bitterly with in life, as he did with Naomi, and was now the case of Job; see

[g] So Schmidt.

[h] See Kimchi, Sepher Shorash. rad. עטן, and Jarchi and Ben Melech in loc.

[i] עטיניו mulctralia ejus, Montanus, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus, Bolducius, Drusius, Cocceius, Schmidt.

[y] בטובה bonum, Pagninus, Mercerus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator & Bar Tzemach; de bono, Coccoius, Michaelis, Schultens.

[z] Bar Tzemach.

Ruth i. 20. Job. iii. 20. and who die in very poor and distressed circumstances; so that nothing is to be concluded from such appearances, with respect to the characters of men, as good or bad, and especially since both are brought into a like condition by death, as follows.

Ver. 26. *They shall lie down alike in the dust,* &c.] Such as have lived and died in great outward prosperity, or in more unhappy circumstances; these are levelled by death, and brought into the same state and condition; are laid on dusty beds, where there is no difference between them, their rest together is in the dust; here they dwell, and here they lie and sleep until they are awaked in the morning of the resurrection: *and the worms shall cover them:* these are the companions alike unto them, and sweetly feed on the one as on the other; the earth is their bed, and worms are their covering; even such who used to lie on beds of down, and were covered with coverings of silk, have now the same bed and covering as those who used to lie on beds of straw, and scarce any thing to cover them; worms are spread under them, and are spread upon them; they are both their bed and their covering, Isa. xiv. 11.

Ver. 27. *Behold, I know your thoughts,* &c.] God only truly, really, and in fact, knows the thoughts of men; this is his peculiar prerogative, he only is the searcher of the hearts and the trier of the reins of the children of men. Christ, the eternal Logos, or Word, by his being a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, appears to be truly God. No man knows the things of a man, or the thoughts of his heart, but himself, and such to whomsoever he reveals them; but a wise and understanding man, a careful observer of men and things, may make some shrewd guesses at the thoughts of others, by hints and half words, or sentences expressed by them; by the shew of their countenance, which is the index of the mind, and by the gestures and motions of their bodies; by these they may in a good measure judge whether they like or dislike, approve or disapprove, of what is said to them: and thus Job knew the thoughts of his friends, that they were different from his, that the sentiments of their minds did not agree with his; and though he had so clearly proved his point, yet he saw by their looks and gestures that what he had said was not satisfactory to them; that they did not think it a sufficient confutation of their arguments, and a full answer to their objections: *and the devices* which *ye wrongfully imagine against me;* that he was an hypocrite, a wicked man, guilty of crimes, and which they were devising to produce against him, and charge and load him with, as Eliphaz does in the following chapter; he knew they meant him in all that they had said concerning wicked men, and their afflictions, and what would be their portion at death, and after it; and though they did not name his name, they might as well have done it, since he was the man they struck at in all, particularly in ch. xx. 5, 29.

Ver. 28. *For ye say,* &c.] Or *have said,* or I know *that ye say:* or that *ye are about to say*[a]; it is in your hearts and minds, and just ready to come out of your lips, and what you will say next: *where is the house of the prince?* of the righteous man, as the Syriac and Arabic versions; or *of the good and liberal man,* as others[b]; of such as are of a princely and ingenuous spirit, who are made willing, free, or princes, in the day of the power of the grace of God upon them; and are endowed and upheld with a free and princely spirit; where is the house, or what is the state and condition, of the families of such? are they the same with that of wicked men in the next clause? is there no difference between the one and the other? according to your way of reasoning, Job, there should not be any: or else this is to be understood rather of a wicked and tyrannical prince, who has built himself a stately palace, which he fancied would continue for ever; but where is it now? it lies in ruins; having respect perhaps to some noted prince of those times: or rather either to Job himself, who had been a prince, and the greatest man in all the east, but in what condition were his house and family now? or else to his eldest son, whose house was blown down with a violent wind: *and where are the dwelling-places of the wicked?* of the mighty men before the flood, which are now overthrown by it; or of the king and princes, and nobles, and great men of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven; or of Job, his tent or tabernacle, and the several apartments in it; or of the rest of his children and servants, respecting rather, as before observed, the state and condition of his family, than his material house: these questions are answered by putting others.

Ver. 29. *Have ye not asked them that go by the way?* &c.] Did you not ask every traveller you met with on the road the above question? not which was the way to Job's house, which they knew very well, but in what condition that and his sons were? or what was the case of him and his family? and what was his character? or what was thought of him now since his unhappy circumstances? *and do ye not know their tokens?* by which it might be known in what a plight he and his family were, and what were the marks, signs, and characters they gave of him: *have ye not asked?* &c. the sense seems to be this, that if they had not asked, they might and should have asked of travellers the above things relating to himself and family, and then they would not have needed to put the above question about his house and tabernacles; or, if they had inquired of his character of any travellers, they would have given them it, that he was a generous hospitable man, a man truly good, strictly just and upright, and not the wicked man and the hypocrite as they had traduced him; for Job's house had been open to strangers and travellers, and he was well known by them, and they were ready to give him a good character, see ch. xxxi. 32. or, if they had inquired of them concerning the stately houses and palaces of wicked men that had lived in times past, whether there were any of them standing; they could have told them they were, and where they were, and given them such signs and tokens, and such proof and evidence of them they could not

[a] כי האמרו vos dicere, Junius & Tremellius; nempe vos dicturos' Piscator; so Schmidt, Schultens.

[b] נדיב liberalis, Montanus; boni & liberalis hominis, Tigurine version; ingenui, Schultens.

deny; and indeed, if they had been inquired of about the thing in controversy between Job and his friends, concerning the prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the godly, as they by travelling became acquainted with persons and things, and made their observations on them, they could have easily pointed out instances of wicked men living and dying in prosperous circumstances, and of good men being greatly afflicted and distressed, if not all their days, yet great part of them: and they could have given such plain signs and tokens, and such clear and manifest proofs of those things, as could not have been gainsaid: and this may be understood of travellers in a spiritual sense, and who are the best judges of such a case, and are travellers through the wilderness of this world, and pass through many tribulations in it; and, being bound for another and better country, an heavenly one, are pilgrims, strangers, and sojourners here; have no abiding, but are passing on in the paths of faith, truth, and holiness, till they come to the heavenly Canaan; if any of those who are yet on the road, and especially if such could be come at who have finished their travels, and the question be put to them, they would all unite in this doctrine, which Abraham, the spiritual traveller, is represented delivering to the rich wicked man in hell; that wicked men have their good things in this life, and good men their evil things, and particularly would agree in saying what follows.

Ver. 30. *That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction,* &c.] That is, that they are spared, withheld, restrained, as the word [d] signifies, or kept and preserved from many calamities and distresses, which others are exposed unto; and so are reserved, either unto a time of greater destruction in this life, or rather to eternal destruction in the world to come; which is the same with the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men, when they will be destroyed soul and body, in hell, with an everlasting destruction, as the just demerit of sin; or of that sinful course of life they live, being the broad way which leads to and issues in destruction, and for which there is a day appointed, when it will take place; and unto that day are the wicked reserved, in the purpose and decree of God, by which they are righteously destined to this day of evil, and by the power and providence of God, even the same chains of darkness, in which the angels are reserved unto the same time, being fitted and prepared for destruction by their own sins and transgressions; and unto which they are kept, as condemned malefactors are in their cells, unto the day of execution, they being condemned already, though the sentence is not yet executed; in order to which *they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath;* the wrath of God, which is very terrible and dreadful, and is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, and is here expressed in the plural number, *wraths* [e], either as denoting both present and future wrath; or the vehemency of it, it being exceeding fierce and vehement; and the continuance and duration of it, there will be wrath upon wrath, even to the uttermost, and for ever; and for this a day is fixed, against which day wicked men are treasuring up wrath to themselves, and they shall be brought forth at the day of judgment, to have it poured forth upon them. This is the true state of the case with respect to them, that, though sometimes they are involved in general calamities, as the old world, and the men of Sodom and Gomorrah; and sometimes good men are delivered from them, as Noah and Lot were, or are taken away by death from the evil to come; yet for the most part, generally speaking, wicked men escape present calamities and distresses, and are not in trouble as other men, but live in ease and pleasure all their days; nevertheless, wrath and ruin, and everlasting destruction, will be their portion.

Ver. 31. *Who shall declare his way to his face?* &c.] Jarchi and Aben Ezra think that Job here returns to God, and speaks of him, as in ver. 22. signifying that no man can or ought to presume to charge the ways of God in his providence with inequality or injustice, in sparing the wicked now, and reserving them to wrath and destruction hereafter; since he is a sovereign Being, and does what he pleases, and none can hinder him, nor ought any to say to him, what dost thou? nor does he give an account of his matters to the children of men; but this respects the wicked man, and describes his state and condition in this life, as being possessed of such wealth and riches, and living in such grandeur and splendour, and advanced to such places of honour and glory, as to be above the reproof of men; though his way, his course of life, is a very wicked one, and he ought to be told to his face the evil of his way, and the danger he is exposed to by it, and what will be the sad consequence of it; his relations and friends, his neighbours and acquaintance, should labour to convince him of his evil, and reprove him to his face, and endeavour to reclaim him from it; but how few are there that have courage and faithfulness enough to do this, since they are sure to incur his displeasure and hatred, and run the risk of their lives, as John the Baptist lost his for his faithfulness in reproving Herod to his face, for taking to him his brother Philip's wife? *and who shall repay him* what *he hath done?* bring him to an account for his crimes, and to just punishment for them; who will venture to bring a charge against him, or enter an action at law, bring him before a court of judicature, and prosecute him, and get judgment passed upon him? as such a man is above all reproof for his sins, he is out of the reach of punishment for them; he lives with impunity, none can punish him but God; and being lifted up with his greatness, he neither fears God nor regards man.

Ver. 32. *Yet shall he be brought to the grave,* &c.] Or *and,* or *yea he shall be brought,* &c. [a]; for the meaning is not, that though he is great in life he shall be brought low enough at death; for Job is still describing the grand figure wicked men make, even at death, as well as in life; for he is not only brought to the grave, as all men are, it being the house appointed for all living, and every man's long home; but the wicked rich man is brought thither in great funeral pomp, in great state, as the rich sinner was buried,

[d] יחשך prohibebitur, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius; so Beza, Vatablus, Mercerus; subtrahitur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; subducitur, Schultens.

[e] עברות irarum, Pagninus, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Schultens.

[a] והוא & ipse, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

Eccl. viii. 10. Luke xvi. 22. or *to the graves* [b], the place where many graves are, the place of the sepulchres of his ancestors; and in the chiefest and choicest of them he is interred, and has an honourable burial; not cast into a ditch, or buried with the burial of an ass, as Jehoiakim was, being cast forth beyond the gates of the city, Jer. xxii. 19. *and shall remain in the tomb:* quiet and undisturbed, when it has been the lot of others to have their bones taken out of their grave, and spread before the sun, see Jer. viii. 1, 2. and even some good men, who have had their graves dug up, their bones taken out and burnt, and their ashes scattered about, as was the case of that eminent man, John Wickliff, here in England. The word for *tomb* signifies an *heap* [c], and is sometimes used for an heap of the fruits of the earth; which has led some to think of the place of this man's interment being in the midst of a corn-field; but the reason why a grave or tomb is so called is, because a grave, through a body or bodies being laid in it, rises up higher than the common ground; and if it has a tomb erected over it, that is no other than an heap of stones artificially put together; or it may be so called from the heaps of bodies one upon another in a grave, or vault, over which the tomb is, or where every part of the body is gathered and heaped [d]; from this sense of the word some have given this interpretation of the passage, that the wicked man shall be brought to his grave, and abide there, after he has heaped up a great deal of wealth and riches in this world; which, though a truth, seems not to be intended here, any more than others taken from the different signification of the word translated *remain*. It is observed by some to signify to *hasten* [e], from whence the almond-tree, which hastens to put forth its bloom, has its name, Jer. i. 10—12. and so give this as the sense, that such a man, being of full age, is ripe for death, and comes to his grave, or heap, like a shock of corn in its season. Others observe, that it signifies to *watch;* and so in the margin of our Bibles the clause is put, *he shall watch in the heap* [f], which is differently interpreted; by some, that he early and carefully provides himself a tomb, as Absalom in his life-time set up a sepulchral pillar for himself; and Shebna the scribe, and Joseph of Arimathea, hewed themselves sepulchres out of the rock; and others think the allusion is either to statues upon tombs, as are still in use in our days, where they are placed as if they were watching over the tombs; or to bodies embalmed, according to the custom of the eastern countries, especially the Egyptians, which were set up erect in their vaults, and seemed as if they were alive, and there set to watch the places they were in, rather than as if buried there; or, according to others, *he shall be watched*, or the keeper *shall watch at*, or *over the tomb* [g], that the body is not disturbed or taken away; but the sense our version gives is best, and most agrees with the context, and the scope of it, and with what follows.

Ver. 33. *The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him, &c.*] Where he lies interred, alluding to places of interment at the bottom of hills, and mountains, and under rocks, in plains and vales, see Gen. xxxv. 8. and by this strong figure is signified, that the dead wicked man, lying in the clods of the valley in his grave, is in great repose, and in the utmost ease and quiet, feels no pains of body, nor has any uneasiness of mind concerning what befalls his posterity after his death, ch. xiv. 21. *and every man shall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him:* which either respects the pomp at his funeral procession, vast numbers being drawn and gathered together to gaze at it, as is common at grand funerals; and particularly it may describe the multitude that go before the corpse, as well as those that follow after it; but rather as he is before represented as brought to his grave, and laid there, this clause is added, to denote the universality of death, it being common to all; thousands and ten thousands, even a number which no man can number, have gone before him by death into another world, as every man that comes after him must; and so this may prevent an objection to the grandeur of a wicked man, that after all he dies; but then death is no other than what is common to all men, to the vast multitudes that have gone before, and will be the case of all that come after, to the end of the world.

Ver. 34. *How then comfort ye me in vain, &c.*] This is the conclusion Job draws from the above observations: his friends came to comfort him, and they took methods for it, as they thought, but miserable comforters were they all; what they administered for comfort was in vain, and to no purpose; nor could any be expected from them, on the plan upon which they proceeded; they suggested he was a bad man, because of his afflictions, and they exhorted him to repentance and reformation, and then promised him happiness and prosperity upon it; which could not be expected, as appeared from the face of things in Providence: since, according to the above instances and proofs, wicked men enjoy prosperity, and good men had usually a great share of adversity: *seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood;* all their replies to Job were filled with these intimations and suggestions, that wicked men were only and always afflicted; or if they were at any time in prosperity, it was but for a little while; that good men were seldom or never afflicted, at least as Job was, or but a little afflicted, and for a little while: now Job had proved the contrary to all this, and therefore no consolation could be hoped for from men that held such tenets; comfort only springs from truth, and not falsehood; a man that speaks the truths, or delivers out the truths of God's word, he speaks to comfort and edification; but he that brings nothing but error and falsehood can never be the means and instrument of true solid comfort to any. Job having thus fully proved his point, and con-

[b] לקברות ad sepulchra, V. L. Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Beza, Mercerus, Michaelis, Schultens; in sepulchra, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[c] על גדיש super acervo, Montanus, Codurcus; so Bolducius, Mercerus.

[d] Vid. David de Pomis Lexic. fol. 14. 3.

[e] ישקוד festinabit, Pagninus; so some in Vatablus, and Ben Melech.

[f] Vigilabit, V. L. Tigurine version, Montanus; vigilat, Michaelis, Schultens; erit tanquam vigil, Bolducius.

[g] Vigilabitur, Beza; vigilatur, Cocceius; so Calovius.

futed the notions of his friends, it might have been thought they would have sat down in silence, and made no further answer; but Eliphaz rises up a third time, and makes a reply, as follows.

CHAP. XXII.

THIS chapter contains the third and last reply of Eliphaz to Job, in which he charges him with having too high an opinion of himself, of his holiness and righteousness, as if God was profited by it, and laid thereby under obligation to him, whereas he was not, ver. 1—3. and as if he reproved and chastised him, because of his fear of him, whereas it was because of his sins, ver. 4, 5. an enumeration of which he gives, as of injustice, oppression, cruelty to the poor, and even of atheism and infidelity, for which snares and fears were around him, and various calamities, ver. 6—14. and compares his way and course of life to that of the men of the old world, and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, and suggests that his end would be like theirs, unless he repented, ver. 15—20. and then concludes with an exhortation to him to return to God by repentance, and to reform, when he should see happy times again, and enjoy much outward and inward prosperity, and be an instrument of doing much good to many, ver. 21—30.

Ver. 1. *Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said.*] As Eliphaz was the first that entered the lists with Job, being perhaps the oldest man, and might be reckoned the wisest, so he gives the lead in every course of disputation; and here, instead of replying to Job's arguments and instances, at which he was very angry, betakes himself to calumny and reproach, and to draw invidious consequences, instead of making use of solid reasons for conviction and confutation.

Ver. 2. *Can a man be profitable unto God?* &c.] Eliphaz imagined that Job thought so, by his insisting so much on his integrity, and complaining of his afflictions; and that God was beholden to him for his holiness and righteousness, and that instead of afflicting him, should have heaped honours and happiness upon him; whereas there is not any thing a man can do, or does, by which God can be profited; which is a very great truth, though misapplied to Job through a wrong construction of his words and meaning. No man, even the best of men, and by the best things they can do, can be profitable to God; as for bad men, they are altogether unprofitable to themselves and to others, and still less profitable to God; and as for good men, their *goodness extendeth not* to the Lord; it comes from him, it is his own previously; it is of no avail and advantage to him, who is perfect and all-sufficient; when they have done all that they are commanded, they are bid to say, and very truly, *we are unprofitable servants;* they do indeed glorify God, and are the means of others glorifying him by their good works; but then they add no glory to him, which he had not before; they only declare the glory of God by the light of their grace and works, as the heavens and luminaries in them do by their light and lustre; they worship God as they ought to do; but then he is not worshipped by them *as though he needed any thing* of them; it is they, and not he, that get by worship; it is good for them, and they find their account in it, to draw near to him, and wait upon him, and worship him; what are all their prayers and praises to him? the benefit redounds to themselves: some men are very serviceable to promote the interest of religion, either by their purses, or by their gifts and talents, fitting for public usefulness; but then, what do they give to God but what is his own? *of thine own have we given thee,* says David; or what do they do for him? it is for the good of themselves, and others. Some are useful in the conversion of men to God, either by the public ministry of the word, or in private life by discourse and conversation; but then the profit of all this is to men, and not unto God; there is nothing that a man can do, by which he can make God his debtor, or lay him under an obligation to him, which he would, if he could be profitable to him; but whatever he does, it is but his duty, and what God has a prior right unto; and therefore men can merit nothing at the hand of God, no, not the least mercy; it is by the grace of God a good man is what he is, and does what he does, see Psal. xvi. 2. Luke xvii. 10. Acts xvii. 25. 1 Chron. xxix. 14. Rom. xi. 35, 36. the Targum paraphrases it, *can a man teach God?* and so Mr. Broughton; see ch. xxi. 22. *as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?* or *though,* or *indeed, truly he that is wise,* &c.[h]. A man that is worldly wise is profitable to himself and his family, by gathering wealth and riches; and a man that is wise, and has a large understanding of natural things, may be profitable to himself by enriching his mind with knowledge, increasing the pleasure of it, and getting credit and fame among men by it, and may be profitable to others by communicating his knowledge to them, see Prov. ix. 12. Eccl. vii. 11. and one that is spiritually wise, or has the true grace of God, and wisdom in the hidden part, which is no other than real godliness, gets great gain; for godliness is that to him, and is profitable for all things, having the promise of the present and future life; and he that has an interest in Christ, the Wisdom of God, is a happy man indeed, since he has that, the merchandise of which is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold; one that is wise unto salvation, and is a wise professor of religion, and walks wisely and circumspectly, has great advantages; he builds his salvation on the rock Christ, and is safe and sure; he is concerned to have the oil of grace, with the lamp of a profession, and so is always ready to meet the bridegroom; and being careful of his conversation, keeps his garments that his shame is not seen; and so a wise minister of the word, one that *instructs*[i], or gives instructions to others, as the word here signifies; or one that causes to understand, or is the means of causing men to understand, such a

[h] כי immo, Beza; profecto, Schultens.

[i] משכיל.

man is profitable to himself and to others, see Dan. xii. 3.

Ver. 3. Is it *any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* &c.] It is not; the Lord indeed takes pleasure in his people, not as sinners, but as righteous; and as they are considered such in Christ, he is well pleased for his righteousness-sake, and with it, being agreeable to his nature, will, and law; and with his people in Christ, in whom they are accepted, having imputed the righteousness of his Son unto them, and so they stand before him unblamable and irreprovable, and he takes pleasure in the work of his own hands upon them, called the good pleasure of his will, in the new man formed after his image in righteousness and true holiness, in the graces of his Spirit, and in the exercise of them, faith, hope, love, humility, fear of God, *&c.* it is a pleasure to him to hear their prayers and praises, and to observe their ready and cheerful obedience to his will; but then all this gives him no new pleasure, or adds any thing to the complacency of his mind; he would have had as much delight and pleasure within himself, if there had never been an holy angel in heaven, or a righteous man on earth; he has no such pleasure in either as to be made more happy thereby, or so as to receive any *gain* or profit from it, as the next clause explains it. Some render it, *that thou justifiest thyself*[k], or *that thou art just*, or *seemest to be righteous* to thyself[l]; a self-righteous person is not pleasing to God; it is no pleasure to him when a man seeks for justification by his own works, or reckons them his righteousness; the publican that confessed his sin was rather justified with God than the Pharisee that applauded his own righteousness; such that are conceited of their own righteousness, and despise others, are an offence to God, a *smoke in his nose*, Isa. lxv. 5. Luke xviii. 9, 14. for the righteousness of such is not real righteousness in the account of God, and according to his law; it has only the shadow and appearance of one, but is not truly so; and besides, to seek righteousness this way is going contrary to the revealed will of God, to the Gospel scheme of justification by faith in Christ's righteousness, without the works of the law, and is a setting aside his righteousness, and frustrating and making null and void the death of Christ, and therefore can never be pleasing in the sight of God: *or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect?* no man's ways are perfect before God, even the best of men have defects in their works, and failings in their walk and conversations: some men's ways are indeed clean in their own eyes, and perfect in their own conceit; and if Eliphaz thought Job such an one, he was mistaken, see ch. ix. 20. there are others, who are in a sense unblamable in their walk and conversation; that is, are not guilty of any notorious crime, but exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and man, walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; and yet this is no *gain* to God; for what does such a man give to him? or what does he receive of his hands? see ch. xxxv. 7. This was indeed Job's case and character.

Ver. 4. *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?* &c.] That is, chastise, correct, and afflict, for fear that hurt should be done unto him; no, he will not; for as the goodness of men does not profit him, the sinfulness of men does not hurt him, see ch. xxxv. 6, 8. Kings and civil magistrates sometimes chastise offenders, not only to do justice to them, but through fear of them, lest, if spared or connived at, they should be hurtful to the state, and overturn it; but though sin is an act of hostility against God, and strikes at his being and government, yet he is in no fear of being ruined or dethroned, or of having his government taken out of his hands, and therefore does not chastise men on that account: or *for thy fear*[m], for thy fear of God, thy piety; or *for thy religion*, as Mr. Broughton translates the word. Job had often suggested that good men, such that truly feared God, are afflicted by him, and therefore his own afflictions were no objection to his character, as a man that feared God, and eschewed evil, ch. i. 1. and in this sense Eliphaz uses the word, ch. iv. 6. and here he intimates, as if, according to the notion of Job, that God afflicted him, and other good men, because they feared him, and which he observes, as a great absurdity; whereas, on the contrary, he chastised him for his sins, as the following verse shews; but though God does not afflict men for their goodness, but for sins, yet they are only such that fear him, and whom he loves, that he chastises in a fatherly way, see Heb. xii. 6, 7. *will he enter with thee into judgment?* that is, will he, in reverence to thee, out of respect to so great a person (speaking ironically), in condescension to one of so much consequence, will he regard thy request, so often made, as to come into judgment with thee, and to admit of thy cause being pleaded before him, and to give the hearing of it, and decide the affair in controversy? or rather, will he not plead against thee, and condemn thee for thy sins, as follow? in this sense it is to be deprecated, and not desired, see Psal. cxliii. 2.

Ver. 5. *Is not thy wickedness great?* &c.] It must be owned it is, it cannot be denied. Indeed, the wickedness of every man's heart is great, it being desperately wicked, full of sin, abounding with it; out of it comes forth every thing that is bad, and the wickedness of actions is very great: some sins are indeed greater than others, as those against God, and the first table of the law, are greater than those against men, or the second table; some are like crimson and scarlet, are beams in the eye, whilst others are comparatively as motes; yet all are great, as committed against God, and as they are breaches of his law; and especially they appear so to sensible sinners, to whom sin is made exceeding sinful; and they see and own themselves to be the chief of sinners, and as such entreat for pardon on that account, see Psal. xxv. 11. *and thine iniquities infinite?* strictly speaking, nothing is infinite but God; sins may be said in some sense to be infinite, because committed against an infinite God, and cannot be satisfied for by a finite creature, or by finite sufferings, only through the infinite value of the blood of Christ;

[k] כי תצדק quod justifices te, Junius & Tremellius.
[l] Quum justus es apud teipsum, Schmidt; quod tibi justus esse videris, Michaelis.

[m] המיראתך an de religione tua, Junius & Tremellius; ob timorem tuum, so some in Drusius; num ob pietatem tuam, others in Michaelis.

here it signifies, that his iniquities were *innumerable*[n], as some versions, they were not to be reckoned up, they were so many; or, more literally, there is *no end of thine iniquities*[o], there is no summing of them up; and it may denote his continuance in them; Eliphaz suggests as if Job lived in sin, and allowed himself in it, and was going on in a course of iniquity without end, which was very uncharitable; here he charges him in a general way, and next he descends to particulars.

Ver. 6. *For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought*, &c.] It can hardly be thought that it was for nothing at all, on no consideration whatever, or that nothing was lent, for which the pledge was taken; but that it was a small trifling sum, and comparatively nothing, not to be spoken of; or it was borrowed for so short a time, that there needed not any pledge for it; and it was unkind to take it, especially of a brother, whether in nature, or in religion, whether a near kinsman, or friend, or neighbour. Some render the words, *thou hast taken thy brother*, or *brothers, for a pledge*[p]; them themselves, their persons, as a security for what was lent, in order to sell them, and pay off the debt with the money, or detain them as bondmen till it was paid, 2 Kings iv. 1. Matt. xviii. 25. If Eliphaz said this, and what follows, only as conjectures, as some think, or upon supposition, concluding from his afflictions that those things, or something like them, had been done by him; it is contrary to that charity that thinks no ill, and hopes the best; and if they are positive assertions of matters of fact, as they rather seem to be, delivered upon hearsay, and slender proof, it shews a readiness to receive calumnies and false accusations against his friend, and can scarcely be excused from the charge of bearing false testimony against him, since Job does in the most solemn manner deny those things in ch. xxxi. *and stripped the naked of their clothing*; not such as were stark naked, because they have no clothes to be stripped of; but such that were poorly clothed, scarce sufficient to cover their nakedness, and preserve them from the inclemencies of weather; these were stripped of their clothing, and being stripped, were quite naked and exposed, which to do was very cruel and hardhearted; perhaps it may respect the same persons from whom the pledge was taken, and that pledge was their clothing, which was no uncommon thing, see Exod. xxii. 26. Deut. xxiv. 13.

Ver. 7. *Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink*, &c.] To a weary thirsty traveller, to whom in those hot countries cold water was very refreshing, and which in desert places was not to be had in common, or any where; rich men were possessed of their wells and fountains, and were kept for their own use, and it was a kindness and favour to obtain water of them; and yet a cup of cold water is one of the least favours to be given to a poor man, and to deny it him in distress was very inhuman, and was very far from Job's character: *and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry*; bread, which strengthens man's heart, and is the staff of life, without which he cannot support; and this is not to be withheld from, but given even to an enemy when hungry; and to deny it to a poor neighbour in such circumstances is very cruel; the charge is, that Job would not give a poor hungry man a morsel of bread to eat; which must be false, being directly contrary to what he strongly asserts, ch. xxxi. 17.

Ver. 8. *But as for the mighty man, he had the earth*, &c.] A large share and portion of it, which Job could not hinder him from the enjoyment of, because mightier than he, or otherwise he would have done it; or Job was content he should have what he had, and gave him more than what of right belonged to him; for when any cause came before him as a judge, or civil magistrate, between a rich man, and a poorer man, relating to a field, or piece of land, he always gave the cause to the rich and mighty, and so he had the land, as is suggested: *and the honourable man dwelt in it*; peaceably, quietly, and undisturbed, though he had no just title to it; or *the man accepted of face* or *countenance*[q], who was respected because of his outward circumstances, wealth and riches, power and authority; and so Job is tacitly charged with being a respecter of persons in judgment, which was not good; and in general these phrases denote partiality in him, that he was favourable to the mighty and powerful, and unkind and cruel to the poor and needy. Some[r] understand all this of Job himself, that because he was the mighty man, or *man of arm*[s], he made use of his power and might, and stretched out his arm, and grasped and got into his possession, by force and violence, the houses, and lands, and estates of others, and became the greatest man in all the east, and the earth in a manner was his alone; and because he was respected for his greatness and riches, he was confirmed therein, and dwelt securely: or rather, taking the words in this sense, they may be considered as an aggravation of Job's sins, both before and after charged upon him; as that when he was the mighty and honourable man, and though he was such, and had it in the power of his hands to do a great deal of good to the poor and needy; yet took a pledge from his indigent brother, stripped those that were almost naked of their clothing, and would not give a poor weary traveller a cup of water, nor a morsel of bread to an hungry man; yea, abused his power and authority which he had, to the oppression of the widow and fatherless, as in the following verse.

Ver. 9. *Thou hast sent widows away empty*, &c.] Either out of their own houses, which he spoiled, and devoured, and stripped, and cleared of all that were in them, as did the Scribes and Pharisees in Christ's time, Matt. xxiii. 14. or out of his own house, when they came to him, as a rich man, for charity; as they came to him wanting relief, they went away so; if without food and clothing, they were bid to depart without giving them any thing to feed and clothe them with; or if they came to him as a civil magistrate to have justice done them, and to be delivered out of the hands of their oppressors, they could not obtain any, but

[n] Αναριθμητοι, Sept.

[o] אין קץ לעונתיך non est finis iniquitatibus tuis, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[p] תחבל אחיך ηνεχυραζες τους αδελφους σου, Sept. capies in pignus fratres tuos, Montanus.

[q] נשוא פנים acceptus faciebus, Montanus; vel facie, Vatablus, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Mercerus.

[r] Jarchi, Ramban, Bar Tzemach, Sephorno.

[s] איש זרוע viro brachii, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Vatablus, Drusius, &c.

were dismissed without it; how contrary is this to ch. xxix. 13. and xxxi. 16. *and the arms of the fatherless have been broken*; not in a literal sense, as if when refusing to go out, when their mothers, the widows, had their houses spoiled, and they sent empty out of them; these laid hold on something within them, and would not depart, and so had their arms broken by the mighty man, the man of arms; but, in a metaphorical and figurative sense, their substance, and goods, and possessions, left them by their fathers for their support, these were taken away from them, and so they were as impotent and helpless as if their arms had been broken; or their friends on whom they relied for their sustenance, these were either ruined, and so could not help them; or else their affections were alienated from them, and would not. This indeed is not expressly charged upon Job, but it is intimated that it was done with his knowledge and consent, good will, and approbation; at least that he connived at it, and suffered it to be done when it was in his power to have prevented it, and therefore to be ascribed unto him; but how foreign is all this to Job's true character, ch. xxix. 12—17. and xxxi. 16—22?

Ver. 10. *Therefore snares are round about thee*, &c.] Not what occasion sin, draw into it, and issue in it, as inward corruptions, the temptations of Satan, and the things of this world, but punishments; because of the above sins charged upon Job, therefore evils, calamities, and distresses of various kinds, came upon him, beset him, and encompassed him all around, so that there was no way left for him to escape; it may refer to the Sabeans and Chaldeans seizing on his cattle, and carrying them away; to the fire that fell from heaven upon his sheep, and consumed them; to the great wind that blew down the house in which his children were, and destroyed them; and to the boils and ulcers that were all over his body: *and sudden fear troubleth thee;* those things, at least some of them, were what he feared, and they came suddenly upon him, and gave him great trouble and distress, ch. iii. 25. and iv. 5. and present fear frequently, on a sudden, darted into his mind, and gave him fresh trouble; he was afraid of his present sorrows, and of further and future ones, ch. ix. 28. and perhaps Eliphaz might think he was afraid of hell and damnation, and of sudden destruction from the Almighty coming upon him, ch. xxxi. 23. see Isa. xxiv. 17, 18.

Ver. 11. *Or darkness, that thou canst not see*, &c.] Or darkness is round about thee, thou art enveloped in it; meaning either judicial blindness, and darkness, and stupidity of mind, which must be his case, if he could not see the hand of God upon him, or the snares that were about him, or was not troubled with sudden fear; or else the darkness of affliction and calamity, which is often signified hereby, see Isa. viii. 22. Lam. iii. 1, 2. afflictive dispensations of Providence are sometimes so dark, that a man cannot see the cause and reason of them, or why it is he is brought into them; which was Job's case, and therefore desires God would shew him wherefore he contended with him, ch. x. 2. nor can he see, perceive, or enjoy any light of comfort; he is in inward darkness of soul, deprived of the light of God's countenance, as well as he is in the outward darkness of adversity, which is a most uncomfortable case, as it was this good man's; nor can he see any end of the affliction, or any way to escape out of it, and which were the present circumstances Job was in: *and abundance of waters cover thee;* afflictions, which are frequently compared to many waters, and floods of them, because of the multitude of them, their force and strength, the power and rapidity with which they come; and because overflowing, overbearing, and overwhelming, and threaten with utter ruin and destruction, unless stopped by the mighty hand of God, who only can resist and restrain them; Eliphaz represents Job like a man drowning, overflowed with a flood of water, and covered with its waves, and in the most desperate condition, see Psal. lxix. 1, 2.

Ver. 12. *Is not God in the height of heaven?* &c.] The heaven is high, it has its name from its height, and is noted for it; some of the heavens are higher than others, as the heaven of heavens, the third heaven, the habitation of angels and glorified saints; and here God dwells, this is the habitation of his holiness, and the high and holy place he inhabits; his throne is in heaven, in the heaven of heavens is his throne, where he in an especial manner manifests his glory, and the lustre of it; he is not indeed confined here, the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, he is everywhere; yet this is his court and palace, where his residence and retinue be, and angels behold his face, and wait upon him; and because this is the principal seat of his majesty, it becomes one of his names, Dan. iv. 26. Luke xv. 18. and the words here will bear to be rendered, *is not God the height of the heavens*[t]? or, as the Vulgate Latin version, *higher than the heavens;* he is above them, more exalted than they, being the Creator of them, see Heb. vii. 26. *and behold the height of the stars, how high they are;* or *the head* or *top of the stars*[u], which Ben Gersom interprets of the supreme orb, or that high and vast space in which the fixed stars are, or the highest of them, which are at the greatest distance; according to Mr. Huygens[w], a cannon-ball discharged would be 25 years in passing from the earth to the sun, from Jupiter to the sun 125 years, from Saturn 250, and from the sun to the dog-star 691,600 years; and if therefore it would be so long going to the nearest of the fixed stars, how great must be the distance of them from our earth, which are so much higher than the dog-star as that is from the sun? But, though these are so exceeding high, yet God is higher than they, see Isa. xiv. 13, 14. the truth contained in these words was what both Eliphaz and Job were agreed in, let them be spoken by which they will, some ascribing them to the one, and some to the other; from whence Eliphaz represents Job drawing an inference very impious, blasphemous, and atheistical.

Ver. 13. *And thou sayest, how doth God know?* &c.]

[t] שמים גבה sublimitas cœlorum, Bolducius; altitudo cœli, Michaelis; altitudo cœlorum, Schultens.

[u] ראש כוכבים caput stellarum, Montanus, Bolducius, Mercerus, Coccejus; verticem stellarum, V. L. Tigurine version, Michaelis, Schultens.

[w] Cosmotheoros, l. 2. p. 125, 137.

What is done on earth, the works of the children of men, their sinful actions, when he dwells at such a distance, and so remote from the earth, as the height of the stars, and highest heavens, be; not that Job said this expressly with his lips, but in his heart; Eliphaz imagined and supposed that such was the reasoning of his mind; it was an invidious consequence he had drawn from what Job had said concerning the afflictions of the godly, and the prosperity of the wicked; which he interpreted as a denial of the providence of God, as if he had no regard to human affairs, but things took place in a very disorderly and confused way, without any regard to right or wrong; and he concluded that Job was led into these sentiments by the consideration of the distance of God from the earth; that, dwelling in the highest heavens, he could not and did not see what was done here, and therefore men might commit all manner of sin with impunity; that their sins would never be taken notice of, or they be called to an account for them; which are the very language and sentiments of the most abandoned of men, see Psal. x. 11, 14. and lxxiii. 11, 12. and xciv. 5—10. Ezek. ix. 9. *can he judge through the dark clouds?* if he can't see and know what is done, he can't judge of it, whether it is good or bad, and so can neither justify nor condemn an action. By *the dark cloud* is not meant the matter, or corporeal mass, with which man is covered, as a Jewish commentator [x] interprets it; rather the cloudy air, or atmosphere around us; or that thick darkness in which Jehovah dwells, clouds and darkness being around him, Psal. xcvii. 2. but all this hinders not his sight of things done here below; what is thick darkness to us is pure light to him, in which also he is said to dwell, and with which he covers himself as with a garment; and the darkness and the light are both alike to him, he can see and judge through the one as well as the other.

Ver. 14. *Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not, &c.*] Thus Job is made to speak, or to reason as atheistical persons, or such who are inclined to atheism would, who take God to be altogether such an one as themselves; as that because thick clouds hide objects, as the sun, and moon, and stars, from their sight, therefore they must hide men and their actions from the sight of God; whereas there is nothing between God and man to hide them from him, let them be what they will, clouds as thick and as dark as can be imagined, yet his eyes are upon the ways of man, and see all his goings, nor is there any darkness that can hide from him, ch. xxxiv. 21, 22. *and he walketh in the circuit of heaven;* within which he keeps himself, and never looks down upon the earth, or takes any notice of what is done there; quite contrary to Psal. xiv. 3. and xxxiii. 13, 14. as if he only took his walks through the spacious orb of heaven, and delighted himself in viewing the celestial mansions, and the furniture of them, but had no regard to any thing below them; whereas, though he walks in the circuit of heaven, he also sits upon the circle of the earth, Isa. xl. 22. Eliphaz seems here to ascribe the sentiments perhaps of the Zabians in former times to Job, and since adopted by some philosophers; that God only regards the heavenly bodies, and supports them in their beings, and regulates and directs their motions, and leaves all things below to be governed and influenced by them, as judging it unworthy of him to be concerned with things on earth. Indeed the earth and the inhabitants of it are unworthy of his notice and care, and of his providential visits, but he does humble himself to look upon things on earth as well as in heaven, Psal. viii. 4. and cxiii. 6. to make Job reason after this Epicurean manner was doing great injustice to his character, who most firmly believed both the being and providence of God, and that as extending to all things here below, see ch. xii. 13—25.

Ver. 15. *Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?*] The evil way that wicked men have walked in ever since man apostatized from God, the way of Cain and his descendants, who were of the wicked one, and lived wicked lives and conversations; *the way of the old world*, as Mr. Broughton renders the phrase here, the imagination of the thoughts of whose hearts was evil, and that continually; who filled the earth with rapine and violence, and all flesh corrupted their way with all manner of impurity and wickedness, and indulged themselves in the gratification of their sensual lusts and pleasures; and were, as the Apostle Peter calls them, *the world of the ungodly;* and here, *men of wickedness*, or *iniquity* [y]; such who gave themselves up to it, and were immersed in it; these trod the paths of sin, and made it a beaten road; they frequented this way, they walked continually in it; their life was a series and course of iniquity, in which they obstinately persisted, and proceeded from evil to evil, to more and more ungodliness. Now Job is asked if he had *marked* their way and course of life; the evil of their way should have been marked, in order to avoid it; it being an old way should not recommend it; and the end of it, which was sudden ruin and destruction, should be marked to deter from it: but it is suggested that Job kept in this way, and observed it himself, and walked in it; for the words may be rendered, *truly thou keepest the old way*, or *the way of the world* [z]; trod in the steps of wicked men, was a close follower of them, and companied with them; in like manner is Job charged by Elihu, ch. xxxiv. 7, 8. and this sense agrees with what goes before.

Ver. 16. *Which were cut down out of time, &c.*] Sent out of time into eternity, time being no more with men, and they no longer in time, when death seizes upon them; or *before time* [a], before the common term of life, which, according to the course of nature, and human probability, they might have arrived unto: as this is spoken of the men of the old world that lived before the flood, when the lives of men were very long, it is highly probable there were many that were destroyed by the general deluge, who, had it not been for that, might have lived many hundreds of years, according to the usual course: or *without time* [b], without any delay, suddenly, at once, at an unawares; for, though

[x] Peritzol.

[y] מתי און viri iniquitatis, Montanus, Mercerus; so Drusius, Michaelis.

[z] הארח עולם תשמור profecto viam seculi servas, Schultens.

[a] ולא עת ante tempus suum, V. L. Mercerus; ante tempus, Cocceius, Schultens.

[b] Sine mora, Cocceius; in momento, Codurcus.

they had notice of the flood, they did not regard it, but lived careless and secure; and it came upon them without any further warning, and swept them away, when they were *cut down*, as trees by the axe laid to the root of them, to which wicked men in great power and flourishing circumstances are sometimes compared, Psal. xxxvii. 35, 36. or like grass by the scythe, which it is not able to resist, and to which all men are like for their numbers and weaknesses, and who are cut down by death as easily as the grass is by the mower, see Psal. xxxvii. 1, 2. and xc. 5, 6. Some render it *wrinkled*[c], as in ch. xvi. 8. as bodies when dead are, and especially such as are drowned, and have been long floating in the water, as those that perished by the flood were, for to such the words have respect, as appears by what follows: *whose foundation was overflown with a flood;* either of water, or of fire and brimstone, as Jarchi observes; the former is most likely to be meant; for by the flood, or universal deluge, all that was thought firm and permanent, and might be called a foundation, was overflown and carried away, as houses, goods, furniture, wealth, and riches, and every thing that men had a dependence upon for the support and comfort of life; yea, the earth itself, on which they dwelt, and was reckoned *terra firma*, this being founded upon, and over the waters; or, as the Apostle Peter describes it, it *standing out of the water and in the water*, 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6. or *their foundation* was *a flood poured out*[d]; what they thought were solid, and firm, and durable, and built their hopes of happiness upon, were like a flood of water, poured, dissipated, and scattered, and which disappeared and came to nothing: and such is every foundation that a man builds his hope, especially of eternal happiness, upon, short of Christ, the only sure foundation laid in Zion, his person, grace, blood, and righteousness; every thing else, let it seem ever so firm, is as sand, yea, as water, as a flood of water that spreads itself, and quickly comes to nothing.

Ver. 17. *Which said unto God, depart from us*, &c.] Choosing not to be admonished of their sins, nor be exhorted to repentance for them, nor be instructed by him in the way of their duty, nor to attend the worship and ordinances of God, nor be under his rule and government; the same is observed by Job of wicked men, but to a different purpose; he makes this to be the language of such who were in very prosperous circumstances, and continued in them, notwithstanding their impiety; here by this Eliphaz describes such persons who were cut off, and destroyed for their wickedness, see ch. xxi. 14. *and what can the Almighty do for them?* that is, for us; for these are either the words of the wicked continued, being so self-sufficient, and full of good things, having as much, or more, than heart can wish, that they stood in no need of any thing from God; nor could they imagine they should receive any profit and advantage from him, by listening to his instructions, or obeying his will; they had such low and mean thoughts of God, that he would neither do them good nor evil; they expected no good from him, and feared no ill at his hands; they ascribed all the good things they had to their own care, industry, and diligence; and when any ill befell them, they attributed it to chance, and second causes, thinking nothing of God: as these are the words of Eliphaz, they may be rendered, *what has the Almighty done to them*, or *against them*[e]? what injury has he done them, or ill will has he shewn them, that they should treat him in so contemptuous a manner? so far from it, that he has bestowed abundance of good things on them, as follows, see Jer. ii. 5.

Ver. 18. *Yet he filled their houses with good things*, &c.] With temporal good things, with this world's good, with plenty of providential goodness; earthly enjoyments are good things in themselves, and in their effects, when rightly used, and these wicked men have their share of; this is their portion, they have their good things in this life, and a large abundance of them oftentimes; their hearts are filled with food, and should be with gladness and thankfulness; their bellies are filled with hidden treasures; their outhouses with corn and wheat, and such-like fruits of the earth; their shops with all manner of goods; their dwelling-houses with gold and silver, with rich furniture, and all precious substance; and all this is from God, every good gift comes from him; the earth is full of his goodness; though these men say, *what can the Almighty do for them?* this shews, that what they have they are not deserving of; and what is bestowed upon them is not from any merit in them, but according to the sovereign will and pleasure of God; and this is an aggravation of their wickedness, that notwithstanding he has loaded them with his benefits, and indulged them with such a plenty of good things, yet they spurn at him, rebel against him, and bid him depart from them; which conduct of theirs Eliphaz expresses his abhorrence of: *but the counsel of the wicked is far from me;* such impious reasonings, and wicked practices, he was far from justifying; he had them in the utmost detestation, and could not but abhor such vile ingratitude; he makes use of Job's words, ch. xxi. 16. which he thought he could do to better purpose, and with greater sincerity.

Ver. 19. *The righteous see* it, *and are glad*, &c.] Not the counsel of the wicked, nor their outward prosperity, but their ruin and destruction, which is sure and certain; though it may sometimes seem to linger, it is often public and visible to the view of every man, being made public examples, see Psal. xci. 8. and which is matter of joy and gladness to truly good and righteous men; who have the righteousness of Christ on them, his grace in them, and in consequence of that live soberly, righteously, and godly; these rejoice at the vengeance of God on wicked men, Psal. lii. 5, 6. 7. and lviii. 10. not that the misery of their fellow-creatures is pleasing to them as such; this would be brutish and inhuman, as well as contrary to the grace of God, and to their character as good men, and also would be displeasing to God, Prov. xxiv. 17, 18. but partly because they themselves, through the grace and goodness of God, have been kept from such sins as bring to ruin

[c] קמטו corrugati sunt, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Bolducius, Cocceius.

[d] נהר יוצק יסודם fundamentum eorum ut flumen diffluxit. Tigurine version; fluvius effusus fundamentum eorum, Codurcus, Beza; to the same sense Drusius, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schultens.

[e] ומה יפעל שדי למו & quid fecerat omnipotens illis? Piscator.

and destruction; and partly because they are delivered out of the hands of these wicked men, who were distressing to them; and chiefly because of the glory of the divine perfections, particularly the holiness and justice of God displayed herein; for God is known and glorified by the judgments which he executeth, see Psal. ix. 16. Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2, 3. *and the innocent laugh them to scorn;* such as are upright and sincere, live holy and harmless lives and conversations, though not entirely free from sin; these deride them for their impieties, and observe to them the justness of the divine judgments upon them. The Jewish writers, many of them [f], restrain these words to Noah and his sons, who saw with their eyes the flood that destroyed the world of the ungodly, and rejoiced at it, and had them in their turn in derision, who had made a mock at Noah's building of the ark, and at his exhortations to them; but though the characters of righteous and innocent agree with Noah, who was just and perfect in his generation, yet not with all his sons; and it is best to understand this of good men in general; though it must be observed and owned, that the destruction of the wicked by the flood is before spoken of, and their character described. The word *saying* is by some supplied at the close of this verse, and so the following words are what the righteous are represented as saying, upon sight of the destruction of the wicked.

Ver. 20. *Whereas our substance is not cut down,* &c.] As yours is; Noah and his family were preserved in the ark, and the creatures with him, and sufficient sustenance was laid up for them all, when every thing relating to the wicked was destroyed: but this may be thought too restrictive, as well as what follows too subtle, that this should respect the human species not being cut down and utterly destroyed in the flood, but preserved in and restored by Noah and his family; it may perhaps be thought better to interpret these words as the words of Eliphaz and his friends, joining with the righteous and the innocent, putting themselves in their number, and rejoicing with them at the destruction of the wicked, and as having a particular regard to Job's case, and the difference between him and them; his substance being cut down, and he stripped of all; whereas they were not deprived of theirs, but it continued with them, and they in the full possession of it; the reason of which difference was, he was a wicked man, and they righteous and innocent; but by others, who also take them to be the words of the righteous triumphing over the wicked, they are rendered thus; *is not he cut off that rose up against us* [g]? Our enemy and adversary, he is no more, he can do us no more hurt, and we are delivered out of his hand: *but the remnant of them the fire consumes;* which Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, and others, interpret of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other cities, by fire; which would have had some appearance of truth, if the destruction had been of the whole world, and as general as the flood was, or more so, and had cleared the world of the remnant of the ungodly, whereas it was only of a few cities: rather it may be Eliphaz glances at the case of Job, as different from him and his friends, that when their substance was untouched, the remnant of Job's was consumed by fire; what were left by the Chaldeans and Sabeans were destroyed by fire from heaven; though if it could be thought that Eliphaz had knowledge of the general conflagration at the last day, and had that in view, it would afford a better sense; but it may be he does not mean material, but metaphorical fire, the fire of divine wrath, which will consume the wicked, root and branch, and leave them nothing.

Ver. 21. *Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace,* &c.] Not with the righteous and innocent, but with God, as the following verses shew: from severe charges and censures, Eliphaz proceeds to advice and exhortations, and seems to be in a better temper, and to talk in a more kind and gentle manner, only he goes upon a false supposition and mistaken notion, that Job was a bad man; had he had a proper object to have directed his discourse to, it would have been excellently said; and, as it is, is not without its use: this first exhortation supposes unacquaintance with God, and an estrangedness from him; which is the case of every man from the womb, and in a state of nature and unregeneracy. Acquaintance with God begins at conversion, when he is made known, not only as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of grace and peace in Christ; and it is carried on by prayer, which is a converse with God, and by attendance on his worship and ordinances, in which men walk before him, and have fellowship with him: this is sometimes interrupted and dropped for a while, through temptation or sin; when there arises on account thereof a shyness and backwardness to draw nigh unto God, until he calls and invites them to take with them words, and return unto him; an acquaintance with God is not kept up when prayer before him is restrained; which Eliphaz charges Job with, ch. xv. 4. and when saints forsake the assembling of themselves together, or neglect public worship, or grow indifferent to it; and it is renewed again by prayer, and a fresh attendance on the above things; in which frequent visits are made between God and his people, mutual secrets communicated, a holy freedom, familiarity, and boldness contracted, and communion with God enjoyed: men may also acquaint themselves with him yet more and more by the contemplation of his works, by reading and hearing his word, and by conversation with good men, ministers, and others. The Jewish commentators [h] generally interpret it, *use or accustom thyself with him,* to walk in his ways, and observe his commands: *and be at peace;* not make his peace with God, which a creature cannot do; only Job's living Redeemer could do that, and he has done it; but be easy and still under the afflicting hand of God, quietly submit to it, and patiently endure it, and not murmur at it; or, as Aben Ezra interprets it, as a promise of God, *thou shalt be in peace,* or *thou shalt have peace;* all outward prosperity and happiness, which is often signified by this word; or inward peace of mind, which comes from God, and through an acquaintance with him, and from Christ, his blood,

[f] Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, Sephorno, & alii.

[g] אם לא נכחד קימנו annon exscinditur qui insurgit contra nos, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[h] Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, Bar Tzemach.

righteousness, and sacrifice, by whom the acquaintance with God is opened and maintained; and it is had in a way of duty, in attendance on the ordinances of God, which are paths of peace; and also eternal peace hereafter, when acquaintance with God will be no more dropped, nor interrupted, but continue for ever: *thereby good shall come unto thee*: temporal good things, necessary and convenient, the promise of which is annexed to godliness, or an acquaintance with God; spiritual good things, the blessings of grace, all things pertaining to life and godliness, and eternal good things; that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which afflictions, peaceably and patiently borne, work for and bring unto.

Ver. 22. *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth*, &c.] Not the law of Moses; for it is a question whether that was as yet, or could come to the knowledge of Job; rather any doctrine, as the word signifies, any revelation of the mind and will of God, made unto the patriarchs in former times, and which was handed down from one to another, and was to be received as coming from the mouth of God, not as the word of man, but as the word of God; and as such to be received with meekness and reverence, with readiness, cheerfulness, and gladness; and not only to be attended to but obeyed: *and lay up his words in thine heart*; as a rich treasure, very valuable, and preferable to gold, silver, and precious stones, laid up in chests and cabinets because of their value, and that they might not be lost, but be preserved safe and sure, and that they might be come at, and made use of on proper occasions; as the words of God and doctrines of the Scriptures may be, against the temptations of Satan, the lusts of the flesh, and for the instruction of ourselves and others; and therefore should be retained in our minds, hid in our hearts, and dwell richly in us; and, unless they are in the heart, and have a place there, they will be of little avail to have them in the head or on the tongue; but if they come with power into the heart, and have a place there, they work effectually, and influence the life and conversation: these Job had, and had a great value for them; see ch. vi. 10. and xxiii. 12.

Ver. 23. *If thou return to the Almighty*, &c.] Which supposes a departure from him; and that is by sinning against him, which should be repented of, confessed, and pardoning grace and mercy be implored, by all those that have backslidden, and return to God; to which they are encouraged by his being the *Almighty*, who has power to forgive sins, also to cause all grace to abound, and to save to the uttermost; he is not a God that is prayed and returned to, that cannot save, or whose hand is shortened, or his ear heavy; the word is *shaddai*, which signifies who is *sufficient*, all-sufficient; whose grace is sufficient to restore and receive backsliders, pardon their sins, accept their persons, supply their wants, and preserve them safe to his kingdom and glory: *thou shalt be built up*; restored to his former

happin[illegible]
his body, [illegible]
dropping d[illegible]
which was [illegible]
his children [illegible] prived of
through a like [illegible] ing again
families are built [illegible] ch means
affluence of good th[illegible] ng a large
had before; and also, [illegible] er than
and built up in his so[illegible] sense, be edi[illegible]
and built up in his so[illegible] in the light of God['s]
countenance, the discoveries of his love, the comforts of his spirit, an application of precious promises, an[d] divine truths, and a communication of grace, and blessings of it: *thou shalt put away iniquity far from [thy] tabernacle*; not commit it himself, nor connive at [it in] others, nor suffer it in his family, suggesting as if [he] had so done in times past; or remove men of iniqui[ty], wicked men, from his house, and not allow them [to] dwell there; though rather this seems to be spok[en] of by way of promise, and as an encouragement to re[turn] to the Almighty; upon which all evils and ca[lamities], the effects of sin and iniquity, should be removed from his house, and the apartments of it, they were now full of.

Ver. 24. *Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust*, &c.] Have such plenty of it, as not to be counted: *and the* gold *of* Ophir *as the stones of the brooks*; which was reckoned the best, probably in Arabia; not in the East and West Indies, which were not known to Job; though some take this to be an exhortation to despise riches, and as a dissuasion from covetousness, rendering the words, *put gold upon the dust*, or earth[i], and trample upon it, as a thing not esteemed by thee, as Sephorno interprets it; make no more account of it than of the dust of the earth; let it be like dirt unto thee, *and among the stones of the brooks*, Ophir[k]; that is, the gold of Ophir, reckon no more of it, though the choicest gold, than the stones of the brook; or thus, *put gold for dust, and the gold of* Ophir *for the flint of the brooks*[l]; esteem it no more than the dust of the earth, or as flint-stones; the latter clause I should choose rather to render, *and for a flint the rivers of* Ophir, or the golden rivers, from whence the gold of Ophir was; and it is notorious from historians, as Strabo[m] and others, that gold is taken out of rivers; and especially from the writers of the history of the West Indies[n].

Ver. 25. *Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence*, &c.] In temporal things, secure the plenty of gold and silver possessed of; surround and protect by his providence, that there shall be no danger of the Sabeans and Chaldeans, or others, breaking in and stealing it away; and, in spiritual, preserve from all enemies, sin, Satan, and the world; be a wall of fire about him, his fortress, his tower, and place of defence; or keep him as in a garrison, through faith unto salvation; or, as others render the words, *and let the Almighty be*, or *he shall be thy gold*, or *golds*[o]; all thy gold, the same

[i] ושית על עפר בצר pone aurum super pulverem, Codurcus; in pulvere aurum, [illegible] abjice humi aurum, Beza; so Grotius.
[k] נחלים אופיר [illegible] inter saxa torrentium Ophir, Codurcus.
[l] Pro rupe aurum Ophi[r illegible]um, Junius & Tremellius; so Schultens.
[m] Geograph. l. 11. p. 344.

[n] Pet. Martyr. Decad. 3. l. 4.
[o] בצריך lectissimum aurum tuum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Vatablus, Schmidt, Schultens; so R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 23. 2.

[illegible] treat [illegible] [illegible]mpt, and [illegible] [illegible]em him as gold, an[illegible] [illegible]at thy confi-dence in [illegible] [illegible]o gold, for its [illegible] [illegible]ore precious than gold that [illegible] [illegible] i. 7. the righte-[illegible] of [illegible] [illegible]ncy, called the gold [illegible] Ophir, and ch[illegible] [illegible]ht gold, Psal. xlv. 9, [illegible] and he himself is m[illegible] more precious than the gold of Ophir, and the gain that comes by him than fine [illegible] Cant. v. 11. Prov. iii. 14, 15. the doctrines of [illegible] grace of God are comparable to gold, silver, and [illegible] ious stones; yea, to be preferred unto them, 1 Cor. [illegible] 12. Psal. xix. 11. and cxix. 72. Prov. viii. 10. God [illegible] instead of all riches to his people; and they that have an interest in him share in the riches of grace, and are entitled to the riches of glory; all are theirs; *and thou shalt have plenty of silver*; or God shall be, *or let him be to thee silver of strength* ‡; or instead of silver, which is the strength of men, in which they confide for business or war; but God is to his people infinitely more than what silver or gold can be to them.

Ver. 26. *For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, &c.*] In the perfections of his nature, in the works of his hands, in his word and worship, in communion with him, and in the relation he stands in to his people as their covenant God and Father: this would be the case when Job should be more and better acquainted with God, and with the law or doctrine of his mouth, and the words of his lips, and should return unto him with his whole heart; and when his affections should be taken off of all earthly riches; when he should look upon gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brook, and God should be to him his gold and his silver; then, and not till then, could he have true delight and complacency in God: *and shalt lift up thy face unto God*; in prayer, as Sephorno interprets it, with an holy confidence, boldness, and cheerfulness; as a believer in Christ may, having on his righteousness, and having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience by his blood: such an one can appear before God, and lift up his face to him, as without spot, so without confusion, shame, and blushing, without a load of guilt upon him, without fear of wrath or punishment, and of being repulsed; see ch. xi. 15.

Ver. 27. *Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, &c.*] To God, and him only; for not a creature, angels, or men, are to be prayed to; and this is to be done in a supplicating, entreating way, as the word signifies; not pleading merit, but mercy; not presenting prayers and supplications for a man's own righteousness-sake, but for the Lord's mercy's sake, and for the sake of Christ and his righteousness; and prayer is to be made in this manner frequently, to be multiplied, as the word also signifies; prayer should be made always, and without ceasing; and this is not only a duty, but a privilege; and as such it is here observed, even as a benefit and blessing to be enjoyed; as it is when a man can come to God as his father, through Christ the Mediator, with boldness and confidence, in the faith of him, and to God as on a throne of grace, where he may find grace and mercy to help him in time of need, and especially it is so when attended with the success following: *and he shall hear thee*; as he does hear those that pray to him in the name of Christ, in the exercise of faith, and in the sincerity and uprightness of their hearts; and answers their requests, fulfils their desires, and gives them what they ask of him; for he is a God hearing prayer, and sooner or later, in his own time and way, grants the petitions of his people: *and thou shalt pay thy vows*; the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving which he promised to offer up to God, should he grant him the desires of his heart; and these being granted, he would be laid under obligation to perform his promises; so that this also is to be considered as a benefit and blessing; for it does not so much regard the payment of vows, as it is designed to observe to him that he should have that done for him which would be a sufficient ground and reason for paying his vows, or making good what he promised in the time of his distress; since what he then requested, and was the condition of his vow, should now be granted; see Psal. lvi. 12, 13. and lxvi. 13, 14.

Ver. 28. *Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee, &c.*] Strictly speaking, this is only true of God, whose decrees are unfrustrable, whose counsel shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart be established to all generations; and frequently so it is, according to an usual saying, man appoints, but God disappoints: this may be understood of Job, either as a civil magistrate, that he should decree a thing in a court of judicature with so much wisdom and equity, that it should stand firm and sure, and, though made on earth, should be ratified in heaven, as the decrees and doctrines of the apostles of Christ are said to be, Matt. xvi. 19. see Prov. viii. 15. or, as a private man in civil affairs, signifying that he should be so guided by the Lord, and prospered and succeeded in all his ways and works, that what he determined to do, and formed a scheme for the execution of, it should be brought about and confirmed; he committing his ways to the Lord, his thoughts should be established, or his purposes and designs effected, see Psal. i. 3. Prov. xvi. 3. or rather as a praying man; and so it agrees with what goes before, that he should lift up his face to God, and pray unto him with success, and have just occasion to praise him, or pay his vows to him, since he should have the desires of his heart; whatever was upon his mind, and he prayed in faith for, he should have it; as Elias prayed, both that it might not rain, and that it might rain, and both were according to his word, or the decree of his lips in prayer; see 1 Kings xvii. 1. Jam. v. 17, 18. *and the light shall shine upon thy ways*; which is the reason of all things prospering and succeeding, and being established according to his wish and will; the light of gr[illegible]e shining in him, to put him upon and instruct h[illegible]m in denying and avoiding that which is sinful, [illegible]nd doing that which was just and good; and the [illegible]ght of the word without him, being a light unto h[illegible] feet, and a lamp to his paths, to guide and direct [illegible] [illegible] especially the light of God's favour and [illegible] [illegible]ing on him, suc-

‡ וכסף תועפות לך & argentum fortitudinum tibi, Montanus; Cocceius, Sch

ceeding him in all his ways and works, and making them prosperous.

Ver. 29. *When* men *are cast down,* &c.] Wicked men are brought down from a state of prosperity to a state of adversity, are in low circumstances, great straits and difficulties: *then thou shalt say, there is lifting up;* that is, for himself and his; when others are in adversity, he should be in prosperity; when others are cast down into a very low estate and distressed condition, he should be exalted to a very high estate, and be in affluent circumstances, see Psal. cxlvii. 6. or else the sense is, when thou and thine, and what belong to thee, are humbled and brought low, then thou mayest promise thyself a restoration and change for the better; and boldly say, they will be lifted up, and raised up again, since God's usual method is to exalt the humble, and to abase the proud, Luke xiv. 11. or rather, this may respect the benefit and advantage that humble persons would gain by Job, and his prayers for them, and may be rendered and interpreted thus: *when they have humbled* [q] themselves, and bowed themselves low at thy feet, and especially before God, *then thou shalt say,* pray unto God for them, that *there* may be a *lifting up,* raising them up out of their low estate, and thou shalt be heard: *and he shall save the humble person;* that is, *low of eyes* [r], humble in his eyes; who is so pressed with troubles and distress, that he hangs down his head, looks upon the ground, and will not lift up his eyes, but is of a dejected countenance; or that is low in his own eyes, has humble thoughts of himself, esteems others better than himself, and lies low before God under a sense of his sinfulness and unworthiness, and casts himself entirely upon the grace and mercy of God; such an one he saves, in a spiritual sense, out of his troubles and afflictions; he does not forget the cry of such humble ones, but remembers them, and grants their desires: and he saves the lowly and humble with a spiritual and eternal salvation; gives m[...] gra[...] [...]ns them for glory, and at l[...] [...]s them on high to sit a[...] [...]e throne o[...] glory; the [...] [...] new heavens and earth, [...]ess, Jam. iv. 6. Matt. v. 5.

Ver. 30. *He shall* [...] [...]*e innocen*[...] &c.] But where is th[...] [...]nd, an island innocent persons? it se[...] [...] better rendered b[...] others, *the innocent shall deliver the island* [s]: good men are sometimes, by their counsel and advice, and especially by their prayers, the means of deliverin[...] island or country from ruin and destruction: bu[...] word rendered *island* is a negative particle, as in 1 S[...] iv. 21. Prov. xxxi. 4. and signifies *not;* and so in [...] Targum; which is " a man that is not innocent sha[...] " be delivered:" in like manner Jarchi interprets i[...] and so do Noldius [t] and others [u]; and the sense is that Job, for he is the person spoken of, as appear[...] from the following clause, should not only be beneficial by his prayers, to humble and good men, but even to the wicked, such as were not innocent and free from fault and punishment, but guilty, and obnoxious to wrath and ruin; and yet such should escape it, at least for the present, through the prayers and intercession of Job; or God shonld do this for Job's sake and his prayers: *and it is,* or *he is delivered by the pureness of thine hands;* either by his good works, setting a good example, which, being followed, would be the means of the prevention of present ruin; or by his lifting up pure and holy hands in prayer to God for a sinful people; which God often attends to and hears, and so delivers them from destruction; as the Israelites were delivered through the prayer of Moses, when they had made the golden calf, and worshipped it; see Psal. cvi. 33. though sometimes God will not admit of an intercessor for such persons, Ezek. xv. 1.

CHAP. XXIII.

THIS and the following chapter contain Job's reply to the last oration of Eliphaz; in this he first declares his present sorrowful estate and condition, ver. 1, 2. wishes he knew where to find God, as a judge sitting on a throne, before whom he might lay his cause, and plead it, and have his judgment and final decision passed upon it; when he doubted not but he would deal favourably with him, and both admit him and strengthen him, to plead his own cause, and would acquit him for ever from the charges laid against him, ver. 3—7. in order to which he sought for him everywhere, but could not find him, but contents himself with this, that God knew his way; and that, after trial of him, he should shine like pure gold, and appear to be no apostate from him, but one sincerely obedient to his commands, and a true lover of his word, ver. 8—12. and as for his afflictions, they were the result of the unalterable purposes and appointments of God: but what gave him the greatest uneasiness was, that there were more of that sort yet to come, which filled him with fears and faintings, with trouble and darkness, ver. 13—17.

Ver. 1. *Then* Job *answered and said,* &c.] In reply to Eliphaz; for though he does not direct his discourse to him, nor take any notice of his friends; yet, as a proof of his innocence, against his and their accusations and charges, he desires no other than to have his cause laid before God himself, by whom he had no doubt he should be acquitted; and, contrary to their notions, he shews in this chapter, that he, a righteous man, was afflicted by God, according to his unchangeable decrees; and, in the next, that wicked men greatly prosper; so that what he herein says may be considered as a sufficient answer to Eliphaz and his

[q] כי השפילו quum humi[...] verint, Montanus, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[r] שח עינים demissum oc[...]s, Montanus, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; humilem oculi[...] Vatablus.
[s] ימלט אי נקי innocens insu[...]a liberabit, Montanus; so Pagninus, Vatablus.
[t] Concordant. Ebr. Part. p. 25. No. 135.
[u] אי נקי non innocentem, Drusius, Piscator, Michaelis; non insontem, Schultens; to the same sense Beza, Mercerus, Codurcus, Junius, & Tremellius.

friends; an[illegible] [illegible] him by them, ex[illegible] [illegible] Bildad.

Ver. 2. [illegible] *bitter*, &c.] Job's co[illegible] [illegible]ings; he was made to [illegible] as he had been complain[illegible] [illegible] upon him, he still continued [illegible] [illegible]day, even after all the discourse his frie[illegible] [illegible] to administer to him, as Jarchi observes; [illegible] [illegible]plaints were concerning his afflictions, and his friends' ill usage of him under them; not of injustice in God in afflicting him, though he thought he dealt severely with him; but of the [gre]atness of his affliction, they being intolerable, and his strength unequal to them, and therefore death was [m]ore eligible to him than life; and he complained of God's hiding his face from him, and not hearing him, not shewing him wherefore he contended with him, nor admitting an hearing of his cause before him: and this complaint of his was *bitter*; the things he complained of were such, bitter afflictions, like the waters of Marah the Israelites could not drink of; there was a great deal of wormwood and gall in his affliction and misery; and it was in a bitter way, in the bitterness of his soul, he made his complaint; and, what made his case still worse, he could not utter any complaint, so much as a sigh or a groan, but it was reckoned provocation, or stubbornness and *rebellion*, by his friends: so some render the word *, as Mr. Broughton does, *this day my sighing is holden a rebellion*: there is indeed a great deal of rebellion oftentimes in the hearts, words and actions, conduct and behaviour, even of good men under afflictions, as were in the Israelites in the wilderness; and a difficult thing it is to complain without being guilty of it; though complaints may be without it, yet repinings and murmurings are always attended with it: *yet my stroke is heavier than my groaning*; or *my hand*, meaning either his own hand, which was heavy, and hung down, his spirits failing, his strength being exhausted, and so his hands weak, feeble, and remiss, that he could not hold them up through his afflictions, and his groanings under them, see Psal. xlii. 3. Heb. xii. 12. or the hand of God upon him, his afflicting hand, which had touched him and pressed hard upon him, and lay heavy, and was heavier than his groanings shewed; though he groaned much, he did not groan more, nor so much, as his afflictions called for; and therefore it was no wonder that his complaint was bitter, nor should it be reckoned rebellion and provocation; see ch. vi. 2, 3. and xix. 24.

Ver. 3. *O that I knew where I might find him*, &c.] That is, God, who is understood, though not expressed, a relative without an antecedent, as in Psal. lxxxvii. 1. Cant. i. 2. John xx. 15. Jarchi supplies, and interprets it, *my Judge*, from ver. 7. and certain it is Job did desire to find God as a judge sitting on his throne, judging right, that he might have justice done to him; indeed he might be under the hidings of God's face, which added to his affliction, and made it the heavier; in which case, the people of God are at a loss to know where he is, and how to find him, as Mr. Broughton renders the words here: they know that he is every where, and fills heaven and earth with his presence; that their God is in the heavens, his throne is there, yea, the heaven is his throne; that he is in his church, and among his people, where they are gathered together in his name, to wait upon him, and to worship him; and that he is to be found in Christ, as a God gracious and merciful; all which Job knew, but might, as they in such circumstances are, be at a loss how to come at sensible communion with him; for, when he hides his face, who can behold him? yet they cannot content themselves without seeking after him, and making use of all means of finding him, as Job did, ver. 8, 9. see Cant. iii. 1, 2, 3. *that I might come even to his seat*: either his mercy-seat, him whence he communes with his people, the throne of his grace, where he sits as the God of grace, dispensing his grace to his people, to help them in time of need; the way to which is Christ, and in which all believers may come to it with boldness, in his name, through his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; they may come up even to it, in the exercise of faith and hope, though the distance is great, as between heaven and earth, yet by faith they can come into the holiest of all, and by hope enter within the vail; and though the difficulties and discouragements are many, arising from their sins and transgressions: or else his judgment-seat, at which no man can appear and stand, without a righteousness, or without a better than his own, by which none can be justified in the sight of God; who, if strict to mark iniquity, the best of men cannot stand before him, at his bar of justice; indeed, in the righteousness of Christ, a believer may come up to the judgment-seat of God, and to him as Judge of all, and not be afraid, but stand before him with confidence, since that is sufficient to answer for him, and fully acquit him: but Job here seems to have a peculiar respect to his case, in controversy between him and his friends, and is so fully assured of the justness of his cause, and relying on his innocence, he wishes for nothing more than that he could find God sitting on a throne of justice, before whom his cause might be brought and heard, not doubting in the least but that he should be acquitted; so far was he from hiding himself from God, or pleasing himself with the thoughts that God was in the height of heaven, and knew nothing of him and his conduct, and could not judge through the dark clouds, which were a covering to him, that he could not see him; that he was not afraid to speak before him, and come up even to his seat, if he knew but where and how he could; see ch. xiii. 18, [illegible].

Ver. 4. *I would order my cause before him*, &c.] Either, as a praying person, direct his prayer to him, and set it in order before him, see Psal. [illegible] 3. or else as pleading in his own defence, and in justification of himself; not of his person before God, setting his works of righteousness in order before him, and pleading his justification on the foot of them; for, by these no flesh living can be justified before God; but of his cause, for, as a man may vindicate his cause before

* [illegible] Montanus, Vatablus, Schmidt; [illegible] Mercerus, Drusius; [illegible] Beza; [illegible] Cocceius; [illegible] Junius & Tremellius; [illegible] Piscator, Codurcus.

* [illegible] Montanus, Vatablus, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis.

men, and clear himself from aspersions cast upon him, as Samuel did, 1 Sam. xii. 5. so he may before God, with respect to the charges he is falsely loaded with, and may appeal to him for justice, and desire he would stir up himself, and awake to his judgment, even to his cause, and plead it against those that strive with him, as David did, Psal. xxxv. 1, 23. and xliii. 1. and *fill my mouth with arguments;* either in prayer, as a good man may; not with such as are taken from his goodness and righteousness, but from the person, office, grace, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ, and from the declarations of God's grace, and the promises of his word; or else as in a court of judicature, bringing forth his strong reasons, and giving proofs of his innocence, such as would be demonstrative, even convincing to all that should hear, and be not only proofs for him, and in his favour, but reproofs also, as the word [c] signifies, to those that contended with him.

Ver. 5. *I would know the words* which *he would answer me,* &c.] Being a God hearing and answering prayer, who always hears, and sooner or later answers the petitions of his people in his own way; and which when he does, they know, take notice, and observe it: or then he should know the reason why the Lord contended with him, and what were his sins and transgressions, which were the cause of his afflictions; things he had desired to know, but as yet had no answer, see ch. x. 2. and xiii. 22, 23. *and understand what he would say unto me;* what judgment he would pass upon him, what sentence he would pronounce on him, whether guilty or not, and by which judgment he was content to stand or fall; as for men's judgment, the judgment of his friends, or to be judged by them, he required it not, as he did not understand upon what ground they went, or that it was a good one; but the judgment of God he should pay a deference to, as being always according to truth, and the reason of which, when he should have a hearing before him, and a decisive sentence by him, he should clearly perceive; see 1 Cor. iv. 3.

Ver. 6. *Will he plead against me with* his *great power?* &c.] God will not plead against his people at all, but for them: much less will he plead against them with his great strength, use all his power to run them down, crush, and oppress them; for he is a great God, and of great power, he is mighty in strength, and there is no contending with him, or answering of him, ch. ix. 3, 9, 19. nor will he deal with them according to the strict rigour of his justice, nor stir up all his wrath, nor contend for ever with them in such a way; for then the spirits would fail before him, and the souls that he has made; whatever he does with others, making known his power on the vessels of wrath, he will never act after this manner with the vessels of mercy: *no, but he would put* strength *in me:* to pray unto him, and prevail with him to lay hold on him, and not let him go without the blessing, as Jacob did, Hos. xii. 3, 4. or to stand before him, and plead his own cause with him, in such a strong and powerful manner as to bear down all the accusations and charges brought against him: or *he will set* his heart *upon me* [d]; deal mildly and gently, kindly and graciously, and not with his great strength and strict justice; or *will not put* sins *upon me,* as Jarchi, or lay charges to him, however guilty of them, as his friends did, or impute such to him he never committed: God is so far from doing this to his people, that he does not impute their sins to them they have committed, but to his son, much less will he lay upon them more than is right, ch. xxxiv. 23. Some take the sense of the words to be this, in answer to the above question, *will he plead against me with his great power?* let him do it, *only let him not set upon me* [e], in an hostile way; and then I do not decline entering the lists with him; which expresses great boldness and confidence, and even too much, and must be reckoned among the unbecoming expressions Job was afterwards convinced of; but this he utters in his passion, in order the more clearly to shew, and the more strongly to assert, his innocence.

Ver. 7. *There the righteous might dispute with him,* &c.] That is, at his seat, either at his mercy-seat, where even God allows sinners to come and reason with him, for pardoning grace and mercy, upon the foot of his own declarations and promises, and the blood and sacrifice of his son, Isa. i. 18. or at his judgment-seat, pleading the righteousness of Christ, which is fully satisfactory to law and justice. Job most probably means himself by the righteous or upright man, being conscious to himself of his sincerity and integrity; and relying on this, he feared not to appear before God as a Judge, and reason his case before him, dispute the matter with him, and in his presence, which was in controversy between him and his friends, whether he was an hypocrite or a sincere good man: *so should I be delivered for ever from my Judge;* either from those who judged hardly of him, and were very censorious in the character they gave of him; and from all their condemnation of him, and calumnies and charges they fastened on him; or *from him that judgest me* [f], from any one whatever that should wrongly judge him, friend or foe; or rather from God himself, his Judge, from whom he should depart acquitted; and so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *so should I be quit for ever by my Judge:* for, if God justifies, who shall condemn? such an one need not regard the condemnations of men or devils; being acquitted by God he is for ever justified, and shall never enter into condemnation; God's acquittance is a security from the damnatory sentence of others.

Ver. 8. *Behold, I go forward, but he* is *not there,* &c.] Job here returns to what he had said before, ver. 3. as Jarchi observes, where he expresses his earnest desire after God, that he might know where he was, and come up to his seat; here he relates the various ways he took to find him, and his fruitless search of him. Cocceius thinks, by these phrases *forward* and *backward,* are meant times future and past; and that the sense is, that Job looked into the future times of the

[c] תוכחות increpationibus, V. L. and so Montanus, Beza, Mercerus, Drusius, Schultens.

[d] ישם בי ipse apponeret ad me animum, Junius & Tremellius; so Piscator, Cocceius, & Aben Ezra.

[e] Schultens.

[f] משפטי a judicante me, Beza, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Vatablus, Cocceius.

Messiah, and the grace promised him, his living Redeemer, that should stand on the earth in the latter day; and that he looked back to the ages before him, and to the first promise made to Adam; but could not understand by either the reason why good men were afflicted; and by the *right* hand and *left*, the different dispensations of God to men, granting protection with his right hand, and distributing the blessings of his goodness by it; and with his left hand laying afflictions and evils upon them; and yet, neither from the one nor the other could he learn the mind and will of God concerning men, since love and hatred are not to be known by these things: but rather, with the Jewish commentators in general, we are to understand places by these various expressions; even the several parts of the world, east, west, north, and south; which Job went through, and surveyed in his mind, to find God in, but to no purpose; for, when a man stands with his face to the rising sun, the east is before him, and, if he goes forward, he goes eastward; and behind him is the west, and, if he goes that way, he goes backward; so the eastern sea is called the former sea, and the western, or Mediterranean sea, the hinder sea, Zech. xiv. 8. and a man, in this position, will have the north on his left hand, and the south on his right; see Gen. xiii. 9. now Job says that he went *forward*, that is, eastward; but, says he of God, *he* is *not* there, or *is not* [g]; meaning not that he was not in being, did not exist; for he most firmly believed the existence of God, or that he was, but, as we rightly supply, he was not *there*, that is, eastward; and yet the greatest, the most glorious, and most gracious appearances of him were in the east; man was made in the east; the garden of Eden was planted eastward; here God appeared to Adam, both before and after his fall; and it was in the east, Christ, the second Adam, was born; his star appeared in it, and his Gospel was first preached in the eastern parts; in the east Job now lived, and had been the greatest man in it; but now God did not appear to him, as the Vulgate Latin version, not in a kind and gracious manner; nor could he find him at his throne of justice here, as he wished for; he was there, though Job saw him not; for he is everywhere; indeed he is not confined or limited to any place; for, as the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, so much less any part or corner of the earth: *and backward, but I cannot perceive him;* or understand where he is, or get intelligence of him, and of the reason of his dispensations, especially concerning himself.

Ver. 9. *On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him,* &c.] The northern part of the world, where his seat is, or the circle of the earth, says Bar Tzemach, and who has stretched out the north over the empty place, ch. xxvi. 7. Jarchi's note is, when he created it, he did not make it the place of his throne: God works everywhere in a way of providence, but in some places more eminently than in others; the northern part of the world is observed to be more inhabited than the southern, and the people of it to be more active in war and business than elsewhere; and more and greater things are done by God among them as instruments than among any other; and Mr. Caryl observes, that the Gospel has ever more generally and more clearly been preached here than in the southern parts of the world; and perhaps by the northern chambers in Ezekiel's vision, ch. xlii. 1. were designed the Protestant churches in the northern parts, as it is well known the Protestant doctrine is called the northern heresy: but what Job meant by God's works in the north is not easy to say; but as this refers to some place where God had been used to work either in the way of providence or grace, it was the most likely one to find him in, and yet Job could not behold him, or get any sight of him, either as on a throne of grace or justice: *he hideth himself on the right* hand, *that I cannot see* him; or *he covereth the right hand* [h], the southern parts of the world; he covers the face of the south with his face, that I cannot see him, so Jarchi; this is said because the south is covered with the waters of the ocean, as Bar Tzemach observes; what we call the South sea: or rather the meaning is, that God covered himself on the right hand, or on the south, as with a garment, as the word signifies; wrapped himself up either in light inaccessible, as with a garment, or with clouds of darkness, that he could not be seen; and if he hides himself, as he often does from the best of men, who can behold him? ch. xxxiv. 29. see ch. ix. 11.

Ver. 10. *But he knoweth the way that I take,* &c.] This he seems to say in a way of solace to himself, comforting and contenting himself, that though he could not find God, nor knew where he was, or what way he took, nor the reasons of his ways and dispensations with the children of men, and with himself, yet God knew where he was, and what way he took; by which he means either the way he took, being directed to it for his acceptance with God, his justification before him, and eternal salvation; which was his living Redeemer, he looked unto by faith for righteousness and eternal life: or rather the way and manner of life he took to, the course of his conversation, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, in the paths of piety and truth, of righteousness and holiness; and this God knew not barely by his omniscience, as he knows all the ways of men, good and bad; his eyes are upon them, he compasses them, and is thoroughly acquainted with them; but by way of approbation, he approved of it, and was well pleased with it, it being so agreeable to his revealed will, so pure and holy; thus the Lord knows the way of the righteous, Psal. i. 6. when he *hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold;* as pure as gold, as free from dross as that, appear quite innocent of the charges brought against him, and shine in his integrity. He was as valuable and precious as gold, as all God's people are in his esteem, however reckoned of by others; they are precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold; not that they have any intrinsic worth in themselves, they are in no wise better than others by nature; but through the grace of God bestowed on them, which is as gold tried in the fire; and through the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, which is gold of Ophir,

[g] ואיננו & non ipse, Montanus, Drusius, Bolducius.

[h] יעטף ימין operiet dextram, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius; so Cocceius, Drusius, Schmidt, Schultens, & Broughton.

and clothing of wrought gold; and, on account of both, they are like a mass of gold, and are the chosen of God, and precious: this gold he tries, the Lord trieth the righteous; and which he does by afflictive providences; he puts them into the furnace of affliction, which is the fiery trial to try them; and hereby their graces are tried, their faith, hope, love, patience, *&c.* their principles and doctrines they embrace, whether they be gold, silver, and precious stones, or whether wood, hay, and stubble; the fire tries every man's work, of what sort it is, and whether they will abide by them and their profession also, whether they will adhere to it; and by this means he purges away their dross and tin, and they come out of the furnace as pure gold in great lustre and brightness, as those in Rev. vii. 13, 14. now Job was in this furnace and trying; and he was confident that, as he should come out of it, he should appear to great advantage, pure and spotless; though it may be he may have respect to his trial at the bar of justice, where he desired to be tried, and be brought under the strictest examination; and doubted not but he should be acquitted, and shine as bright as gold; nay, these words may be given as a reason why God would not be found by him as his Judge to try his cause, because he knew his uprightness and integrity, and that he must go from him acquitted and discharged; and therefore, for reasons unknown to him, declined the judging of him; to this purpose Jarchi interprets the words, which may be rendered, *for he knoweth the way that I take*[a]; and therefore will not be seen by me, nor appear to judge me: *he hath tried me;* again and again, and has seen the integrity of my heart, as Sephorno interprets it, and well knows my innocence; see Psal. xvii. 3. and if he would try me again, *I shall come forth as gold;* quite clear of all charges and imputations; I'm able to stand the strictest scrutiny: this he said as conscious of his uprightness, and of his strict regard to the ways and word of God, as follows; but this was a bold saying, and an unbecoming expression of his to God; and of which he afterwards was ashamed and repented, when God appeared and spoke to him out of the whirlwind.

Ver. 11. *My foot hath held his steps,* &c.] Trod in the steps he has walked in; he followed God closely, imitated him in acts of holiness and righteousness, of mercy, kindness, and beneficence; and he continued therein; as he set his foot in the steps of God, which were to him for an example, he persisted therein; as he followed on to know him, so to imitate him, and walk worthy of him: *his way have I kept;* the way he prescribed him, and directed him to walk in, the way of his commandments, which he observed constantly, and kept; though not perfectly, yet with great delight and pleasure, and so as not to be chargeable with any gross neglect of them, but in some sense to walk in all of them blameless, as not to be culpable before men: *and not declined;* from the way of God, did not turn aside from it to the right or left, or go into crooked paths with wicked men, or wickedly depart from his God, his ways and worship, as David says, Psal. xviii. 21.

Ver. 12. *Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips,* &c.] From any of the commandments his lips had uttered; meaning not the ten commandments given to Israel, which perhaps as yet were not given, or had not come to the knowledge of Job; some speak of the seven commandments, given to the sons of Noah; see the note on Gen. ix. 4. It seems to design any and every commandment that God had given to Noah or Abraham, or any of the patriarchs, before the times of Job, and which he had knowledge of, and which he carefully observed, kept close to, and did not deviate from; but made it the rule of his walk and practice: *I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food;* the words of the Lord, the doctrines of grace that came from his mouth, are food for faith; there are in them milk for babes, and meat for strong men; they are savoury, salutary, and wholesome words, by which the people of God are nourished up unto eternal life; and they are esteemed by them more than the food that is necessary and convenient for their bodies; see Prov, xxx. 8. for as the soul is preferable to the body, so the food of the one is preferable to the food of the other, and is sweeter, as the words of God are, to the taste of a believer, than honey, or the honeycomb: or *I have hid* or *laid up, the words of his mouth*[b]; he had laid them up in his heart, in order to meditate upon them, and receive comfort and spiritual nourishment from them when he should want it, as men lay up their food in a proper place against the time they want it for their support and refreshment; and Job was more careful to lay up the one than the other; see Psal. cxix. 11. here Job meets with, and has respect unto, the advice of Eliphaz, ch. xxii. 22. and signifies that he had no need to have given him it, he had done this already.

Ver. 13. *But he* is *in one mind,* &c.] Either with respect to his commandments, every precept remains in full force, he never alters the thing that is gone out of his lips, or delivers out other commandments different from, or contrary to what he has given; and therefore Job thought it his duty to abide by them, and not decline from them; which is the sense of a Jewish commentator[c], connecting the words with the preceding: or with respect to his dispensations towards Job in afflicting him; which he continued notwithstanding his innocence, because he is a sovereign Being, and does whatsoever he pleases; he is unchangeable in his purposes and decrees; he is not to be wrought upon by any means to alter his fixed course; he is not to be contradicted nor resisted; and this was the reason why he would not be found by him, though he sought him so earnestly and diligently, and why he would not hear him, and would not appear to try his cause, though he knew he was innocent, because he was determined to go on to afflict him; and he never changes his mind, or alters his counsels, on any account whatever. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, *for he is alone;* and so the Targum, "if he is alone, or "the only one;" there is none with him to advise him, for *with whom took he counsel?* or to persuade him to be of another mind, and take contrary mea-

[a] כי quia, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis; nam, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Schultens.

[b] צפנתי abscondi, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Bolducius; recondidi, Tigurine version, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius, Mercerus, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens; so Broughton.

[c] Sephorno.

sures, who might be applied to, to use their interest with him to act in a different manner; but he is alone, there are none with him that have any influence upon him, and can prevail with him to do otherwise than he does; some translate the words, *if he acts against one*[d]; against a man in a hostile way, if he sets his face against him, and comes upon him as an enemy; and so Mr. Broughton, *yet when he is against me, who can stay him?* notwithstanding my innocence and integrity, though I keep his ways, and do not go back from his commandments. Some think there is a redundancy of a letter, which we translate *in*, and then the words will be read thus: *but he is one;* the one only living and true God; this is the voice of reason and revelation, *hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord;* for though there are three Persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *these three are one* God; and so the words are expressive of the unity of the Divine Being; but this seems not to be Job's sense: Aben Ezra says, the truth is, that the letter ב is not added, is no redundancy, and should be read *he is in one;* but, says he, I cannot explain it, there is a great mystery in it: what the Jew understood not may be more clear and plain to us Christians, who are taught the mystery of the in-being of the divine Persons in each other, the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father, as they are divine Persons; though in what manner they are we are not able to explain; besides, God was in Christ, as Mediator, reconciling the world, choosing his people in him, and blessing them with all spiritual blessings in him; though the true sense seems to be what is before given, agreeably to our version, that God is in one mind, purpose, and design; that his decrees are unchangeable and invariable; that he always acts according to them, and never alters them: *and who can turn him?* turn his mind, or cause him to change his counsel, and alter his purposes; or turn his hand, or stop and stay it from the execution of them; it is not to be done by force and power, for there is no power equal to his, and much less superior to his; which must be the case, if any could turn him: and though he may be turned by the prayers of his people, and by the repentance of men, so as to repent himself, and not do what he has threatened to do; yet this is no change of his mind and counsels, only an alteration in the course of his providence, or a change of his outward dealings with men, according to his unchangeable will; see Isa. xiv. 27. Dan. iv. 35. *and what his soul desireth, even that he doth;* that is, what he himself desireth earnestly and vehemently; he has done all things in creation according to the good pleasure of his will; and he does all things in providence according to the counsel of it, and as seems best in his sight; and so he does all things in grace, chooses whom he will, predestinates to the adoption of children according to the good pleasure of his will; redeems whom he pleases, and calls by his grace, and brings to glory whomsoever he will be gracious to; see Psal. cxv. 3.

Ver. 14. *For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me, &c.*] The same word is used as at the end of ver. 12. where it is rendered, *my necessary food;* or appointed food, a certain portion of it; food convenient, daily bread; and this has led some interpreters to take it in the same sense here, and render it, *he performeth my necessary things*[e], or things necessary for me; supplies me with the necessaries of life, to which agrees the Targum, and so Mr. Broughton; "because "he hath furnished me with my daily bread, and many "such graces are with him;" and which he did according to his unchangeable purposes and decrees, and according as his soul desired, and it pleased him; and this laid Job under greater obligation still to have regard to his commandments, and the words of his mouth; but rather it is to be understood of the decrees and purposes of God relating to Job, to his person, case, and circumstances, throughout the whole course of his life hitherto: and indeed all things relating to every individual person, as to him, are appointed of God; and whatever he appoints he performs: all things relative to their temporal life, the birth of persons into the world, and their continuance in it; all the incidents in life, the places of their abode, their employments, callings, and occupations; their riches and poverty, prosperity and adversity; all their afflictions, and which Job has a special regard to, the kind and nature of them, their measure and duration, and the end and use of them; and death itself, which closes all things here, that is appointed of God, the time and circumstances of it, see Eccl. iii. 1, 2. and so all things relative to the spiritual and eternal salvation of men; to save men is the determinate will of God; the persons saved are appointed by him to it, and Christ is ordained to be the Redeemer and Saviour of them; whose coming into the world for that purpose was at the appointed time, called the fulness of time, and his going out of it, or his sufferings and death, by which salvation was accomplished, were in due time, and by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God. The conversion of men is according to the appointment of God; they that are called are called according to his purpose; the time of conversion, the place where, and means whereby, are all fixed in the decrees and purposes of God, and have their sure and certain accomplishment; and the several vicissitudes of distress and comfort in spiritual things are as God has determined; all the times of his people are in his hands, and disposed by him; times of temptation, darkness, and desertion, and times of peace, joy, and comfort; the everlasting happiness itself is a kingdom prepared in the purposes of God from the foundation of the world, and is an inheritance obtained according to the purpose of him who has predestinated unto it; and seeing God is all-wise, all-knowing, all-powerful, faithful and true, what he appoints must certainly be performed: *and many such things are with him;* besides what were appointed for Job, and performed upon him, there were innumerable instances in the world of God's appointments, and the performance of them, both with respect to good things and evil things, mercies and blessings, afflictions and troubles: or besides what God had performed with respect to Job, especially with regard to his afflictions and sufferings, there

[d] והוא באחד sed si ipse contra unum agit, Junius & Tremellius; so Piscator, Cocceius.

[e] כי ישלים חקי quia perfecit necessaria mea, Vatablus; so Nachmanides, Ben Gersom, Sephorno.

were still many more things to come, which were secret in his breast, and which he had decreed and appointed, and would in due time be performed, though Job knew not as yet what they were, whether good or evil things, though he supposed the latter.

Ver. 15. *Therefore am I troubled at his presence,* &c.] Not at his gracious presence, which he wanted, and every good man desires; but at his appearance as an enemy, as he apprehended him, laying and continuing his afflictive hand upon him, and indeed at his appearance as a Judge to try his cause; for though he had most earnestly desired it, yet when he thought of the sovereignty of God, and the immutability of his counsels, and of his perfect knowledge of all things; and he not knowing what he had with him, and to bring out against him, when he came to the point, might be troubled and shrink back, see Psal. lxxvii. 3. *when I consider, I am afraid of him:* when he considered his terrible majesty, his sovereign will, his unalterable purposes, his infinite wisdom, and almighty power, his strict justice, and spotless purity; he was afraid to appear before him, or afraid that since many such things were with him he had already experienced, there were more to be brought forth, which might be greater and heavier still.

Ver. 16. *For God maketh my heart soft,* &c.] Not tender as Josiah's was, or as the heart of every penitent is, when God makes it humble and contrite by his spirit and grace, or takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh; though Job had such an heart, and God made it so; but he means a weak, feeble, fearful heart, pressed and broken with afflictions, that could not endure and bear up under the mighty hand of God; but became as water, and melted like wax in the midst of him, and was ready to faint, and sink, and die away: *and the Almighty troubleth me:* by afflicting him; afflictions cause trouble, and these are of God; or he *astonishes* [a], amazes me, throws me into the utmost consternation, the reason of which follows.

Ver. 17. *Because I was not cut off before the darkness,* &c.] That is, it was amazing to him, and troubled him when he thought of it, that he was not cut off by death, before the darkness of afflictions, or this dark dispensation came upon him; as sometimes righteous ones are taken from the evil to come, as Methuselah was before the flood; and Job wonders this was not his case, or at least he wishes it had been; for so Aben Ezra seems to understand and read the words, *why was I not cut off?* &c. as if it was a wish, and expressive of his desire, that this had been done; which was what he had expostulated with God about at first, in the third chapter, and death was what he always desired, and still continued to wish for: or else the sense is, that he was amazed that he *was not cut off, because, at, through,* or *by darkness* [b], by means of his afflictions; he wondered how he was supported under them, and carried through them, that they did not press him down to death; how such a poor wasted creature as he was, reduced to skin and bones, should ever be able to endure what he did: neither *hath he covered the darkness from my face;* that I should not see and feel the afflictions I do; or rather, *he hath covered the darkness from my face,* for the word *neither* is not in the text, though repeated by many interpreters from the foregoing clause; and then the sense is, though I am sensible of the darkness of affliction upon me, yet he has covered it so from me, that I cannot see an end of it, or any way to escape out of it; or, which is the sense Drusius gives, he hath covered death and the grave from me, which is a state of darkness, a land of darkness, or darkness itself, as he calls it, ch. x. 21, 22. that he could not see it, and enjoy it; he wished for death, but could not have it, it was hid from him. Cocceius renders the words very differently, he, that is, *God, hath covered himself with darkness from my face;* and interprets it of divine desertion, which troubled and terrified Job; and because he thus covered himself as it were with a cloud, this was the reason why he knew not where he was, and could not find him, when he made the most diligent search for him, and this grieved and astonished him, see Lam. iii. 44.

CHAP. XXIV.

THIS chapter contains the second part of Job's answer to the last discourse of Eliphaz, in which he shews that wicked men, those of the worst characters, prosper in the world, and go through it with impunity; he lays down this as a certain truth, that though no time is hid from God, yet they that are most familiar with him, and know most of him, do not see, and cannot observe, any days of his for judging and punishing wicked men in this life, ver. 1. and instances in men guilty of injustice, violence, oppression, cruelty, and inhumanity to their neighbours, and yet God lays not folly to them, or charges them with sin, and punishes them for it, ver. 2—12. and in persons that commit the most atrocious crimes in secret, such as murderers, adulterers, and thieves, ver. 13—17. he allows that there is a curse upon their portion, and that the grave shall consume them, and they shall be remembered no more, ver. 18, 19, 20. and because of their ill treatment of others, though they may be in safety and prosperity, and be exalted for a while, they shall be brought low, and cut off by death, but generally speaking are not punished in this life, ver. 21—24. and concludes with the greatest assurance of being in the right, and having truth on his side, ver. 25.

Ver. 1. *Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty,* &c.] Which seems to be an inference deduced from what he had said in ch. xxiii. 14. that since all things are appointed by God, and his appointments are punctually performed by him, the times of his carrying his purposes and decrees into execution cannot

[a] הבהילני me attonitum reddidit, Vatablus; consternavit me, Drusius, Mercerus, Cocceius, Michaelis; externavit me, Schultens.

[b] מפני חשך propter tenebras, Pagninus, Piscator, Cocceius; so V. L. a tenebris, Drusius; a præsentibus tenebris, Beza.

be hidden from him; for, as he has determined what shall be done, he has determined the time before appointed for the doing of them; as there is a purpose for every thing under the heavens, there is a time set for the execution of that purpose, which must be known unto God that has fixed it; for as all his works are known to him from the beginning, or from eternity, the times when those works should be wrought must also be known to him. The Vulgate Latin version reduces the words to a categorical proposition, *times are not hidden from the Almighty;* either temporal things, as Sephorno interprets it, things done in time, or the times of doing those things; no sort of time is hid from God; time respecting the world in general, its beginning, duration, and end; all seasons in it, day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, which are all fixed and settled by him; the several distinct ages and periods of time, into which it has been divided; the old and new world, the legal and Gospel dispensation, the various generations in it; the four great monarchies of the world, their rise, and duration, and end, with all other lesser kingdoms and states; time respecting the inhabitants of the world, their coming into and passing out of it in successive generations, the time of their birth, and of their death, and of adversity and prosperity, which interchangeably take place during their abode in it; and particularly the people of God, the time of their redemption by Christ, of their conversion by the grace of God, and all their times of darkness, desertion, temptation, and afflictions, and of peace, joy, and comfort; time, past and future, respecting the church of God, and the state of it, and all things relative thereunto; and the times of Israel's affliction in a land not theirs, 400 years, and of their 70-years' captivity in Babylon, were not hidden from the Almighty, but foretold by him; the suffering times of the church under the New Testament; the ten persecutions of it by the Roman emperors; the flight and nourishment of it in the wilderness for a time, and times, and half a time; the treading down of the holy city 42 months; the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth 1,260 days; the killing of them, and their bodies lying unburied three days and a half, and then rising; the reign of antichrist 42 months, at the end of which antichristian time will be no more; the time of Christ's coming to judgment, which is a day appointed, though unknown to men and angels, and the reign of Christ on earth 1,000 years; all these times are not hidden from, but known to the Almighty, even all time, past, present, and to come, and all things that have been, are, or shall be done therein. Several Jewish commentators[c] interpret these words as an expostulation or wish, *why are not times hidden?* &c. if they were, I should not wonder at it that those that know him don't know what shall be; but he knows the times and days in which wicked men will do wickedness, why is he silent? Mr. Broughton, and others[d], render them, *why are not*, or *why should not times be hidden by the Almighty?* that is, be hidden in his own breast from men, as they are; for the times and seasons it is not for man to know, which God has put in his own power, Acts i. 6. as the times of future troubles, of a man's death, and the day of judgment; it is but right and fit, on many accounts, that they should be hid by him from them; but others of later date translate the words perhaps much better, *why are not* certain stated *times laid up*, or *reserved by the Almighty*[e]? that is, for punishing wicked men in this life, as would be the case, Job suggests, if it was true what his friends had asserted, that wicked men are always punished here: and then upon this another question follows, *why do they that know him not see his days?* that know him not merely by the light of nature, but as revealed in Christ; and that have not a mere knowledge of him, but a spiritual and experimental one; who know him so as to love him, believe in him, fear, serve, and worship him; and who have a greater knowledge of him than others may have, and have an intimate acquaintance and familiarity with him, are his bosom-friends; and if there are fixed times for punishing the wicked in this life, how comes it to pass that these friends of God, to whom he reveals his secrets, can't see and observe any such days and times of his as these? but, on the contrary, observe, even to the stumbling of the greatest saints, that the wicked prosper and increase in riches. Job seems to refer to what Eliphaz had said, ch. xxii. 19. which he here tacitly denies, and proves the contrary by various instances, as follows.

Ver. 2. Some *remove the land-marks*, &c.] Anciently set to distinguish one man's land from another, to secure property, and preserve from encroachments; but some were so wicked as either secretly in the night to remove them, or openly to do it, having power on their side, pretending they were wrong set; this was not only prohibited by the law of God, and pronounced an accursed thing, Deut. xix. 14. and xxii. 17. but was reckoned so before the law was given, being known to be such by the light of nature, as what was now, and here condemned, was before that law was in being; and so we find that this was accounted an execrable thing among the Heathens, who had a deity they called Jupiter Terminalis, who was appointed over bounds and land-marks; so Numa Pompilius appointed stones to be set as bounds to every one's lands, and dedicated them to Jupiter Terminalis, and ordered that those that removed them should be slain as sacrilegious persons, and they and their oxen devoted to destruction[f]: some render it, *they touch the land-marks*[g], as if to touch them was unlawful, and therefore much more to remove them: *they violently take away flocks, and feed* thereof; not content with a sheep or a lamb, they took away whole flocks, and that by force and violence, openly and publicly, and slew them, and fed on them; or else took them and put them into their own grounds, or such as they had got by encroachments from others, where they fed them without any fear of men; which shews the effrontery and impudence of them.

Ver. 3. *They drive away the ass of the fatherless*, &c.] Who are left destitute of friends, and have none to

[c] Aben Ezra, Nachmanides, & Simeon Bar Tzemach.
[d] מדוע משדי quinam ab omnipotente, Beza; so Junius & Tremellius.
[e] Quare ab omnipotente non sunt recondita in pœnam stata tempora, Schultens.

[f] Dion. Halicarnass. & Festus apud Sanctium in loc. Vid. Rycquium de Capitol. Roman. c. 14. Ovid. Fasti, l. 2.
[g] ישיגו attigerunt, Pagninus, Bolducius; attingunt, Vatablus.

take care of them, and provide for them; and who having one ass to carry their goods for them from place to place, or to ride upon, which though a creature of no great worth, yet of some usefulness, this they drove away from its pasture, or however from its right owner; and who having but one, 'twas the more cruel and inhuman to take it from him, see 2 Sam. xii. 3, 4. *they take the widow's ox for a pledge;* or oxen, the singular for the plural, with which her lands were ploughed, for a single ox could be but of little service: some render it *a cow*[h], by the milk of which she and her family were chiefly supported, as many poor country families are by the means of a good milch cow; and to take this, on which her livelihood depended, and retain for a pledge, was very barbarous; when the law concerning pledges took place among the Jews, in the times of Moses, which it seems was in being before with others, whatsoever was useful to persons, either to keep them warm, or by which they got their bread, were not to be taken, at least not detained for a pledge, see Exod. xxii. 26, 27. Deut. xxiv. 6, 12, 13.

Ver. 4. *They turn the needy out of the way,* &c.] Either, in a moral sense, out of the right way, the way of righteousness and truth, by their ill examples, or by their threatenings or flatteries; or, in a civil sense, out of the way of their livelihood, by taking that from them by which they got it; or, in a literal sense, obliging them to turn out of the way from them, in a supercilious and haughty manner, or causing them, through fear of them, to get out of the way, that they might not meet them, lest they should insult them, beat and abuse them, or take that little from them they had, as follows: *the poor of the earth hide themselves together;* who are not only poor in purse, but poor in spirit, meek, humble, and lowly, and have not spirit and courage to stand against such oppressors, but are easily crushed by them; these through fear of them hide themselves in holes and corners in a body, in a large company together, lest they should fall into their cruel hands, and be used by them in a barbarous manner, see Prov. xxviii. 28.

Ver. 5. *Behold,* as *wild asses in the desert,* &c.] The word *as* is a supplement, and may be omitted, and the words be interpreted literally of wild asses, as they are by Sephorno, whose proper place is in the wilderness, to which they are used, and where their food is provided for them, and which they diligently seek for, for them and their young; and so the words may be descriptive of the place where the poor hide themselves, and of the company they are obliged to keep; but the Targum supplies the note of similitude as we do; and others[i] observe it to be wanting, and so it may respect wicked men before described, who may be compared to the wild asses of the wilderness for their folly and stupidity, man being born like a wild ass's colt, ch. xi. 12. and for their lust and wantonness, and for their unsubjection to God and his laws, and their unteachableness. Perhaps some regard may be had to the wild Arabs that were in Job's neighbourhood, the descendants of Ishmael, called the wild man, as he is in Gen. xvi. 12. who lived by plunder and robbery, as these here: *they go forth to their work:* of thieving and stealing, robbing and plundering, as their trade, and business, and occupation of life, and as naturally and constantly as men go to their lawful employment, and as if it was one: *rising betimes for a prey;* getting up early in a morning to meet the industrious traveller on the road, and make a prey of him, rob him of what he has about him; for they can't sleep unless they do mischief: *the wilderness* yieldeth *food for them,* and *for* their *children;* though they are lurking in a wilderness where no sustenance is to be had, yet, by robbing every one that passes by, they get a sufficiency for them and their families: though some understand all this of the poor, who are obliged to hide themselves from their oppressors, and go into the wilderness in droves like wild asses, and as timorous and as swift as they in fleeing; and are forced to hard service, and to rise betimes to earn their bread, and get sustenance for their families; and who in the main are obliged to live on berries and roots, and what a wild desert will afford; but the word *prey* is not applicable to the pains and labours of such industrious people, wherefore the former sense is best; and besides, there seems to be one continued account of wicked men.

Ver. 6. *They reap every one his corn in the field,* &c.] Not the poor, who are obliged to reap the corn of the wicked for them without any wages, as some; but rather the wicked reap the corn of the poor; they are so insolent and impudent, that they don't take the corn out of their barns by stealth, but whilst it is standing in the field; they come openly and reap it down, as if it was their own, without any fear of God or men: it is observed, that the word[k] signifies a mixture of the poorer sorts of corn, which is scarce any thing better than food for cattle; yet this they cut down and carry off, as forage for their horses and asses at least. Some of the ancient versions, taking it to be two words, render them, *which is not their own*[l]; they go into a field that is not theirs, and reap corn that don't belong to them, that they have no right unto, and so are guilty of great injustice, and of doing injury to others: *and they gather the vintage of the wicked;* gather the grapes off of the vines of wicked men, which are gathered, as the word signifies, at the latter end of the year, in autumn; and though they belong to wicked men like themselves, yet they spare them not, but seize on all that come to hand, whether the property of good men or bad men; and thus sometimes one wicked man is an instrument of punishing another: or *the wicked gather the vintage*[m]; that is, of the poor; as they reap where they have not sown, they gather of that they have not planted.

Ver. 7. *They cause the naked to lodge without clothing,* &c.] That is, such as are poorly clothed, thinly arrayed, have scarce any thing but rags, and yet so cruel the wicked men above described, that they take these away from the poor, and even their bed-clothes, which seem chiefly designed; so that they are obliged to lodge or lie all night without any thing upon them:

[h] שור pro bove fœmina, vacca, Bolducius.
[i] Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, Bar Tzemach.
[k] בלילו migma suum, Bolducius; farraginem ejus *vel* suam, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[l] Οὐκ αὐτῶν, Sept. non suum, V. L. so the Targum, and Aben Ezra, Grotius, Codurcus.
[m] וכרם רשע ילקשו & in vinea (aliena) vindemiant impii, Tigurine version; vineasque vindemiant impii, Castalio.

that they have *no covering in the cold:* neither in the day-time, nor in the night, and especially the latter; and having no house to go to, and obliged to lay themselves down upon the bare ground, had nothing to cover them from the inclemency of the weather; for even in hot countries nights are sometimes cold, and large dews fall, yea, sometimes it is a frost, see Gen. xxxi. 40.

Ver. 8. *They are wet with the showers of the mountains,* &c.] They that are without any clothes to cover them, lying down at the bottom of a hill or mountain, where the clouds often gather, and there break, or the snow at the top of them melts through the heat of the day; and whether by the one or by the other, large streams of water run down the mountains, and the naked poor, or such who are thinly clothed, are all over wet therewith, as Nebuchadnezzar's body was with the dew of heaven, when he was driven from men, and lived among beasts: *and embrace the rock for want of a shelter;* or habitation, as the Targum; having no house to dwell in, nor any raiment to cover them, they were glad to get into the hole of a rock, in a cave or den there, and where some good men in former times were obliged to wander, Heb. xi. 38. and whither mean persons, in the time and country in which Job lived, were driven to dwell in, see ch. xxx. 6.

Ver. 9. *They pluck the fatherless from the breast,* &c.] Either on purpose to starve it, which must be extremely barbarous; or to sell it to be brought up a slave; or by obliging the mother to wean it before the due time, that she might be the better able to do work for them they obliged her to. Mr. Broughton renders the words, *of mischievousness they rob the fatherless;* that is, through the greatness of the mischief they do, as Ben Gersom interprets it; or through the exceeding mischievous disposition they are of, of which this is a flagrant instance; or "they rob the fatherless of what "remains for him after spoiling [n]," or devastation, through the plunder of his father's substance now dead, which was exceeding cruel: *and take a pledge of the poor;* either the poor himself, or his poor fatherless children, see 2 Kings iv. 1. or what is *upon the poor* [o], as it may be rendered; that is, his raiment, which was commonly taken for a pledge; and, by a law afterwards established in Israel, was obliged to be restored before sun-set, that he might have a covering to sleep in, Exod. xxii. 26, 27. see the note on ch. xxii. 6.

Ver. 10. *They cause* him *to go naked without clothing,* &c.] Having taken his raiment from him for a pledge, or refusing to give him his wages for his work, whereby he might procure clothes to cover him, but that being withheld, is obliged to go naked, or next to it: *and they take away the sheaf* from *the hungry:* the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *ears of corn,* such as the poor man plucked as he walked through a corn-field, in order to rub them in his hand, and eat of, as the disciples of Christ, with which the Pharisees were offended, Luke vi. 1. and which, according to a law in Israel, was allowed to be done, Deut. xxiii. 25. but now so severe were these wicked men to these poor persons, that they took away from them such ears of corn: but it is more likely that this sheaf was what the poor had gleaned, and what they had been picking up ear by ear, and had bound up into a sheaf, in order to carry home and beat it out, and then grind the corn of it, and make a loaf of it to satisfy their hunger; but so cruel and hardhearted were these men, that they took it away from them, which they had been all, or the greatest part of the day, picking up; unless it can be thought there was a custom in Job's country, which was afterwards a law among the Jews, that if a sheaf was forgotten by the owner, and left in the field when he gathered in his corn, he was not to go back for it, and fetch it, but leave it to the poor, Deut. xxiv. 19. but these men would not suffer them to have it, but took it away from them; or the words may be rendered, as they are by some, *the hungry carry the sheaf* [p]; that is, of their rich oppressive masters, who having reaped their fields for them, and bound up the corn in sheaves, carry it home for them; and yet they do not so much as give them food for their labour, or wages to purchase food to satisfy their hunger, and so dealt with them worse than the oxen were, according to the Jewish law, which were not to be muzzled when they trod out the corn, but might eat of it, Deut. xxv. 4.

Ver. 11. Which *make oil within their walls,* &c.] Not the poor within their own walls; as if the sense was, that they made their oil in a private manner within the walls of their houses, or in their cellars, lest it should be known and taken away from them; for such can't be thought to have had olive-yards to make oil of; rather within the walls of their rich masters, where they were kept close confined to their work, as if in a prison; or within the walls and fences of their olive-yards, where their olive-presses stood; or best of all *within the rows* [q] of *their* olive-trees, as the word signifies, where having gathered the olives, they pressed out the oil in the fats; and this they did at noon, in the heat of the day, as the word [r] for making oil is observed by some to signify, and yet had nothing given them to quench their thirst, as follows: and *tread their wine-presses, and suffer thirst;* after having gathered their grapes from their vines for them, they trod them in the wine-presses, and made their wine, and yet would not allow them to drink of it to allay their thirst.

Ver. 12. *Men groan from out of the city,* &c.] Because of the oppressions and injuries done to them, so that not only the poor in the country that were employed in the fields, and olive-yards, and vineyards, were used exceeding ill; but even in cities, where not only are an abundance of people, and so the outrages committed upon them, which made them groan, were done openly and publicly, with great insolence and impudence, but where also courts of judicature were held, and yet in defiance of law and justice were those evils done, see Eccl. iii. 16. *and the soul of the wounded crieth out;* that is, the persons wounded with the

[n] משד per devastationem, some in Munster; post vastationem, Tigurine version; so Nachmanides & Bar Tzemach.
[o] על עני super inopem, Cocceius, Schultens; so Ben Gersom.
[p] ורעבים נשאו עמר & famelici gestant manipulum, Tigurine version, Mercerus; so Schultens, Michaelis.
[q] בין שורתם inter ordines, Mercerus, Piscator, Cocceius; so Sephorno, and some in Eliæ Tishbi, p. 241.
[r] יצהירו meridiati sunt, V. L. so Bolducius, Schultens.

sword, or any other instrument of vengeance, stabbed as they went along the public streets of the city, where they fell, these cried out vehemently as such persons do; so audacious, as well as barbarous, were these wicked men, that insulted and abused them: *yet God layeth not folly* to them; it is for the sake of this observation that the whole above account is given of wicked men, as well as what follows; that though they are guilty of such atrocious crimes, such inhumanity, cruelty, and oppression in town and country, unheard-of, unparalleled, iniquities, sins to be punished by a judge, yet are suffered of God to pass with impunity. By *folly* is meant sin, not lesser sins only, little, foolish, trifling things, but greater and grosser ones, such as before expressed; all sin is folly, being the breach of a law which is holy, just, and good, and exposes to its penalty and curse; and against God the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; and as it is hurtful and prejudicial, either to the characters, bodies, or estates of men, and especially to their immortal souls; and yet God that charges his angels with folly did not charge these men with it; that is, he seemed, in the outward dealings of his providence towards them, as if he took no notice of their sins, but connived at them, or took no account of them, and did not take any methods in his providence to shew their folly, and convince them of it, nor discover it to others, and make them public examples, did not punish them, but let them go on in them without control; and this Job observes, in order to prove his point, that wicked men are not always punished in this life.

Ver. 13. *They are of those that rebel against the light,* &c.] The light of nature, acting contrary to the dictates of their own consciences, in being guilty of the inhumanity, barbarity, and cruelty they were chargeable with in the above instances; or the light of the law, as the Targum; though as yet the law of the ten commandments was not in being; or however was not known to these persons; or against God himself, who is light, and in him no darkness at all, is clothed with it, and is the Father of lights unto his creatures, the Light of lights, and the Light of the world, from whom all light, natural, spiritual, and eternal, springs; which is the sense of most of the Jewish commentators [s]; and every sin is a rebellion against God, and betrays the enmity of the carnal mind to him, is an act of hostility against him, and shews men to be enemies in their minds to him: *they know not the ways thereof;* the ways of light, but prefer the ways of darkness to them; or the ways of God, the ways of his commandments, which he has prescribed for men, and directed them to walk in; these they know not, are wilfully ignorant of, desire not the knowledge of them, and will be at no pains to get any acquaintance with them; or they approve not of them, they are not pleasing to them, and they choose not to walk in them: *nor abide in the paths thereof;* if at any time they are got into the paths of light, truth, and righteousness, or in the ways of God's commandments, and do a few good actions, they don't continue therein, but quickly go out of the way again, leave the paths of righteousness to walk in the ways of darkness, Prov. ii. 13. Some interpreters understand these words entirely of natural light, and of men who are like owls and bats that flee from the light, who are authors of the works of darkness, and do what they do in the dark secretly, and hate the light, and don't choose to come unto it, that their deeds may not be reproved; and so now Job enters upon the account of another set of men different from the former, who did what they did openly, in the face of the sun, and before all men; but these he is now about to describe are such who commit iniquity secretly and privately, and instances in the murderer, adulterer, and thief, in the following verses.

Ver. 14. *The murderer rising with the light,* &c.] The light of the morning, before the sun is risen, about the time the early traveller is set out on his journey, and men go to distant markets to buy and sell goods, and the poor labourer goes forth to his work; then is the time for one that is used to commit robbery and murder to rise from his bed, or from his lurking-place, in a cave or a thicket, where he has lain all night, in order to meet with the above persons: and so *killeth the poor and needy;* takes away from them the little they have, whether money or provisions, and kills them because they have no more, and that they may not be evidence against him; it may be meant of the poor saints and people of God, whom the wicked slay out of hatred to them: *and in the night is as a thief;* kills privately, secretly, at an unawares, as the thief does his work; or the *as* here is not a note of similitude or likeness, but of reality and truth; and so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *and in the night he will be as a thief;* in the morning he is a robber on the highway, and a murderer; all the day he is in his lurking-place, in some haunt or another, sleeping or carousing; and when the night comes on, then he acts the part of a thief; in the morning he not only robs, but murders, that he may not be detected; at night he only steals, and not kills, because men are asleep, and see him not.

Ver. 15. *The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight,* &c.] Not of the morning, which would not give him time enough to satiate his lust, but of the evening, that he may have the whole night before him to gratify his impure desires, and that these may be indulged in the most private and secret manner; and having fixed the time in the evening with his adulteress, he waits with impatience, and earnestly wishes and longs for its coming, and diligently looks out for the close of day, and takes the first opportunity of the darkness of the evening to set out on his adventure, see Prov. vii. 7—9. and the *eye* is particularly observed, not only because that is the instrument by which the twilight is discerned, and is industriously employed in looking out for it, but is full of adultery, as the Apostle Peter expresses it, 2 Pet. ii. 14. it is what is the inlet to this sin, the leader-on to it, the caterer for it, and the nourisher and cherisher of it, see ch. xxx. 1. *saying, no eye shall see me;* no eye of man, which such an one is careful to guard against; and especially the eye of the husband of the adulteress, whose raging jealousy will not spare the adulterer, but take revenge on him by an immediate dispatch of him. And few care to

[s] Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, Sephorno, Bar Tzemach.

have it known by any that they are guilty of this sin, because it brings dishonour and reproach upon them, which cannot be wiped off: the fact of Absalom going in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel, and lying with them in the face of the sun, is the most notorious instance of this kind to be read; usually both sexes choose the utmost secrecy. Potiphar's wife took the opportunity to tempt Joseph when none of the men of the house were within; and when Amnon intended to force his sister, he ordered all the men to be had out of the room: and moreover, the adulterer foolishly fancies that God sees him not, or at least is not concerned about that; though there is no darkness where such workers of iniquity can hide themselves from his all-seeing eye, the darkness and the light are both alike to him. These men are like the ostrich, which thrusting its head into a thicket, as Tertullian[t] observes, fancies it is not seen; so children cover their faces, and, because they see none, think that nobody sees them; and as weak and childish a part do such act, who imagine that their evil deeds, done in the dark, are not seen by him, before whom every creature is made manifest, and all things are naked and open: *and disguiseth* his *face;* puts a mask upon it, that he may not be known by any he meets, when upon his amorous adventure, as harlots used to cover themselves with a vail, Gen. xxxviii. 14, 15.

Ver. 16. *In the dark they dig through houses* which *they had marked for themselves in the day-time,* &c.] Which some understand of adulterers last mentioned, who, having observed where beautiful women dwell, mark their houses, and the way to them, and the best way into them, and in the dark get in at windows, or by breaking open doors get to the persons they lust after; but as such steps would be neither safe nor prudent, so they are not necessary; such sort of persons get admittance in an easier way, either by bribing servants, or by a previous agreement with the adulteress herself: rather this is to be understood of the thief and his companions, before spoken of; or designs another sort of thieves, such as are guilty of burglary, housebreakers, who in the day-time go about and observe such houses as are full of money, plate, and rich goods, see ch. iii. 15. and take diligent notice of the way to them, and which is the best and easiest part to get into them, and, perhaps, set on them a private mark that they may know them; these they break up, the walls, or doors, or windows, and get in at them, and rob, and plunder, and carry off all they can; the same sins were committed, and the same methods of committing them were used, formerly as now; there was a law in Israel concerning housebreaking, Exod. xxii. 2. and our Lord alludes to it, Matt. xxiv. 43, 44. Some render the words, *they seal up* or *shut up themselves in the day*[u]; in their caves, and dens, and lurking-places, and don't appear, and scarce ever see the light, and therefore it follows: *they know not the light;* it is seldom or ever seen by them, or they don't approve it, like it, and love it, being not for their purpose; whilst it is light they can do nothing, that manifestly discovers and betrays them, and therefore they hate it; and in a figurative sense they know not, or do not approve of the light of nature, which checks and controls such evil actions, and accuses them of them; nor the light of God's word, or holy law, which forbids them, and therefore they despise it, and cast it away from them, and will not be subject to it; nor God himself, who is light, and against whom their carnal minds are enmity; and whatever knowledge they have of him, or profess to have, in works they deny him, and live without him, as atheists in the world.

Ver. 17. *For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death,* &c.] It is as disagreeable, and as hateful, and as terrible to them as the grossest and thickest darkness can be to others. The word יחדו is to be rendered either *alike* or *altogether,* and not *even,* as in our version: *the morning is to them equally* or *together*[w]; that is, to the murderer, robber, thief, adulterer, and housebreaker, *as the shadow of death;* alike disagreeable to them all; or *the shadow of death is to them together* or *alike* as the *morning;* what the morning is to others, exceeding pleasant and delightful, that to them is the shadow of death, or the darkest night; they love darkness rather than light: *if* one *know* them, they are in *the terrors of the shadow of death;* they are frightened unto death, they are in as great terror as a man is to whom death is the king of terrors; and who is sensible of the near approach of it, the plain and manifest symptoms of it being upon him: this is the case of the murderer, adulterer, and thief, when they are catched in the fact; or are known by such who are capable of giving notice of them, detecting them, and bearing witness against them: or *he,* each and every one of these, *knows the terrors of the shadow of death*[x]; the darkest night, which strikes terrors into others, is known by them, is delighted in by them, is familiar with them, and friendly to them, and is as pleasing as the brightest day to others.

Ver. 18. *He is swift as the waters,* &c.] Or *upon the face of the waters*[y]; which some interpret of another set and sort of wicked men, guilty of like crimes, not on land, but upon the mighty waters; pirates, such that commit robberies upon the high seas, who generally choose the swiftest vessels to run from place to place for their prey, and to carry off their booty when pursued; whose manner of life is detestable to other persons; and especially they are cursed by those on land, who suffer by robbing the ships of their goods they send abroad; but these men best like such a manner of life, and prefer it to any thing by land, to agriculture or cultivation of vineyards, which they have no regard unto, as is supposed to be intimated by the following clauses; but it is greatly to be questioned whether there were any such persons, or that such practices obtained so early as the time of Job. Schultens thinks Sodomites are meant, who are most profuse to lust, and flow in it like water, plough the accursed field, by going after strange flesh, and have no regard to lawful marriage, or honest wives, comparable to vines and vineyards; but I should rather think those

[t] De Virgin. Veland. c. 17.
[u] חתמו למו ἐσφράγισαν ἑαυτοὺς, Sept. includunt sese, some in Mercerus; so Drusius; semet sigillant, Schultens.
[w] Pariter, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
[x] יכיר בלהות צלמות agnoscit terrores umbræ mortis, Mercerus, Cocceius; so Codurcus, Schmidt.
[y] על פני מים super faciem aquarum, Mercerus, Bolducius, Beza, Drusius, Schultens.

guilty of the sin of Onan are meant, who have no regard to the propagation of posterity. Others, as Ben Gersom, are of opinion that this refers to the above persons, murderers, adulterers, and thieves; who, being conscious of their crimes and due deserts, and in danger of being taken up, and brought to just punishment, flee to the sea with all the haste they can, take shipping, and go abroad into foreign parts; where they dwell in desolate and uncultivated places of the earth, which are cursed, or nigh unto cursing, and never more see pleasant fields, gardens, orchards, and vineyards: though others suppose that these words describe the temper and disposition of such wicked persons, who are unstable as water, carried about as any light thing upon the water with every wind of temptation, run swiftly into evil, and make haste to commit sin; though it seems best of all to interpret the words as respecting the state of wicked men at death, who then pass away swiftly and suddenly as gliding waters, and are *lighter* or swifter *than the waters*, as Mr. Broughton renders the words: *their portion is cursed in the earth*: that part and portion of the good things of this world they have is with a curse; their very blessings are cursed, and what they leave behind has a curse entailed on it, and in process of time is blasted, and comes to nothing; for, the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked, Prov. iii. 33. *he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards*: as in their life-time they had no regard to the way of good and righteous men, of whom Jarchi in a mystical sense interprets the vineyards; so at death they are taken away from all their worldly enjoyments they set their hearts upon; their places know them no more, and they no more see their fields, and vineyards, and oliveyards, and take no more walks unto them nor in them.

Ver. 19. *Drought and heat consume the snow-waters*, &c.] Melt the snow into water, and dry up that, which is done easily, quickly, and suddenly: so doth *the grave* those which *have sinned*; all have sinned, but some are more notorious sinners than others, as those here meant; and all die and are laid in the grave, and are consumed; hence the grave is called the pit of corruption and destruction, because bodies are corrupted and destroyed in it, and which is the case of all, both good and bad men; but the metaphor here used to express it by, of the consumption of snow-water by drought and heat, denotes either that the death of these persons is sudden and violent, and in such a manner are brought to the grave, consumed there; that they die a sudden death, and before their time, and don't live out half the days, which, according to the course of nature, they might have lived, or it was expected by them and others they would; whereas they are *snatched away*, as the word signifies, as suddenly and violently as snow-waters are by the drought and heat; or else that their death is quick, quiet, and easy, as snow is quickly dissolved, and the water as soon and as easily dried up by the drought and heat; they do not lie long under torturing diseases, but are at once taken away, and scarce feel any pain; they die in their full strength, wholly at ease and quiet; which sense well answers Job's scope and design, see ch. xxi. 23. Psal. lxxiii. 4. Some render the words, *in the drought and heat they rob, and in the snow-waters*[z]; that is, they rob at all times and seasons of the year, summer and winter; and this is their constant trade and employ; they are always at it, let the weather be what it will: and *they sin unto the grave*, or *hell*[a]; they continue in their wicked course of life as long as they live, until they are brought to the grave; they live and die in sin.

Ver. 20. *The womb shall forget him*, &c.] His mother that bore him; or his wife, by whom he had many children; or his friend, as Gersom, who had a tender and affectionate respect for him; these all, and each of them, either because of his wicked life and infamous death, care not to speak of him, but bury him in oblivion; or because of his quiet and easy death, are not distressed with it, but soon forget him; unless this is to be understood of the womb of the earth, in which being buried, he lies forgotten, to which the next clause agrees; though some interpret it of God himself, the word having the signification of *mercy*[b]; who, though mercy itself, is rich and abundant in it, yet has no mercy for, nor shews any favour to, such men; but they lie in the grave among those whom he remembers no more in a way of grace and favour, Psal. lxxxv. 5. *the worm shall feed sweetly on him*; for being brought to the grave at once, without any wasting distemper, is a fine repast for worms, his breasts being full of milk, and his bones moistened with marrow, and full of flesh; or *the worm* is *sweet unto him*[c]; he feels no pain by its feeding on him, and so the sense is just the same with that expression, *the clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him*, ch. xxi. 33. *he shall be no more remembered*; with any mark of honour and respect; his memory shall rot with him, whilst the righteous are had in everlasting remembrance; or rather dying a common death, and not made a public example of: *and wickedness shall be broken as a tree*; that is, wicked men, who are wickedness itself, extremely wicked, and are like to a tree, sometimes flourishing in external prosperity, having an affluence of the things of this world, and always like barren and unfruitful trees, with respect to grace and good works; these, when the axe of death is laid to the root of them, they are cut down, and their substance comes to nothing, and their families are destroyed, and so they become like trees struck with thunder and lightning, and broken into ten thousand shivers; or as the trees in Egypt were broken to pieces by the plague of hail, Exod. ix. 25.

Ver. 21. *He evil-entreateth the barren*, that *beareth not*, &c.] Here Job returns, to give some further account of the sins of some wicked men, who prosper in this world, and go through it with impunity; and speaks of such that use their wives ill because they are barren, upbraid them with it, and are churlish to them on account of it; or use them ill that they may be barren, and bear no children, having no pleasure

[z] ב deficit; so some in Simeon, Bar Tzemach.

[a] שאול חטאו ad infernum usque peccarunt, Schmidt; usque ad sepulchrum, Mercerus; some in Drusius.

[b] רחם misericordia, V. L. miseratio, Montanus, Bolducius; so Tigurine version, Grotius.

[c] מתקו dulcescit ei, Beza, Piscator; suavis, Cocceius; so Michaelis, Schultens.

in them, as not in vineyards, before, ver. 18. and some interpret this of deflouring virgins, who never bore children, and of using methods to make them abortive, when with-child; the word we translate *evil-entreateth* sometimes signifies joining to, or being a companion of others, as in Prov. xiii. 20. hence various senses are given; some, he joins himself to a barren woman, that he may have no children, being not desirous of any; others, he joins himself to, and is a companion of harlots, who are commonly barren: and, like the prodigal, spends his substance among them. Some interpreters take this and the following verse as expressive of the punishment of wicked men: so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *he adjoineth the barren*[d], and gives the sense of them thus; God sends after him a barren wife, that he shall have no help by children; but, though a numerous offspring has been reckoned an outward happiness, and not to have any an infelicity, yet it has been the case of many good men and women to be childless; wherefore love and hatred are not known hereby: besides, such a sense is contrary to the scope and design of Job, which is to prove that wicked men often go unpunished in this life; wherefore, rather the meaning is, that a wicked man uses ill such, who having not only lost their husbands, but having been barren, and so childless, have none to take their part, and to protect and defend them from the abuses of such men; the Targum renders the word, *he breaketh*, and so some understand it[e]; he breaketh the barren, tears them to pieces, ruins and destroys them, as to their outward substance, because they have no children to help them; with which agrees what follows, *and doth not good to the widow:* does not make her glad and cheerful, as Job did, who made the widow's heart to sing for joy, ch. xxix. 13. does not relieve and assist her when in distress, either by counsel and advice, or by administering to her necessities; but, on the contrary, afflicts and oppresses her; takes her ox, or her raiment, for a pledge, and plunders her house, and devours the substance of it; for more is intended than is expressed.

Ver. 22. *He draweth also the mighty with his power,* &c.] Such a wicked man not only maltreats the weak, the helpless, and the defenceless, but even attacks the mighty and powerful; such as are in great power and authority, and abound in wealth and riches, only somewhat inferior in both to himself: wherefore, by his superior force, he draws them to be of his party, to join with him in acts of rapine and violence, oppression and cruelty; or he draws them by power or policy, or by both, as the wicked man does the poor with his net, Psal. x. 9. and so makes a prey of him and his substance. Some understand this of the punishment of wicked men, and interpret it, as Jarchi does, of God's drawing him to punishment; God sometimes does indeed draw and hurl the mighty from their seats; though they are set in high, yet in slippery places, and are brought down to destruction in a moment: and he will draw them all to his judgment-seat hereafter, whether they will or no, and send them into everlasting punishment; but the former sense is best: *he riseth up, and no man is sure of life:* he rises up in the morning, either from his bed, or from his lurking-place, where he was all night with a murdering intention, and no man he meets with is safe, but in the utmost danger of his life, ver. 14. or, he rises in the world to great power and dignity, and increases in wealth and riches, which he abuses to the hurt of others; so that they flee from him and hide themselves, not caring to trust their life with him, Prov. xxviii. 28. or he riseth up against a man in an hostile way, and against whomsoever he does, they are in the utmost jeopardy, and cannot be secure of their lives; though this also is by some interpreted as the punishment of a wicked man, who, when he rises in the morning, *trusteth not his own life*[f], as the words may be rendered, and as they are in the margin of our Bibles; but his life is in suspense, being surrounded with a thousand dangers, and has no assurance of it, and is in continual fear, and often fears where no fear is; see Deut. xxviii. 66. or, if a man rises up against him, the wicked tyrant and cruel oppressor, he the tyrant is not sure of his life, but may be slain by him that rises up against him; but the former sense is best.

Ver. 23. *Though it be given him* to be *in safety,* &c.] Or *he gives him*[g], that is, it is God gives the wicked man to be in safety, notwithstanding all his wickedness; for Job, having described the wicked man, now represents him as in the greatest prosperity: safety is of God in every respect, not only the safety of good men, both in a way of providence and in a way of grace, but even of bad men; those are often preserved from the incursions and depredations of others, and their goods are kept, and they possess them in peace, and they dwell secure and confidently without care. The Vulgate Latin version is widely different, "God gives him place "of repentance, and he abuses it to pride;" though the Targum somewhat agrees with it, "he gives to him "repentance, that he may trust, or be confident and "be supported:" so God gave space to repent to the old world; to whose case some Jewish writers apply the context, see Gen. vi. 3. Luke xvii. 26, 27. *whereon he resteth;* being in prosperity and safety, he trusts to it, and depends upon it it will ever be the case; he has much goods laid up for many years, and therefore sings *requiem* to his soul, saying, *take thine ease;* to-morrow will be as this day, and much more abundant; things will always be as they are, or better: *yet his eyes are upon their ways;* or, *and his eyes*[h], that is, the eyes of God, which are upon all men, good and bad, and upon all their ways and works; these are upon the wicked man and all his courses; not to punish him now for his sins; for, though he sees all his wicked actions, not one escapes his notice, yet he lays not folly to him, nor charges him with it, nor inflicts punishment on him for it; nay, his eyes are upon him to prosper and succeed him in all he does; which is the usual sense of the phrase, unless where there is an explanation, or any thing said to shew the contrary; see Deut. xi. 12. Some give a different sense of the words,

[d] רעה עקרה consociat ei sterilem, Junius & Tremellius.
[e] Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Piscator, Mercerus, Drusius.
[f] יאמין בחייו non fidit suæ vitæ, Tigurine version, Piscator; so V. L.
[g] יתן לו dat ei, Piscator, Mercerus, i. e. Deus, Beza, Drusius, Michaelis.
[h] ועיניהו & ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Beza, Coccius, Schultens.

as that such that fear the wicked man give him gifts, that they may be in safety, in which they trust; or he gives them his hand, or his word, or both, that they shall be, on which they rely; but his eyes are upon them, watching their ways and works, to take every opportunity and advantage against them; but the former is best.

Ver. 24. *They are exalted for a little while*, &c.] To seats of honour, to places of profit and trust, to great wealth and riches, to be highly esteemed among men, and to have a large affluence of the good things of life; see Mal. iii. 15. though this exaltation, dignity, and glory, wealth and riches, last but for a little time, this life at longest being but short, like a vapour that appears, and soon vanishes away; and then all a man's honours and glory, riches and substance, are at an end, who is soon cut down as the grass, and withers as the green herb, Psal. xxxvii. 2. but as this pretty much falls in with the sentiment of Zophar, or seems to do so, ch. xx. 5. rather this phrase, *for a little while*, may be joined with what follows, *a little while, and they are gone*; out of the world, to their own place, and death puts an end to all their prosperity, to all their outward enjoyments, which yet they retain till death: or *they are not*[i]; in the land of the living, in their houses and shops, and places of trade and commerce; they are no more about their business, and in their callings of life, nor in the possession of their worldly estates; the places which knew them know them no more; and this comes to pass in a very little time; their honour is short-lived, and their earthly portion is not for ever: *and brought low*; not diminished in their substance in life, nor lessened in their honour and grandeur, nor are brought into poverty and disgrace; but are brought at last to death, and laid low in the grave, and are fed upon by worms, and reduced to rottenness and dust: *they are taken out of the way, as all* others; out of the world, by death, and out of the way of others; who come in their room, and were hoping for their death, and waiting for their posts of honour, and places of profit, or for their worldly estates; and out of the way of doing more mischief, and especially to good men; or they are *closed* or *shut up*[k]; that is, in the grave, where they lie imprisoned until the resurrection-morn, and out of which prison none can release themselves; nor will they be released, until Christ, who has the keys of the grave, unlocks it, and sets the prisoners free; but then all this is no other than what befalls the rest of mankind; all die, and must die, and all are brought to the grave, and laid in that, and shut up in it, which is the house appointed for all living: *and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn*; when they are fully ripe at harvest-time; it being usual in some places, as I have somewhere read, when they gather their corn, only to cut off the ears of corn at the top, which is very easily and quickly done; and so this may denote the quiet and easy death of wicked men, and when they are come to a full age, and are like a shock of corn in its season, ch. v. 26.

Ver. 25. *And if* it be *not so now*, &c.] If this is not the case of men of such wicked lives as above described, do not prosper in the world, and increase in riches, and do not pass through the world with impunity, and die quietly, in the full possession of their honour and wealth: *who will make me a liar?* where is the man? let him stand forth and appear, and disprove what has been said, and make out the doctrine delivered to be false doctrine, and a lie; for no lie is of the truth: *and make my speech nothing worth*; vain, useless, and unprofitable; truth is valuable, like gold, silver, and precious stones; but error is as wood, hay, and stubble, and nothing worth, yea, to be detested and rejected: or let him make what I have said to stand *for nothing*[l]; let him shew, if he can, that it is impertinent, and not to the purpose, that it does not prove the point for which it is brought: thus Job was willing to have what he had said tried by every method that could be made use of, that it might appear whether what he had said was true or false, worthy to be regarded, or worthless; and he here bids defiance to his friends, or to any other, and triumphs over them, as having gained his point; and, as it appears by the sequel, he had, at least in a great measure, and however with respect to this matter, that good men are afflicted in this life, and wicked men prosper; of which there are many instances.

C H A P. XXV.

THIS chapter contains Bildad's reply to Job, such an one as it is; in which, declining the controversy between them, he endeavours to dissuade him from attempting to lay his cause before God, and think to justify himself before him, from the consideration of the majesty of God, described by the dominion he is possessed of; the fear creatures stand in of him; the peace he makes in his high places; the number of his armies, and the vast extent of his light, ver. 1, 2, 3. and from the impossibility of man's being justified with him, or clean before him, argued from thence, ver. 4. and which is further illustrated by a comparison of the celestial bodies with men, and by an argument from the greater to the less, that if they lose their lustre and purity in his sight, much more man, a mean despicable worm, ver. 5, 6.

Ver. 1. *Then answered* Bildad *the* Shuhite, *&c.*] Not to what Job had just now delivered, in order to disprove that, that men, guilty of the grossest crimes, often go unpunished in this life, and prosper and succeed, and die in peace and quietness, as other men; either because he was convinced of the truth of what he had said, or else because he thought he was an obstinate man, and that it was best to let him alone, and say no more to him, since there was no likelihood of working any conviction on him; wherefore he only

[i] ואיננו & non ipse, Montanus, Bolducius; & non sunt, Schultens.
[k] יקפצו claudentur, Pagninus, Montanus; clauduntur, Piscator.
[l] לאל ad nihilum, Pagninus, Montanus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens.

tries to possess his mind of the greatness and majesty of God, in order to deter him from applying to God in a judicial way, and expecting redress and relief from him; and said as follows.

Ver. 2. *Dominion and fear* are *with him*, &c.] Not with man, as Sephorno interprets it, as that with him is power to rule over the imagination (the evil figment of his heart) to choose the good, and refuse the evil; and with him is fear of punishment, and also the fear of God to restrain him from evil; but with God, as may easily be perceived from the whole context, though his name is not expressed in this clause, and not till ver. 4. this dominion he is possessed of is universal; his kingdom rules over all, over all the angels, good and bad; over all men, over all the nations of the world, and the great men in it, the kings and princes of it; and over all, of every age, sex, and condition; and it is absolute and uncontrollable; he governs according to his will, and is not to be controlled in his ways; nor is he accountable to any for what he does, and his kingdom is an everlasting one, and his dominion for ever and ever: and by the fear that is with him is not meant actively, with which he fears; for he is afraid of none, be they ever so great and mighty, ch. xxii. 4. but passively, with which he is feared; for holy and reverend is his name, and so his nature, and all that belong to him; he is feared by the angels in heaven, who cover their faces before him, and cast their crowns at his feet; and by the saints on earth, in whose assemblies he is served with reverence and godly fear; and should be stood in awe of by all the inhabitants of the world, because of the glory of his nature, the greatness of his works, and the goodness of his providence: *he maketh peace in his high places;* in the high places of his earth, and among the great men of it, creating and commanding peace, and causing war among them to cease, whenever it is his pleasure; and in the regions of the air, where, though there are often thunder and lightning, storms and tempests of wind, hail, and rain, yet, when he says, Peace, be still, all is serene and quiet; and in the orbs of the heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, which know their appointed times and seasons, and keep their place or course, and do their work and office in the most easy and cheerful manner; and among the angels in the highest heaven, which are properly his high places, who, though their numbers are so great, and they themselves thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, and have various offices and different work assigned them, readily do his will, and are in the utmost harmony and concord among themselves, shew no reluctance to him, nor any discord to each other: now Bildad would have Job consider whether he could think himself so significant, that cognizance would be taken of him and his cause by so great, glorious, and majestic a Being; or that he would suffer his high places, where peace reigned, to be disturbed by his noise and brawl.

Ver. 3. *Is there any number of his armies?* &c.] His armies in heaven, the heavenly host of angels, which are innumerable; there are more than twelve legions of them, thousand and ten thousand times ten thousand, employed in a military way, for the safety and preservation of the saints; see Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. Psal. xxxiv. 7. and the sun, moon, and stars, often called the host of heaven, the latter of which cannot be numbered, and which fought in their courses against Sisera, Judg. v. 20. and his armies on earth, all the inhabitants of it; yea, every creature, even the smallest insect in it, which are without number: thus, frogs, lice, flies, and locusts, were the armies of God, with which he fought against Pharaoh and the Egyptians, see Joel ii. 11, 20. *and upon whom doth not his light arise?* either natural light, that grand luminary the sun, which rises on all, the evil and the good, nor is any thing hid from the light and heat of it; or moral light, the light of nature, with which every one that comes into the world is enlightened by him; or the light of providential goodness, which is unto all, and over all his creatures; the whole earth is full of it, and all the inhabitants have a share in it; nor is any thing hid from his all-piercing, all-penetrating, all-seeing eye, who is light itself, and dwells in light inaccessible, and from which light nothing can be hid.

Ver. 4. *How then can man be justified with God?*] Since he sees all his ways and works, his secret as well as open sins; either be more just than he, as Eliphaz expresses it, ch. iv. 17. which no man in his senses will say; or just as he is, and upon a level with him, or in comparison of him, or before him, and in his sight: and this is what Job himself denies, ch. ix. 2. for however righteous a man may be in his own sight, or in the sight of others, he cannot of himself be justified in the sight of God; nor can any be justified with him by his own righteousness, because the best righteousness of man is imperfect; and, if Bildad thought this was the sentiment of Job, he mistook him; for, what he meant by coming to the seat of God, and ordering his cause before him, ch. xxiii. 2, 3. to which Bildad seems to refer, and being judged by him, when he doubted not but he should be acquitted, was no other than the justification of his cause, and not of his person before God; or that he should be cleared of the imputation of hypocrisy, and of being the sinner and wicked man, and guilty of very bad things, though secret and private, for which he was afflicted; for otherwise Job knew full well that he could not be justified with God by his own personal righteousness, for he knew himself to be a sinner, and owns it; nor did he think himself perfect, and his righteousness a complete one; and therefore he expected not to be justified by it; he knew his living Redeemer, and believed in him for righteousness, and expected the justification of his person, and his acceptance with God, only by him; and in this way there are many that are justified with God secretly, *in foro Dei*, in the court of God, and in his sight, who always beholds his people as righteous in Christ, and openly, *in foro conscientiæ*, in the court of conscience, when they believe in him; and who will be publicly justified, and declared righteous, at the day of judgment: *or how can he be clean* that *is born of a woman?* which suggests a doctrine that Job as firmly believed as Bildad did, that all men are unclean by natural generation, or as they are born into the world; their ancestors being such, the more immediate, and the more remote, which may be traced up to the first man and woman, ch. xiv. 4. so that as no man is clean and pure as God is, or in com-

parison of him, or in his sight; they can neither be naturally clean, nor so of themselves, by any means or methods they can make use of; but then they may be, as many are, clean by the blood of Christ, and grace of God, through which his people are cleansed from all their sins, and all their iniquities, and are without spot before the throne and in the sight of God.

Ver. 5. *Behold, even to the moon,* &c.] If all things that are glorious and illustrious in the lower world, and which are between that and the region of the moon, are beheld; or all from the seat of the Divine Majesty, down to that glorious luminary, are viewed, they lose all their lustre and brightness, when compared with the Divine Being: *and it,* even that itself *shineth not;* it is darkened, confounded, and ashamed; it hides its beautiful face, and draws in its borrowed and useful light, at the approach of him, who is light itself, and in whom is no darkness at all: or *it tabernacles not* [n]; has no tabernacle to abide in, as is said of the sun, Psal. xix. 4. or does not expand and spread its light, as a tent [o] or tabernacle is spread; it does not diffuse, but contracts it. No mention is made of the sun, not because that shines in its own light, which the moon does not; but perhaps because the controversy between Job and his friends was held in the night, when the moon and the stars were only seen, and therefore only mentioned; otherwise, what is here observed equally holds good of the sun as of the moon; see Isa. xxiv. 23. *yea, the stars are not pure in his sight;* as there are spots in the sun and in the moon, seen by the eye of man, aided and assisted, so such may be seen by God in the stars also, and in these, both in a natural and in a mystical sense; as by them may be meant the angels of heaven, even those are not pure in the sight of God, and in comparison of him, the most perfectly pure and holy Being; see ch. iv. 18. and xv. 15.

Ver. 6. *How much less man,* that is *a worm,* &c.] Whose original is of the earth, dwells in it, and is supported by it, and creeps into it again; who is impure by nature and by practice, weak and impotent to do any thing that is spiritually good, or to defend himself from his spiritual enemies; and is mean and despicable, as even the best of men are, in their own eyes, and in the eyes of the world: and, if the best of men are comparable to such creatures, and our Lord himself, in human nature, was content to be called a worm, and no man; what must the worst of men be, or man be in and of himself, without the grace of God and righteousness of Christ, by which he can be only clean and righteous? see Isa. xli. 31. Psal. xxii. 6. and, if the celestial bodies above mentioned are eclipsed of all their brightness and glory, in the presence of God; what a contemptible figure must man make in the court of heaven, who, in comparison of them, is but a worm, and much more so, as appearing before God? *and the son of man,* which is *a worm;* which is repeated with a little variation for the confirmation of it; or it may signify, that even the first man was no other than of the earth, earthy, and so are all his sons. The Targum is, "how much "more man, who in his life is a reptile, and the son "of man, who in his death is a worm?" to which may be added, that he is in his grave a companion for the worms; and indeed it appears by the observations made through microscopes, that man, in his first state of generation, is really a worm [p]; so that, as Pliny says [q], one that is a judge of things may pity and be ashamed of the sorry original of the proudest of animals. By this short reply of Bildad, and which contains little more than what had been before said, it is plain that he was tired of the controversy, and glad to give out.

CHAP. XXVI.

In this chapter Job, in a very sarcastic manner, rallies Bildad on the weakness and impertinence of his reply, and sets it in a very ridiculous light; shewing it to be quite foolish and stupid, and not at all to the purpose, and besides was none of his own, but what he had borrowed from another, ver. 1—4. and if it was of any avail in the controversy to speak of the greatness and majesty of God, of his perfections and attributes, of his ways and works, he could say greater and more glorious things of God than he had done, and as he does, ver. 5—13. beginning at the lower parts of the creation, and gradually ascending to the superior and celestial ones; and concludes with observing, that, after all, it was but little that was known of God and his ways, by himself, by Bildad, or by any mortal creature, ver. 14.

Ver. 1. *But Job answered, and said,* &c.] In a very sharp and biting manner; one would wonder that a man in such circumstances should have so much keenness of spirit, and deal in so much irony, and be master of so much satire, and be able to laugh at his antagonist in the manner he does: *and said;* as follows.

Ver. 2. *How hast thou helped him* that is *without power?* &c.] This and the two following verses either are to be understood of God, as many do, by reading the words, *who hast thou helped? God* [r]? a fine advocate for him thou art, representing him as if he was without power, and could not help himself, but stood in need of another; as if he had no arm, and could not save and protect himself, but needed one to rise and stand up in his behalf, when he is God omnipotent, and has an arm strong and mighty, and there is none like his; and as if he wanted wisdom, and one to

[n] ולא יאהיל & non ponet tabernaculum, Montanus, Bolducius; so Schmidt, Schultens.

[o] Non expandet lumen suum in modum tentorii, Complutenses apud Bolduc.

[p] Lewenhoeck apud Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 721. Vid. Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 912, 913.

[q] Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 7.

[r] מה עזרת cui auxiliatis es, Pagninus, Montanus; so Tigurine version.

counsel him, when he is the all-wise God, and never consults with any of his creatures, or admits them to be of his council; and as if his *essence*[s], or *what he is*, as he is, had been very copiously and plentifully declared in a few words by him; in supposing which he must be guilty of the greatest arrogance, stupidity, and folly; and therefore he asks him, who it was he uttered such things unto? and by whose spirit he must be aided in so doing? see ch. xiii. 7, 8. or else Job refers to the cause undertaken by Bildad; and which he, in a sarcastic way, represents as a very weak and feeble one, that had neither strength nor wisdom in it, and was as weakly and as foolishly supported, or rather was entirely neglected and deserted, Bildad having wholly declined the thing in controversy, and said not one word of it; therefore Job ironically asks him, *in what*, or *wherein hast thou helped*[t]? what good hast thou done to this poor tottering cause of yours? or what light hast thou thrown upon it? and to what purpose is any thing that has been said by thee? Some are of opinion that Job refers to Bildad's friends, whom he represents as weak and stupid, as men of no argument, and had no strength of reasoning, and were as poorly assisted and defended by Bildad: but, why not to Bildad himself? for the sense of the question, agreeably enough to the original text, may be put after this manner: a fine patron and defender of a cause thou art; thou canst help and save a dying cause without power, and with a strengthless arm, or without any force of argument, or strength of reasoning; thou canst give counsel without any wisdom, without any shew or share of it, and in half a dozen lines set the thing in a true light, just as it is and should be; a wonderful man indeed thou art! though I choose to join with such interpreters, who understand the whole of Job himself, who was without might and power, a weak and feeble creature in body and mind, being pressed and broken with the weight of his affliction, but was poorly helped, succoured, strengthened, and comforted, with what Bildad had said: it is the duty of all good men, and it is what Job himself had done in former times, to strengthen weak hands and feeble knees, by sympathizing with persons under affliction, by bearing their burdens and infirmities, by speaking comfortably unto them, and telling them what comforts they themselves have received under afflictions, see ch. iv. 3, 4. but miserable comforters of Job were Bildad and his friends: *how savest thou the arm* that hath *no strength?* the sense is the same as before, that he had done nothing to relieve Job in his bodily or soul distresses, and save him out of them; nor had contributed in the least towards his support under them; and be it that he was as weak in his intellectuals as he and his friends thought him to be, and had undertaken a cause which he had not strength of argument to defend; yet, what had he done to convince him of his mistake, and save him from the error of his way?

Ver. 3. *How hast thou counselled* him that hath *no wisdom?* &c. A man deprived of wisdom has need of counsel, and it should be given him; and he does well both to ask and take it; and be it so, as if Job should say, that I am the foolish and unwise creature you take me to be, what counsel and advice have you given me? what a wise counsellor have you shewn yourself to be? or rather, what a miserable part have you acted under this character? *and* how *hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?* the thing in controversy, set it forth in a clear light, and in a copious manner, when he had not said one word about it, namely, concerning the afflictions of the godly, and the prosperity of the wicked; thus jeering at him, and laughing at the short reply he had made, and which was nothing to the purpose.

Ver. 4. *To whom hast thou uttered words?* &c.] That others know not; dost thou think thou art talking to an ignorant man? be it known to thee, that he knows as much, and can say as much of the Divine Being, of his glories, and of his wondrous ways and works, as thyself, or more: or dost thou consider the circumstances he is in thou art speaking to? one under great affliction and distress, to whom it must be unsuitable to talk of the greatness and majesty of God, of his power and strength, of his purity, holiness, and strict justice; it would have been more proper and pertinent to have discoursed concerning his loving-kindness, grace, and mercy, his pity and compassion towards his afflicted people, his readiness to forgive their sins, and overlook their failings; and concerning the promised Redeemer, his righteousness and sacrifice, and of the many instances of divine goodness to the sons of men, and in such-like circumstances, by raising them up again, and restoring them to their former happiness. Some things of this nature would have been more pertinent and suitable, and would have been doing both a wise and friendly part: *and whose spirit came from thee?* Not the spirit of God; dost thou think thyself inspired by God? or that what thou hast said is by the inspiration of his spirit? or that thou speakest like such who are moved by the Holy Ghost? nor indeed was it his own spirit, or the words and things uttered were not of himself, or flowed not from his own knowledge and understanding of things, but what he had borrowed from Eliphaz; for he had delivered very little more than what Eliphaz had said, ch. iv. 17, 18. and xv. 14, 15. or else the sense is, whose spirit has been restored, revived, refreshed, and comforted by what thou hast said? The word of God has such efficacy as to restore the soul, to revive it when drooping, and as it were swooning away and dying, see Psal. xix. 7. and xxiii. 3. and the words of some good men are spirit and life, the savour of life unto life, and are as life from the dead, very refreshing and comforting; but no such effect followed on what Bildad had said. Mr. Broughton renders the words, *whose soul admired thee?* thou mayest admire thyself, and thy friends may admire thee, at least thou mayest think they do, having said in thine own opinion admirable things; but who else does? for my own part I do not; and, if saying great and glorious things of God are to any purpose in the controversy between us, I am capable of speaking greater and better things than what have been delivered; and, for instance, let the following be attended to.

[s] תושיה essentiam, Montanus.

[t] Qua nam re adjuvisti? Vatablus; quid auxiliatus es? Drusius.

Ver. 5. *Dead things are formed from under the waters, &c.*] It is difficult to say what things are here meant; it may be understood of *lifeless* things, as Mr. Broughton renders it; things that never had any life, things inanimate, that never had at least an animal life, though they may have a vegetable one; and so may be interpreted of grains of corn, and which indeed die before they are quickened; to which both Christ and the apostle allude, John xii. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 36. and which, as they cannot grow without water, and their fructification and increase are owing to the earth being plentifully watered with rain, may be said to be formed under the waters; and of these Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom interpret the words; and the latter also makes mention of herbs, plants, and trees in the sea, particularly almug-trees, as being probably intended; to which may be added, corals, and other sea-plants, formed from under the waters; yea, some make mention of woods and forests there: but the last-mentioned writer seems inclined to think that metals and minerals may be intended; and it is well known that much of gold is taken out of rivers, as also pearls and precious stones; and that iron is taken out of the earth, and brass molten out of stone; and that the several metals and minerals are dug out of mountains and hills, from whence fountains and rivers flow; but as the word used has the signification of something gigantic, it has inclined others to think of sea-monsters, as of the great whales which God made in the seas, and the leviathan he has made to play therein: *and* or *with the inhabitants thereof;* the innumerable company of fishes, both of the larger and lesser sort, which are all formed in and under the waters: but why may not giants themselves be designed, since the word is sometimes used of them, Deut. ii. 11. and iii. 11. and so the Vulgate Latin and the Septuagint version here render the word, and may refer to the giants that were before the flood, and who were the causes of filling the world with rapine and violence, and so of bringing the flood of waters upon it; in which they perished *with the inhabitants thereof:* or their neighbours; of whom see Gen. vi. 4. and vii. 23. and the spirits of these being in prison, in hell, as the Apostle Peter says, 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. which is commonly supposed to be under the earth, and so under the waters, in which they perished; they may be represented as in pain and torment, and groaning and trembling under the same, as the word here used is by some thought to signify, and is so rendered[t]; though as the word *Rephaim* is often used of dead men, Psal. lxxxviii. 10. Isa. xiv. 9. and xxvi. 14, 19. it may be understood of them here, and have respect to the formation of them anew, or their resurrection from the dead, when the earth shall cast them forth; and especially of those whose graves are in the sea, and who have been buried in the waters of it, when that shall deliver up the dead that are therein, Rev. xx. 13. which will be a wonderful instance of the mighty power of God. The Targumist seems to have a notion of this, or at least refers unto it, paraphrasing the words thus, "is it possible that the mighty men (or "giants) should be created (*i. e.* recreated or regenerated; that is, raised from the dead); seeing they are "under the waters, and their armies?"

Ver. 6. *Hell is naked before him, &c.*] Which may be taken either for the place of the damned, as it sometimes is; and then the sense is, that though it is hidden from men, and they know not where it is, or who are in it, and what is done and suffered there; yet it is all known to God: he knows the place thereof, for it is made, ordained, and prepared by him; he knows who are there, even all the wicked dead, and all the nations that forget God, being cast there by him; he knows the torments they endure, for the smoke of them continually ascends before him; and he knows all their malice and envy, their enmity to him, and blasphemy of him; for thither are they gone down with their weapons of war, and have laid their swords under their heads, Ezek. xxxii. 27. or for Hades, the invisible world of spirits, or state of the dead, as the Septuagint version renders the word; though that is unseen to men, it is naked and open to the eye of God; or for the grave, in which the bodies of men are laid; which is the frequent sense of the word used, Psal. lxxxviii. 11, 12. Isa. xxxviii. 18. and though this is a land of darkness, and where the light is as darkness, yet God can look into it; and the dust of men therein is carefully observed and preserved by him, and will be raised again at the last day; who has the keys of death and hell, or the grave, and can open it at his pleasure, and cause it to give up the dead that are therein: *and destruction hath no covering;* and may design the same as before, either hell, the place of the damned, where men are destroyed soul and body with an everlasting destruction; or the grave, which the Targum calls the house of destruction, as it sometimes is, the pit of destruction and corruption; because bodies cast into it corrupt and putrefy, and are destroyed in it; and there is nothing to cover either the one or the other from the all-seeing eye of God; see Psal. cxxxix. 7—10. Prov. xv. 11. as hell is supposed to be under the earth, and the grave is in it, Job is as yet on things below, and from hence rises to those above, in the following words.

Ver. 7. *He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, &c.*] The northern hemisphere, which is the chief and best known, at least it was in the time of Job, when the southern hemisphere might not be known at all; though, if our version of ch. ix. 9, is right, Job seems to have had knowledge of it. Scheuchzer[v] thinks the thick air furthest north is meant, which expands itself everywhere, and is of great use to the whole earth. But if the northern hemisphere is meant, as a learned man[w] expresses it, it "was not only principal as to Job's respect, and the position of Arabia, "but because this hemisphere is absolutely so indeed, "'tis principal to the whole; for as the heavens and "the earth are divided by the middle line, the northern "half hath a strange share of excellency; we have more "earth, more men, more stars, more day (the same "also Sephorno, a Jewish commentator on the place,

[t] יחוללו gemunt, V. L. cruciabuntur, Bolducius; cruciantur, dolore contremiscunt, Michaelis; intremiscunt, Schultens. Vid. Windet. de Vita Funct. Stat. p. 90.

[v] Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 724.
[w] Gregory's Notes and Observations, &c. c. 12. p. 55.

"observes); and, which is more than all this, the "north pole is more magnetical than the south:" though the whole celestial sphere may be intended, the principal being put for the whole; even that whole expansion, or firmament of heaven, which has its name from being stretched out like a curtain, or canopy, over the earth; which was done when the earth was *tohu*, empty of inhabitants, both men and beasts, and was without form and void, and had no beauty in it, or any thing growing on it; see Gen. i. 2, 6, 7, 8, and *hangeth the earth upon nothing;* as a ball in the air[x], poised with its own weight[y], or kept in this form and manner by the centre of gravity, and so some Jewish writers[z] interpret *nothing* of the centre of the earth, and which is nothing but *ens rationis*, a figment and imagination of the mind; or rather the earth is held together, and in the position it is, by its own magnetic virtue, it being a loadstone itself; and as the above learned writer observes, "the globe consisteth by a magnetical dependency, "from which the parts cannot possibly start aside; "but which, howsoever thus strongly seated on its "centre and poles, is yet said to hang upon nothing; "because the Creator in the beginning thus placed it "within the *tohu*, as it now also hangeth in the air; "which itself also is nothing as to any regard of base "or sustentation." In short, what the foundations are on which it is laid, or the pillars by which it is sustained, cannot be said, except the mighty power and providence of God. The word used seems to come from a root, which in the Syriac and Chaldee languages signifies to *bind* and *restrain;* and may design the expance or atmosphere, so called from its binding and compressing nature, על, *in* or *within* which the earth is hung; see Psal. xxxii. 9.

Ver. 8. *He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds,* &c.] The clouds are of his making; when he utters his voice, or gives the word of command, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and the vapours he exhales from the ends of the earth and forms them into clouds, and they are his chariots, in which he rides up and down in the heavens, and waters his gardens and plantations on earth; see Jer. x. 13. Psal. civ. 3. which may be said to be thick in comparison of the air, in which they are; otherwise they are but thin, and the thinner they are, the greater wonder it is that the waters, and such a heavy body of them, should be bound up in them, as there often is; and which is bound up, held, and retained therein, as any thing bound up in a sack or bag, or in a garment, or the skirt of a man's coat; see Prov. xxx. 4. and what is still more marvellous: *and the cloud is not rent under them;* under the waters, and through the weight of them; which, if it was, would fall in vast water-spouts, and were such to fall upon the earth, as it may be supposed they did at the general deluge, they would destroy man and beast, and wash off and wash away the things of the earth: but God has so ordered it in his infinite wisdom, and by his almighty power, that clouds should not be thus rent, but fall in small drops and gentle showers, as if they passed through a sieve or colander, whereby the earth is refreshed, and made fruitful; see Job xxxvi. 26—29. and xxxvii. 16.

Ver. 9. *He holdeth back the face of his throne,* &c.] His throne is the heaven of heavens; the face of it, or what is before it, is the starry and airy heavens; this face of his throne is sometimes held back, or covered with clouds, that so his throne is so far from being visible, that even the face of it, or the outside or external appearance of it, is not to be seen, as follows: and *spreadeth his cloud upon it;* and both he and his throne are invisible; clouds and darkness are round about him, and his pavilion round about are dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies, Psal. xviii. 11. and xcvii. 2. and even the light in which he dwells, and with which he clothes himself, is impervious to us, and is so dazzling, that itself covers and keeps back himself and throne from being seen by mortals. The Targum suggests, that what is here said to be done is done that the angels may not see it; but these always stand before the throne of God, and always behold the face of God himself.

Ver. 10. *He hath compassed the waters with bounds,* &c.] Not the waters above the firmament, compassed by that, as if Job was contemplating on and discoursing about what is done in the heavens above; though the Targum seems to incline to this sense, paraphrasing the words, "he hath decreed that the firmament "should be placed upon the face of the waters unto "the end of light, with darkness;" but the waters of the sea, Job descending now to consider the waters of the great deep, and the wonderful restraint that is laid upon them; which is as astonishing as the binding up of the waters in the clouds without being rent by them; for this vast and unwieldy body of waters in the ocean Jehovah manages with as much ease as a mother or nurse does a new-born infant, makes the cloud its garment, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, ch. xxxviii. 8, 9. he has as it were with a compass drawn a line upon the face of it; he has broke up for it its decreed place, and set bars, and doors, and bounds to its waves, that they may come no further than is his pleasure, as is observed in the same place; the bounds he hath compassed it with are the shores, rocks, and clifts, so that the waters cannot return and cover the earth, as they once did; yea, which is very surprising, he has placed the sand, as weak and fluid as it is, for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree; so that though its waves toss and roar, they cannot prevail, nor pass over it; which must be owing to the almighty power and sovereign will of God, who has given the sea a decree that its waters should not pass his commandment; and it must be ascribed to his promise and oath that the waters no more go over the earth to destroy it; see Psal. civ. 9. Jer. v. 22. Prov. viii. 27, 29. Isa. liv. 9. *until the day and night come to an end;* that is, as long as there will be the vicissitudes of day and night, till time shall be no more, as long as the world stands; for that those shall continue so long are the ordinances of God, which shall never depart, and the covenant he has made, which shall never become void; wherefore, as long as they remain, the sea and

[x] Terra pilæ similis nullo fulcimine nixa, Ovid. Fast. 6.

[y] Circumfuso pendebat in aere tellus, ponderibus librata suis—— Ovid. Metamorph. l. 1. Fab. 1.

[z] Ben Gersom & Bar Tzemach in loc.

its waters will be bounded as not to overflow the earth, Gen. viii. 22. Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. and xxxiii. 20, 25. or *until the end of light with darkness*[a]; until both these have an end in the same form and manner they now have; otherwise, after the end of all things, there will be light in heaven, and darkness in hell. Aben Ezra interprets it thus, "unto the place which is the end of "light, for all that is above it is light, and below it the "reverse;" he seems to have respect to the place that divides the hemispheres, where when one is light the other is dark; and so others seem to understand it of such places or parts of the world as are half day and half night, and where one half of the year is light, and the other dark; but the first sense is best.

Ver. 11. *The pillars of heaven tremble*, &c.] Which may be understood either of the air, the lower part of the heavens, which may be thought to be the foundation, prop, and support of them, and is sometimes called the firmament, and the firmament of his power, Psal. cl. 1. and which seems to tremble when there are thunder and lightnings, and coruscations in it; or else the mountains, which, reaching up to the heavens, look as if they were the pillars and support of them; and are indeed said to be the foundations of heaven, which move and shake and tremble at the presence and power of God, and at any expressions of his wrath and anger, and particularly through earthquakes and storms, and tempests of thunder and lightning; see 2 Sam. xxii. 8. Psal. lxviii. 8. which are meant by what follows: *and are astonished at his reproof;* his voice of thunder, which is sometimes awful and terrible, astonishing and surprising; and, to set forth the greatness of it, inanimate creatures are represented as trembling, and astonished at it; see Psal. civ. 17. some interpret this figuratively of angels, who they suppose are employed in the direction of the heavens, and the motion of the heavenly bodies; and who they think are the same which in the New Testament are called *the powers of heaven said to be shaken*, Matt. xxiv. 29. and to be the seraphim that covered their faces upon a glorious display of the majesty of God, and when the posts of the door of the temple moved at the voice of him that cried, Isa. vi. 1—4. but if a figurative sense may be admitted of, the principal persons in the church, sometimes signified by heaven in Scripture, may be thought of; as ministers of the word, who are pillars in the house of God; yea, every true member of the church of God is made a pillar in it; and these tremble, and are astonished oftentimes when the Lord rebukes them by afflictions, though it is in love and kindness to them, Prov. ix. 1. Gal. ii. 9. Rev. iii. 12.

Ver. 12. *He divideth the sea with his power*, &c.] As at the first creation, when the waters were caused to go off the face of the earth, and were separated from it; and the one was called earth, and the other seas, Gen. i. 9, 10. or it may respect the division of those waters into divers seas and channels in the several parts of the world, for the better accommodation of the inhabitants of it, in respect of trade and commerce, and the more convenient supply of them with the various produce of different countries, and the transmitting of it to them: some have thought this has respect to the division of the Red sea for the children of Israel to walk in as on dry land, when pursued by the Egyptians, supposed to be meant by *Rahab* in the next clause; rather it may design the parting of the waves of the sea by a stormy wind, raised by the power of God, which lifts up the waves on high, and divides them in the sea, and dashes them one against another; wrinkles and furrows them, as Jarchi interprets the words, which is such an instance of the power and majesty of God, that he is sometimes described by it, Isa. li. 15. Jer. xxxi. 35. though the word used is sometimes taken in a quite different sense, for the stilling of the waves of the sea, and so it is by some rendered here, *he stilleth the sea by his power*[b]; the noise of its waves, and makes them quiet, and the sea a calm, which has been exceeding boisterous and tempestuous, and is taken notice of as an effect of his sovereign and uncontrollable power, Psal. lxv. 7. and cvii. 25—29. and may be observed as a proof of our Lord's divinity, whom the winds and sea obeyed, to the astonishment of the mariners, who were convinced thereby that he must be some wonderful and extraordinary person, Matt. viii. 26, 27. *and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud;* the proud waves of the sea, and humbles them, and makes them still, as before; or the proud monstrous creatures in it, as whales and others, particularly the leviathan, the king over all the children of pride, ch. xli. 34. see Psal. lxxiv. 13, 14. The word used is *Rahab*, one of the names of Egypt, Psal. lxxxvii. 4. Isa. li. 8. and so Jarchi interprets it of the Egyptians, who were smitten of God with various plagues, and particularly in their first-born, and at last at the Red sea, where multitudes perished, and Pharaoh their proud king, with his army; who was an emblem of the devil, whose sin, the cause of his fall and ruin, was pride; and the picture of proud and haughty sinners, whose destruction sooner or later is from the Lord; and which is an instance of his wisdom and understanding, who humbles the proud, and exalts the lowly.

Ver. 13. *By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens*, &c.] The visible heavens, with the sun, moon, and stars, with which they are studded and bespangled, and look exceeding beautiful; and the invisible heavens, with angels, the morning stars, and glorified saints, who especially in the resurrection-morn will shine not only like stars, but as the sun in the firmament of heaven; and the church, which is the heaven below, is garnished with Gospel ministers, adorned with the gifts and graces of the spirit of God: *his hand hath formed the crooked serpent;* because Job in the preceding clause has respect to the heavens and the ornament of them, this has led many to think that some constellation in the heavens is meant by the crooked serpent, either the galaxy, or milky way, as Ben Gersom and others; or the dragon-star, as some in Aben Ezra[c]; but rather Job descends again to the sea, and concludes with taking notice of the wonderful work of God, the leviathan, with which God himself concludes his discourse with him in the close of this book, which is called as here the crooked or bar serpent, Isa. xxvii. 1. and so

[a] עד תכלית אור עם חשך usque ad finem lucis cum tenebris, Coccius, Michaelis; so Targum & Sept.

[b] רגע הים pacavit mare, Bolducius; quiescit mare ipsum, Vatablus; so Sept. and Ben Gersom.

[c] So Dickinson. Physic. Vet. & Vera, c. 9. sect. 23. p. 137.

the Targum understands it, "his hand hath created "leviathan, which is like unto a biting serpent." Some understand it of the crocodile, and the epithet agrees with it, whether it be rendered a *bar-serpent*, as some[d]; that is, straight, stretched out, long, as a bar, the reverse of our version; or *fleeing*[e], as others: the crocodile being, as Pliny[f] says, terrible to those that flee from it, but flees from those that pursue it. Jarchi interprets it of Pharaoh, or leviathan, both an emblem of Satan, the old serpent, the devil, who is God's creature, made by him as a creature, though not made a serpent, or a devil, by him, which was *of* himself. Some have observed the trinity of persons in these words, and who doubtless were concerned in the creation of all things: here is *Jehovah*, of whom the whole context is; and *his Spirit*, who, as he moved upon the face of the waters at the first creation, is here said to beautify and adorn the heavens; *and his hand*; his Son, the power and wisdom of God, by whom he made all things.

Ver. 14. *Lo, these are parts of his ways*, &c.] This is the conclusion of the discourse concerning the wonderful works of God; and Job was so far from thinking that he had taken notice of all, or even of the chief and principal, that what he observed were only the extremities, the edges, the borders, and outlines of the ways and works of God in creation and providence; wherefore, if these were so great and marvellous, what must the rest be which were out of the reach of men to point out and describe? *but how little a portion is heard of him?* from the creatures, from the works of creation, whether in heaven, earth, or sea; for though they do declare in some measure his glory, and though their voice is heard everywhere, and shews forth the knowledge of him; even exhibits to view his invisible things, his eternal power and Godhead; yet it is comparatively so faint a light, that men grope as it were in the dark, if haply they might find him, having nothing but the light of nature to guide them. We hear the most of him in his word, and by his son Jesus Christ, in whose face the knowledge of him, and his glorious perfections, is given; and yet we know but in part, and prophesy in part; it is but little in comparison of what is in him, and indeed of what will be heard and known of him hereafter in eternity: *but the thunder of his power who can understand?* meaning not literally thunder, which though it is a voice peculiar to God, and is very strong and powerful, as appears by the effects of it; see ch. xl. 9. Psal. xxix. 3—9. yet is not so very unintelligible as to be taken notice of so peculiarly, and to be instanced in as above all things out of the reach of the understanding of men; but rather the attribute of his power, of which Job had been discoursing, and giving so many instances of; and yet there is such an exceeding greatness in it, as not to be comprehended and thoroughly understood by all that appear to our view; for his mighty power is such as is able to subdue all things to himself, and reaches to things we cannot conceive of. Ben Gersom, not amiss, applies this to the greatness and multitude of the decrees of God; and indeed if those works of his which are in sight cannot be fully understood by us, how should we be able to understand things that are secret and hidden in his own breast, until by his mighty power they are carried into execution? see 1 Cor. ii. 9.

C H A P. XXVII.

THOUGH Job's friends were become silent, and dropped the controversy with him, he still continued his discourse in this and the four following chapters; in which he asserts his integrity; illustrates and confirms his former sentiments; gives further proof of his knowledge of things, natural and divine; takes notice of his former state of prosperity, and of his present distresses and afflictions, which came upon him, notwithstanding his piety, humanity, and beneficence, and his freedom from the grosser acts of sin, both with respect to God and men, all which he enlarges upon. In this chapter he gives his word and oath for it, that he would never belie himself, and own that he was an hypocrite, when he was not, but would continue to assert his integrity, and the righteousness of his cause, as long as he lived, ver. 1—6. for to be an hypocrite, and to attempt to conceal his hypocrisy, would be of no advantage to him, either in life, or in death, ver. 7—10. and was this his character and case, upon their principles, he could expect no other than to be a miserable man, as wicked men are, who have their blessings turned into curses, or taken away from them, and they removed out of the world in the most awful and terrible manner, and under manifest tokens of the wrath and displeasure of God, ver. 11—23.

Ver. 1. *Moreover Job continued his parable*, &c.] Having finished his discourse concerning the works and ways of God, and the display of his majesty, power, and glory, in them, he pauses awhile, waiting for Zophar, whose turn was next to rise up, and make a reply to him; but neither he, nor any of his friends, reassumed the debate, but kept a profound silence, and chose not to carry on the dispute any further with him; either concluding him to be an obstinate man, not open to conviction, and on whom no impressions could be made, and that it was all lost time and labour to use any argument with him; or else being convicted in their minds that he was in the right, and they in the wrong, though they did not choose to own it; and especially being surprised with what he had last said concerning God and his works, whereby they perceived he had great knowledge of divine things, and could not be the man they had suspected him to be from his afflictions: however, though they are silent,

[d] נחש בריח serpentem vectem, Pagninus, Cocceius; oblongum instar vectis, Schmidt; oblongum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; longa trabe rectior. Vide Metamorph. l. 3. Fab. 1. ver. 78.

[e] Fugacem, Montanus, Vatablus; fugiens, Codurcus.

[f] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 25.

Job was not, *he added to take* or *lift up his parable*[a], as the words may be rendered; or *his oration*, as Mr. Broughton, his discourse; which, because it consisted of choice and principal things, which command regard and attention, of wise, grave, serious, and sententious sayings, and some of them such as not easy to be understood, being delivered in similes and figurative expressions, as particularly in the following chapter, it is called his parable; what are called parables being proverbial phrases, dark sayings, allegorical or metaphorical expressions, and the like; and which way of speaking Job is here said to take, *and lift up*, which is an eastern phraseology, as appears from Balaam's use of it, Numb. xxiii. 7. and xxiv. 3, 15. and may signify, that he delivered the following oration with great freedom, boldness, and confidence, and with a high tone and loud voice; to all which he might be induced by observing, through the silence of his friends, that he had got the advantage of them, and had carried his point, and had brought them to conviction or confusion, or however to silence, which gave him heart and spirit to proceed on with his oration, which he *added* to his former discourse: *and said;* as follows.

Ver. 2. As *God liveth, &c.*] Which is an oath, as Jarchi observes, and is a form of one frequently used, see 2 Sam. ii. 27. and iv. 9. and is used by God himself, who, because he can swear by no greater, swears by himself, and by his life, which ever continues, as in Ezek. xviii. 3. and many other places: and so the Angel of the Lord, even the increated Angel, Dan. xii. 7. Rev. x. 6. and so should men, when they swear at all, it should be in this manner, see Jer. iv. 2. though this ought not to be but in cases of moment and importance, for the confirmation of the truth, and to put an end to strife, when it cannot be done any other way than by an appeal to God; as was the present case with Job, it being about hypocrisy, and want of integrity his friends charged him with; and such a case can only be determined truly and fully by God, who is here described as the living God, by whom men swear, in opposition to the idols of the Gentiles, which are of gold, silver, wood, and stone, and without life and breath, or to their deified heroes, who were dead men; but the true God is the living God, has life in and of himself, and is the fountain of life to others, the author and giver of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal, and who himself lives for ever and ever; and as such is the object of faith and confidence, of fear and reverence, of love and affection; all which swearing by him supposes and implies; it is a saying of R. Joshuah, as Jarchi on the place relates it, "that Job from "love served God, for no man swears by the life of a "king but who loves the king;" the object swore by is further described, who *hath taken away my judgment*, not the judgment of his mind, or his sense of judging things, which remained with him quick and strong, notwithstanding his afflictions; nor correction with judgment, which continued with him; but, as the Targum paraphraseth it, "he hath taken away the rule "of my judgment;" that is, among men, his substance, wealth, and riches, his former affluence and prosperity, which whilst he enjoyed, he was reckoned a good man; but now all this being taken away by the hand of God as it was, he was censured as a wicked man, and even by his friends; or rather it is a complaint, that God had neglected the judgment of him, like that of the church in Isa. xl. 27. that he did not stir up himself to his judgment, even to his cause; did not vindicate him, though he appealed to him; did not admit him to his judgment-seat, nor give his cause a hearing, and decide it, though he had most earnestly desired it; nor did he let him know the reason of his thus dealing and contending with him; yea, he afflicted him severely, though righteous and innocent, in which Job obliquely reflects upon the dealings of God with him; though he does not charge him with injustice, or break out into blasphemy of him; yet this seems to be one of those speeches which God disapproved of, and is taken notice of by Elihu with a censure, ch. xxxiv. 5. *and the Almighty*, who *hath vexed my soul;* with whom nothing is impossible, and who could easily have relieved him from his distresses; and who was Shaddai, the all-sufficient Being, who could have supplied him with all things temporal and spiritual he wanted; yet instead of this *vexed* his *soul* with adversity, with afflictions very grievous to him, his hand touching and pressing him sore; or, *hath made my soul bitter*[b]; dealt bitterly with him, as the Almighty did with Naomi, Ruth i. 21. Afflictions are bitter things, they are like the waters of Marah, they are wormwood and gall, they cause bitter distress and sorrow, and make a man go and speak in the bitterness of his soul; and these are of God, to whom Job ascribes his, and not to chance and fortune; they were bitter things God appointed for him, and wrote against him.

Ver. 3. *All the while my breath is in me, &c.*] So long the oath of God would be upon him, or he bound himself under it; *and the spirit of God is in my nostrils;* which signifies the same thing. The breath of a man is his spirit, and this is of God, the Father of spirits; he first breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul or spirit; it is he that gives life and breath to every man, and continues it as long as he pleases, which is a very precarious thing; for it is in his nostrils, where it is drawn to and fro, and soon and easily stopped; nor will it always continue, it will some time not be, it will go forth, and then man dies, and returns to the earth; but as long as there is breath there is life; so that to say this is the same as to say, as long as I live, or have a being; and whilst that continued, Job looked upon himself under the oath he had taken by the living God.

Ver. 4. *My lips shall not speak wickedness, &c.*] This is the thing he swears to, this the matter of his oath, not only that he would not speak a wicked word, nor any thing corrupt, unsavoury, unchaste, profane, and idle, nor speak evil of his neighbours and friends, or of any man; but that he would not speak wickedly of himself, as he must do, if he owned himself to be a wicked man, and an hypocrite, as his friends charged

[a] ויסף שאת משלו *&* addidit attollere suam parabolam, Pagninus, Montanus.

[b] המר נפשי affecit amaritudine animam meam, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Michaelis; so Sept.

him, and they would have had him confessed; but he swears he would not utter such wickedness as long as he had any breath in him: *nor my tongue utter deceit;* which respects the same thing; not merely any fallacy or lie, or what might impose upon and deceive another, which yet he was careful of; but such deceit and falsehood as would be a belying himself, which would be the case should he say that he was devoid of integrity and sincerity.

Ver. 5. *God forbid that I should justify you, &c.*] Not but that he counted them righteous and good men Godward; he did not take upon him to judge their state, and to justify or condemn them with respect to their everlasting condition; but he could not justify them in their censures of him, and say they did a right thing in charging him with wickedness and hypocrisy; nor could he justify them in all their sentiments and doctrines which they had delivered concerning the punishment of the wicked in this life, and the happiness that attends all good men; and that a man by his outward circumstances may be known to be either a good man or a bad man; such things as these he could not say were right; for so to do would be to call evil good, and good evil; and therefore he expresses his utmost abhorrence and detestation of shewing his approbation of such conduct as theirs towards him, and of such unbecoming sentiments of God, and of his dealings, they had entertained; and to join in with which would be a profanation and a pollution, as the word used by him signifies; he could not do it without defiling his conscience, and profaning truth: *until I die I will not remove my integrity from me:* Job was an upright man both in heart and life, through the grace of God bestowed on him; and he continued in his integrity, notwithstanding the temptations of Satan, and his attacks upon him, and the solicitations of his wife; and he determined through the grace of God to persist therein to the end of his life; though what he chiefly means here is, that he would not part with his character as an upright man, which he had always had, and God himself had bore testimony to; he would never give up this till he gave up the ghost; he would never suffer his integrity to be removed from him, nor remove it from himself by denying that it belonged to him, which his friends bore hard upon him to do. So Jarchi paraphrases it, "I will not confess (or agree) "to your saying, that I am not upright;" the phrase, *till I die*, seems rather to belong to the first clause, though it is true of both, and may be repeated in this.

Ver. 6. *My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go, &c.*] Meaning not his personal righteousness, or the righteousness of his works, as his justifying righteousness before God, and for acceptance with him; which no man that is convinced of the insufficiency of, as Job was, will hold fast, but renounce, and desire, with the Apostle Paul, not to be found in it, Phil. iii. 9. Indeed the righteousness of his living Redeemer, which was his, and he might call so, this he knew, and knew he should be justified by it, and which he laid hold upon by faith in the strong exercise of it, and would not drop it, or become remiss in it, but retain it, and constantly make mention of it, and plead it as his justifying righteousness with God; but here he intends the righteousness of his cause, which he always maintained strongly, and was determined he ever would, and never give way, or let it drop, but continue to affirm, that he was a righteous man, and that it was not for any unrighteousness he had done to any man that God dealt thus with him; he had wronged no man, he had done justice to all men, as well as he was not devoid of the fear of God, and piety towards him; and this character of himself he would never give up, but defend to the uttermost: *my heart shall not reproach* me *so long as I live;* not that he imagined he should or could live without sin, so that his conscience could never charge, accuse, or upbraid him with it; for there is no man, let him live a life ever so harmless and inoffensive to God and man, but his heart will smite him, and condemn him for his sins committed in thought, word, and deed: but Job's sense is, that he would never deny his integrity, or renounce the righteousness of his cause, and own himself to be an insincere and unrighteous man; should he do this, he should speak contrary to his own conscience, which would accuse and reproach him for so saying, and therefore he was determined it never should; for, as long as he lived, he neither could nor would say any such thing. Some render the last phrase, *for my days*[a], or *concerning* them; for my course of life, all my days, so Jarchi; for that my heart shall not reproach me, as being conscious to himself he had lived in all good conscience to that day, and trusted he ever should; but the sense before given is best.

Ver. 7. *Let mine enemy be as the wicked, &c.*] Job in this, and some following verses, shews, that he was not, and could not, and would not be a wicked man and an hypocrite, or however had no opinion and liking of such persons; for whatever his friends might think of him, because he had said so much of their outward prosperity in this world; yet he was far from approving of or conniving at their wickedness and hypocrisy, or choosing them for his companions, and joining with them in their actions, or imagining they were really happy persons; so far from it, that he would not be in their condition and circumstances for all the world: for if he was to wish a bad thing to the greatest enemy he had, he could not wish him any worse than to be as a wicked and unrighteous man; that is, to be a wicked and unrighteous man; which it is impossible for a good man to wish, and indeed would be a needless wish, since all that are enemies to good men, as such, must be wicked; and such were Job's enemies, as the Chaldeans and Sabeans; but that they might be as such, in their state and circumstances, or rather as they will be in the consequence of things, most wretched and miserable; for they are always under the displeasure of God, and hated by him; and whatever fulness they may have of the things of this world, they have them with a curse, and they are curses to them, and their end will be everlasting ruin and destruction; wherefore the Septuagint version is, *as the overthrow of the ungodly, and as the*

[a] מימי propter dies meos, Munster; vel propter dies vitæ meæ Michaelis; de diebus meis, Schultens.

perdition of transgressors: though some take this to be a kind of an ironical imprecation, and that by the wicked man here, and unrighteous in the next clause, he means himself, whom his friends reckoned a wicked and unrighteous man; and then the sense is, I wish you all, my friends, and even the worst enemies I have, were but as wicked Job is, as you call him; not that he wished they might be afflicted in body, family, and estate, as he was, but that they were as good men as he was, and partook of as much of the grace of God as he did, and had the same integrity and righteousness as he had, see Acts xxvi. 29. and such a wish as this, as it serves to illustrate his own character, so it breathes charity and good will to others; and indeed it cannot be thought the words are to be taken in such a sense as that he wished the same evils might be retorted upon his enemies, whether open or secret, which they were the means of bringing upon him, which was contrary to the spirit of Job, ch. xxxi. 29, 30. Some consider them not as an imprecation, but as a prediction, *mine enemy shall be as the wicked*[s]; and may have respect to his friends, who were so ready to charge him with wickedness, and suggests that in the issue of things they would be found, and not he, guilty of sin and folly, and to have said the things that were not right, neither of God, nor of him, which had its accomplishment, ch. xlii. 7. *and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous*; which is but another way of expressing the same thing; for an enemy, and one that rises up against a man, is the same person; only this the better explains what enemy is intended, even an open one, that rises up in an hostile manner, full of rage and fury; and so a wicked and an unrighteous man are the same, and are frequently put together as describing the same sort of persons, see Isa. lv. 7.

Ver. 8. *For what is the hope of the hypocrite*, &c.] In religion, who seems to be what he is not, a holy and righteous man; professes to have what he has not, the grace of God; pretends to do what he does not, worship God sincerely and fervently, and does all he does to be seen of men; though such a man may have an hope, as he has, of an interest in the divine favour, and of eternal glory and happiness, what will it signify? what avail will it be unto him? what will it issue in? Job was of the same mind in this with Bildad and Zophar, that such a man's hope is as the spider's web, and as the giving up of the ghost, ch. viii. 14. and xi. 20. however he may please himself with it in this life, it will be of no service to him at death; for it is not like that of the true believer's, that is sure and steadfast, and founded upon the perfect righteousness and sacrifice of Christ; but upon his outward substance, fancying, that because God prospers him in this world, he is highly in his favour, and shall enjoy the happiness of the world to come; and upon his external profession of religion, and round of duties performed by him, but he'll find himself mistaken: *though he hath gained*: great wealth and riches under a guise of religion, and by that means making gain of godliness, and taking the one for the other; so the Targum, "because he hath gathered the mammon of "falsehood;" and also has great gifts, and a great deal of head-knowledge, being able to talk of and dispute about most points of religion, and so has gained a great name among men both for knowledge and holiness, and yet all will not stand him in any stead, or be of any advantage to him: *when God taketh away his soul?* out of his body by death, as a sword is drawn out of its scabbard, and which is as easily done by him; or as a shoe is plucked off from the foot, as Aben Ezra, and what he has a right to do, and will do it: and this taking it away seems to be in a violent manner, though not by what is called a violent death, yet against the will of the person; a good man is willing to die, is desirous of it, and gives up the ghost cheerfully; but an hypocrite is not willing to die, being afraid of death, and therefore his life or soul is taken from him without his consent and will, and not in love but in wrath, as the latter part of this chapter shows. Now Job had an hope which bore him up under all his troubles, and which he retained in the most killing and distressed circumstances, and which continued with him, and supported him in the views of death and eternity, so that he could look upon death, and into another world, with pleasure, and therefore could be no hypocrite, see ch. xiii. 15, 16. and xix. 25—27.

Ver. 9. *Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?*] No, he will not, he heareth not sinners, and such as regard iniquity in their hearts, Psal. lxvi. 18. every man has trouble more or less in this life, even the best of men; and generally speaking they have the most, and wicked men the least; but when death comes, he is a king of terrors to them, and they find sorrow and trouble; and especially at the day of judgment, when they will cry for mercy; and hypocrites, as the foolish virgins, will cry, Lord, Lord, open unto us; but when they call for mercy, the Lord will not answer, but laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh, Prov. i. 26, 28. but God hears the cries of his people when in trouble, whether in life, or in death, and is a present help unto them; and when strength and heart fail, he is their portion, and will be so for evermore; and though sometimes they think he does not hear them, as Job sometimes complains, yet he makes it appear that he does sooner or later, and so Job describes himself as one that calleth upon God, and he answereth him, ch. xii. 4. and therefore might conclude he was no hypocrite.

Ver. 10. *Will he delight himself in the Almighty?* &c.] That is, the hypocrite; no, he will not; he may seem to delight in him, but he does not truly and sincerely; not in him as the Almighty, or in his omnipotence, into whose hands it is a fearful thing to fall, and who is able to destroy soul and body in hell; nor in his omniscience, who searches and knows the hearts of all men, and the insincerity of the hypocrite, how covert to men soever he is; nor in his holiness, which at heart he loves not; nor in his ways and worship, word, ordinances, and people, though he makes a shew of it, Isa. lviii. 2. *will he always call upon God?* God only is to be called upon, and it becomes all men to call upon him for all blessings, temporal and spiritual; and this should be done in faith, with fervency, in sin-

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[s] יהי כרשע איבי erit ut impius inimicus meus, Pagninus, Montanus, Belducius; so Junius & Tremellius, Broughton, & [illegible].

cerity and uprightness of soul, and with constancy, always, at all times both of prosperity and adversity; but an hypocrite does not, and cannot call upon God in a sincere and spiritual manner; nor is he constant in this work, only by fits and starts, when it is for his worldly interest and external honour so to do. Now Job was one that delighted in God, was uneasy at his absence, longed for communion with him, sought earnestly after him, frequently and constantly called upon him, though he was wrongly charged with casting off the fear of God, and restraining prayer before him, and therefore no hypocrite. Some understand [f] all this as affirmed of the hypocrite, setting forth his present seeming state of happiness: as that he has a hope of divine favour, and of eternal felicity; has much peace and tranquillity of mind in life, and at death; is heard of God when trouble comes, and so gets out of it, and enjoys great prosperity; professes much delight and pleasure in God, and his ways, and is a constant caller upon him, and keeps close to the external duties of religion; and yet, notwithstanding all this, is in the issue, when death comes, exceeding miserable, as the following part of the chapter shews.

Ver. 11. *I will teach you by the hand of God, &c.*] To serve God, and speak truth, says one of the Jewish commentators [g]; rather the works of God, and methods of his providence, with wicked men and hypocrites; the wisdom of God in his dispensations towards them; the reasons why he suffers them to live in outward prosperity and happiness, and what in the issue will be their case and circumstances; wherefore some render the words, *I will* teach you the *hand of God*, or *of*, or *concerning the hand of God* [h]; and so Mr. Broughton, *of God, his hand*; not his works of nature which his hand had wrought, of which he had discoursed in the preceding chapter; but his works of providence, and those more mysterious ones relating to the afflictions of the godly, and the prosperity of the wicked. Job had been a teacher and instructor of others in the times of his prosperity, and his words had upheld, strengthened, and comforted many, ch. iv. 3, 4. and he was not the less qualified for, nor the less capable of such an office now in his adversity, which had been a school to him, in which he had learned many useful lessons himself, and so was in a better capacity of teaching others. Thus some render the words, *I will teach you*, being in or *under the hand of God* [i]; under his mighty hand, his afflicting, chastising hand, which had touched him, and pressed him sore, and yet had guided and instructed him in many things, and particularly relating to the subject he proposed to instruct his friends in; who, though they were men of knowledge, and in years, yet he apprehended needed instruction; and he undertook to give them some by the good hand of God upon him, through his help and assistance, and under the influences and teachings of his spirit. The Targum is, "I will teach you by the "prophecy of God;" see Ezek. i. 3. and iii. 14. *that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal*; meaning not the secret purposes and decrees of God within himself, which cannot be known, unless he reveals them; rather secret truths, which are not obvious to every one, the mysteries of the kingdom, the wisdom of God in a mystery, the knowledge of which the Lord vouchsafes to some of his people in a very peculiar manner; though the mysteries of Providence seem chiefly intended, which those that carefully observe attain to an understanding of, so as to be capable of instructing others; and indeed what is in reserve with God for men among his treasures, whether of grace or glory for his own peculiar people, or especially of wrath and vengeance for wicked men and hypocrites, may be here designed; and whatever knowledge men have of the mysteries of nature, providence, and grace, which may be profitable unto others, and make for the glory of God, should not be concealed from men, see ch. vi. 10.

Ver. 12. *Behold, all ye yourselves have seen it, &c.*] As they were men of observation, at least made great pretensions to it, as well as of age and experience, they must have seen and observed somewhat at least of the above things; they must have seen the wicked, as David afterwards did, spreading himself like a green bay-tree, and the hypocrites in easy and flourishing circumstances, and good men labouring under great afflictions and pressures, and Job himself was now an instance of that before their eyes: *why then are ye thus altogether vain?* or *become vain in vanity* [k]; so exceeding vain, so excessively trifling, as to speak and act against the dictates of their own conscience, against their own sense, and what they saw with their own eyes, and advance notions so contrary thereunto; as to affirm that evil men are always punished of God in this life, and good men are succeeded and prospered by him; and so from Job's afflictions drew so vain and empty a conclusion, that he must be a wicked man and an hypocrite.

Ver. 13. *This is the portion of a wicked man with God, &c.*] Not to be punished in this life, but after death. This is what Job undertook to teach his friends, and is the purport of what follows in this chapter. A wicked man is not only one that has been so from the womb, and is openly and notoriously a wicked man, but one also that is so secretly, under a mask of sobriety, religion, and godliness, and is an hypocrite, for of such Job speaks in the context; and the portion of such a man is not what he has in this life, which is oftentimes a very affluent one as to the things of this world, but what he has after death, which is banishment from the presence of God, the everlasting portion of his people, a part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, the wrath of God to the uttermost, the second death, and a dwelling with devils and wicked men, such as himself, even a portion with hypocrites, which of all is the most dreadful and miserable, Matt. xxiv. 51. and this is *with God*, is appointed by him; for God has appointed the wicked, the vessels of wrath, fitted by their sins for destruction to the day of evil, to everlasting ruin and destruction; and it is prepared by him for them, as for the devil and his

[f] Schultens.
[g] Simeon Bar Tzemach.
[h] ביד אל manu Dei, Beza, Cocceius; de manu Dei, Mercerus, Piscator, Drusius, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.
[i] In plaga Dei fortis versans, Junius & Tremellius.
[k] הבל תהבלו vanitate vanescitis, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Michaelis, Schultens; vel evanescitis, Montanus, Bolducius, Beza, Mercerus, Drusius, Piscator, Cocceius.

angels, and for them it is reserved among his treasures, even blackness of darkness, damnation, wrath, and vengeance: *and the heritage of oppressors*, which *they shall receive of the Almighty*; these are such who are either oppressors of the poor in their natural and civil rights, taking from or denying to them what of right is their due; or oppressors of the saints in their religious rights and privileges, furious persecutors of them: and who, being powerful, are terrible, as the word signifies: there is an *heritage*, or an inheritance for those, which is entailed upon them, and will descend unto them, as the first-born of their father the devil, as children of disobedience, and so of wrath, and like an inheritance will endure: and this they *shall receive*; it is future, it is wrath to come, and it is certain there is no escaping it; it is their due desert, and they shall receive it: it is in the hands of the almighty God, and he will render it to them, and they shall most assuredly inherit it.

Ver. 14. *If his children be multiplied*, &c.] As it is possible they may; this is one external blessing common to good men and bad men. Haman, that proud oppressor, left ten sons behind him, and wicked Ahab had seventy: it is *for the sword*; for them that kill with the sword, as the Targum: to be killed with it, as in the two instances above; Haman's ten sons were slain by the sword of the Jews, and Ahab's seventy sons by the sword of Jehu, or those he ordered to slay them. The children of such wicked persons are oftentimes put to death, either by the sword of the enemy, fall in battle in an hostile way, which is one of God's four sore judgments; or, leading a most wicked life, commit such capital crimes as bring them into the hand of the civil magistrate, who bears not the sword in vain, but is the minister of God, a revengeful executioner of wrath on wicked men; or else they die by the sword of the murderer, being brought into the world for such, and through their riches become their prey, Hos. ix. 13. or if neither of these is the case, yet they at last, let them prosper as they will, fall a sacrifice to the glittering sword of divine justice, whetted and drawn in wrath against them; the sword of the enemy seems chiefly intended: *and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread*; such of them as die not by the sword shall perish by famine, which is another of God's sore judgments; though this may respect the grandchildren of wicked men, whom God visits to the third and fourth generation; the Targum paraphrases it, his children's children, and so Sephorno; to which agrees the Vulgate Latin version: the sense is, that the posterity of such wicked men, when they are dead and gone, shall be so reduced as to beg their bread, and shall not have a sufficiency of that for the support of nature, but shall die for want of food.

Ver. 15. *Those that remain of him*, &c.] Of the wicked man after his death; or such that remain, and have escaped the sword and famine: *shall be buried in death*: the pestilence, emphatically called death by the Hebrews, as by us the mortality, see Rev. vi. 8. This is another of God's sore public judgments on wicked men, and is such a kind of death, by reason of the contagion of it, that a person is buried as soon as dead almost, being infectious to keep him; and so Mr. Broughton translates the words, "his remnant "shall be buried as soon as they are dead;" or the disease of which such die being so very infectious sometimes, no one dares to bury them for fear of catching it, and so they lie unburied; which some take to be the sense of the phrase, either that they shall be hurried away to the grave, and so not be embalmed and lie in state, and have an honourable and pompous funeral, or that they shall have none at all, their death will be all the burial they shall have: or else the sense is, they shall die such a death as that death shall be their grave; and they shall have no other, as the men of the old world that were drowned in the flood, and Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, and Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who were swallowed up in the earth, and such as are devoured by wild beasts; and if this last could be thought to be meant, we have all the four sore judgments of God in this and the preceding verse, sword, famine, pestilence, and evil beasts: *and his widows shall not weep*; leaving more than one behind him, polygamy being frequent in those times; or else these are his sons' wives, left widows by them, as Bar Tzemach thinks, they being the persons immediately spoken of, dying by various deaths before mentioned; but whether they be his widows, or theirs, they shall weep for neither of them; either because they themselves will be cut off with them; or their husbands dying shameful deaths, lamentation would be forbidden; or they would not be able to weep through the astonishment and stupor they should be seized with at their death; or having lived such miserable and uncomfortable lives with them, they should be so far from lamenting their death, that they should, as Jarchi interprets it, rejoice at it; the Septuagint version is, "no one shall have "mercy on their widows."

Ver. 16. *Though he heap up silver as the dust*, &c.] Which, as it denotes the great abundance of it collected together, so it expresses the bias and disposition of such a man's mind, that he can't be content without amassing great quantities of it, and also his diligence and success therein, see 1 Kings x. 27. Psal. xxxix. 6. Hab. ii. 6. *and prepare raiment as the clay*; not merely for use, but pomp and shew, to fill his wardrobes with; and formerly raiment was part of the treasure of great men: the phrase signifies that he might have such a variety of raiment, and such large quantities of it, that he would value it no more than so much clay; or else that his riches, consist of what it would, would be both polluting and troublesome to him; the Septuagint version reads *gold* instead of *raiment*, as in Zech. ix. 3. where like expressions are used of Tyre.

Ver. 17. *He may prepare* it, &c.] Raiment; beginning with that first which was mentioned last, which is frequent in the Hebrew and eastern languages; such things may be done, and often are, by wicked men: *but the just shall put it on*; the wicked man will either have no heart, or have no time, to wear it, at least to wear it out, and so a just man shall have it, as the Israelites put on the raiment of the Egyptians, which they begged or borrowed, and spoiled them of, Exod. xii. 35. and oftentimes so it is in Providence, that the wealth of wicked men is by one means or another transferred into the families of good men, who enjoy it, and make a better use of it, Prov. xiii. 22. *and the*

innocent shall divide the silver; have a part of it at least, or divide the whole between his children, or give a part of it to the poor; so money that is ill gotten, or ill used, is taken away, and put into the hands of one that will have mercy on the poor, and liberally distribute it to them, Prov. xxviii. 8.

Ver. 18. *He buildeth his house as a moth*, &c.] Which builds its house in a garment by eating into it, and so destroying it, and in time eats itself out of house and home, and however does not continue long in it, but is soon and easily shook out, or brushed off; so a wicked man builds himself an house, a stately palace, *like Arcturus*[1]; so some render the words from ch. ix. 9. a palace among the stars, an heavenly palace and paradise, and expects it will continue for ever; but as he builds it with the mammon of unrighteousness, and to the prejudice and injury of others, and with their money, or what was due to them, so by his sins and iniquities he brings ruin and destruction upon himself and his family, so that his house soon falls to decay, and at least he and his posterity have but a short-lived enjoyment of it. This may be applied in a figurative sense to the hypocrite's hope and confidence, which is like a spider's web, a moth-eaten garment, and a house built upon the sand; the Septuagint version here adds, *as a spider*, ch. viii. 13—15. Isa. li. 8. Matt. vii. 26, 27. *and as a booth that the keeper maketh*: either a keeper of sheep, who sets up his tent in a certain place for a while, for the sake of pasturage, and then removes it, to which the allusion is, Isa. xxxviii. 12. or a keeper of fruit, as the Targum, of gardens and orchards, that the fruit is not stolen; or of fig-trees and vineyards, as Jarchi and Bar Tzemach, which is only a lodge or hut pitched for a season, until the fruit is gathered in, and then is taken down, see Isa. i. 8. Lam. ii. 6. and it signifies here the short continuance of the house of the wicked man, which he imagined would continue for ever, Psal. xlix. 11.

Ver. 19. *The rich man shall lie down, but he shall not be gathered*, &c.] That is, the wicked rich man; and the sense is, either he shall lie down upon his bed, but shall not be gathered to rest, shall get no sleep, the abundance of his riches, and the fear of losing them, or his life for them, will not suffer him to compose himself to sleep; or else it expresses his sudden loss of them, he *lies down* at night to take his rest, *and it is not gathered*, his riches are not gathered or taken away from him, but remain with him: *he openeth his eyes*; in the morning, when he awakes from sleep: *and it is not*; by one providence or another he is stripped of all substance; or rather this is to be understood of his death, and of what befalls him at that time: death is often in Scripture signified by lying down, sleeping, and taking rest, as on a bed, see ch. xiv. 10, 12. rich men die as well as others; their riches can't profit them, or be of any avail to them to ward off the stroke of death, and their death is miserable; he is *not gathered, or shall not gather*[m], he can't gather up his riches, and carry it with him, Psal. xlix. 15, 16. 1 Tim. vi. 7. *he openeth his eyes* in another world, *and it is not*, his riches are not with him; or, as the Vulgate Latin version, *he shall find nothing*: or rather the meaning is, he is *not gathered*: to his grave, as Jarchi and Ben Gersom; and so Mr. Broughton, *he is not taken up*, i. e. as he interprets it, to be honestly buried. He is not buried in the sepulchres of his ancestors, which is often in Scripture signified by a man being gathered to his people, or to his fathers; but here it is suggested, that, notwithstanding all his riches, he should have no burial, or, what is worse than that, when he dies he should not be gathered to the saints and people of God, or into God's garner, into heaven and happiness: but *he openeth his eyes*: in hell, as the rich man is said to do, and finds himself in inexpressible torment: *and he is not*; on earth, in his palace he built, nor among his numerous family, friends, and acquaintance, and in the possession of his earthly riches, but is in hell in the most miserable and distressed condition that can be conceived of. Some think this last clause respects the suddenness of his death, one *opens his eyes*, and looks at him, *and he is not*; he's dead, in the twinkling of an eye, and is no more in the land of the living; but the former sense is best.

Ver. 20. *Terrors take hold on him as waters*, &c.] The terrors of death, and of an awful judgment that is to come after it; finding himself dying, death is the king of terrors to him, dreading not only the awful stroke of death itself, but of what is to follow upon it; or rather these terrors are those that seize the wicked man after death; perceiving what a horrible condition he is in, the terrors of a guilty conscience lay hold on him, remembering his former sins with all the aggravating circumstances of them; the terrors of the law's curses lighting upon him, and of the wrath and fury of the Almighty pouring out on him and surrounding him, and devils and damned spirits all about him. These will seize him *as waters*, like a flood of waters, denoting the abundance of them, terror on every side, a *Magor Missabib* will he be, and coming with great rapidity, with an irresistible force, and without ceasing, rolling one after another in a sudden and surprising manner: *a tempest stealeth him away in the night*; the tempest of divine wrath, from which there is no shelter but the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ; this comes like a thief, suddenly and unexpectedly, and steals the wicked man out of this world; or rather from the judgment-seat, and carries him into the regions of darkness, of horror and black despair, where he is surrounded with the aforesaid terrors; this is said to be in the night, to make it the more shocking and terrible, see Luke xii. 19. and may have respect to that blackness that attends a tempest, and to that blackness of darkness reserved for wicked men, Jude 13.

Ver. 21. *The east wind carrieth him away*, &c.] Which is very strong and powerful, and carries all before it; afflictions are sometimes compared to it, Isa. xxvii. 8. and here either death, accompanied with the wrath of God, which carries the wicked man, sore against his will, out of the world, from his house, his family, his friends, his possessions, and estates, and carries him to hell to be a companion with devils, and share with them in all the miseries of that

[1] כעש quasi Arcturi, Junius & Tremellius; so Aben Ezra.

[m] יאסף nihil secum auferet, V. L.

dreadful state and place. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, *a burning wind*, such as are frequent in the eastern countries, which carry a man off at once, so that he has only time at most to say, I burn, and immediately drops down dead, as Thevenot, and other travellers, relate; which is thus described; "it is a wind called *Samiel*, or poison-wind, "a very hot one, that reigns in summer from Mosul "to Surrat, but only by land, not upon the water; "they who have breathed that wind fall instantly "dead upon the place, though sometimes they have "time to say that they burn within. No sooner does "a man die by this wind but he becomes as black as "a coal; and if one take him by his leg, arm, or any "other place, his flesh comes from the same, and is "plucked off by the hand that would lift him up*:" and again, it is observed, that in Persia, if a man, in June or July, breathes in certain hot south winds that come from the sea, he falls down dead, and at most has no more time than to say he burns*. Wicked men are like chaff and stubble, and they can no more resist death than either of these can resist the east wind; and they are as easily burnt up and consumed with the burning wind of God's wrath as they are by devouring flames; and though wicked men and hypocrites may think all will be well with them if they have but time to say, Lord have mercy on us; they may be carried off with such a burning wind, or scorching disease, as to be able only to say, that they burn, and not in their bodies only, but in their souls also, feeling the wrath of God in their consciences; or this may have respect to the devouring flames of hell they are surrounded with upon dying, or immediately after death, see Isa. xxxiii. 14. *and he departeth;* out of the world, not willingly, but, whether he will or no, he must depart; or rather he will be bid to depart, and he will depart from the bar of God, from his presence, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: *and as a storm hurleth him out of his place;* this is done either at death, when as a storm hurls a tree, or any other thing, out of its place, so is the sinner forced out of his place in a tempestuous manner, through the power and wrath of God, so that his place knows him no more; and he is hurried into hell and everlasting destruction, just as the sinning angels were hurled out of heaven, and cast down into hell, and there will be no place found in heaven for them any more; or rather this will be his case at judgment, which immediately follows, where the wicked shall not stand, or be able to justify themselves, and make their case good; but with the storm of divine wrath and vengeance shall be hurled from thence, and go, being driven, into everlasting punishment.

Ver. 22. *For God shall cast upon him, and not spare, &c.*] Cast his sins upon him, which will lie as an intolerable weight upon his conscience; and his wrath upon him, which being poured out like fire, he will not be able to bear it; and deserved punishment on him, which, like a talent of lead, will bear him down to the lowest hell; and this will be done without shewing any mercy at all; for, though the wicked have much of sparing mercy in this world, they have none in the next; there is sparing mercy now, but none in hell; God, that spared not the angels that sinned, nor the old world, nor Sodom and Gomorrah, will not spare them: he that made them will have no mercy on them; and he that formed them will shew them no favour: *he would fain flee out of his hands;* in whose hands he is, not as all men are, being the works of his hands, and supported by him; much less as his people are, secure there; but in his hands as an awful and terrible Judge, condemning him for his sins, and sentencing him to everlasting punishment; and a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living and almighty God: there is no getting out of them, though *fleeing, he flees*, as the phrase is, with all his might and main, with all the swiftness he can; it is all to no purpose; he is where he was, and must continue in the torment and misery he is in to all eternity; his worm of conscience will never die, nor the fire of divine wrath be ever quenched; though he will desire death ten thousand times over, he shall not find it, it shall flee from him, Rev. ix. 6.

Ver. 23. *Men shall clap their hands at him, &c.*] In a way of joy and triumph, scorn and derision, see Lam. ii. 15. Nah. iii. 19. either at the time of his death, being glad they are rid of him, Psal. lii. 5, 6. or rather hereafter, to all eternity, while the wrath and vengeance of God is pouring on him; and this will be done by all righteous men evermore; not pleasing themselves with the shocking scene, nor indulging any evil passion in them, from which they will be entirely free; but rejoicing in the glory of divine justice, which will be displayed in the everlasting destruction of wicked men, see Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2. and this need not be restrained to good men only, but ascribed to angels also; for it may be rendered impersonally, *hands shall be clapped at him;* or joy be expressed on this occasion by all in heaven, angels and saints, who will all approve and applaud the divine procedure against wicked men as right and just; yea, this may express the glorying of divine justice, and its triumph in the condemnation and destruction of sinners: *and shall hiss him out of his place;* from the bar and tribunal of God, where he stood and was condemned; and, as he goes to everlasting punishment, expressing abhorrence and detestation of him and his crimes, and as pleased with the righteous judgment of God upon him. Now this is the wicked man's portion, and the heritage he shall have of God at and after death, though he has been in flourishing circumstances in life; all which Job observes, to shew that he was no friend nor favourer of wicked men, nor thought well of them and their ways, though he observed the prosperity they are attended with in their present state; and as for himself, he was not, and would not, be such a wicked man, and an hypocrite, on any account whatever, since he was sure he must then be miserable hereafter, to all intents and purposes.

* Thevenot's Travels into the Levant, par. 2. B. 1. ch. 12. p. 54.

* Thevenot's Travels into the Levant, par. 2. B. 3. ch. 5. p. 135.

CHAP. XXVIII.

THE design of this chapter is either to shew the folly of such who are very diligent in their search and pursuit after earthly things, and neglect an inquiry after that which is infinitely more valuable, true wisdom; or rather to observe, that though things the most secret, and which are hidden in the bowels of the earth, may be investigated and discovered by the sagacity and diligence of men, yet wisdom cannot, especially the wisdom of God in his providences, which are past finding out; and particularly in what concerns the prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous; the reason of which men should be content to be ignorant of for the present, and be studious to possess that wisdom which is attainable, and be thankful for it, if they have it; which lies in the fear of the Lord, and a departure from evil, with which this chapter concludes. It begins with setting forth the sagacity of men in searching and finding out useful metals, and other things the earth produces; the difficulty, fatigue, and labour, that attend such a search, and the dangers they are exposed unto in it, ver. 1—11. then it declares the unsearchableness of wisdom, its superior excellency to things the most valuable, and that it is not to be found by sea or land, or among any of the creatures, ver. 12—22. and that God only knows its way and place, who has sought it out, prepared and declared it, ver. 23—27. and that which he has thought fit to make known of it, and is most for his glory and the good of men, is, that it is to fear God, and depart from evil, ver. 28.

Ver. 1. *Surely there is a vein for the silver*, &c.] Silver is mentioned first, not because the most valuable, for gold is preferable to it, as brass is to iron, and yet iron is mentioned first in the next verse; but because silver might be first known, or was first in use, especially in the coinage of money; we read of pieces of silver, or shekels of silver, in the times of Abraham, but not of any golden coin; and among the old Romans silver was coined before gold[p]; it has its name from a word which signifies desire, because it is desirable to men, it answering to various uses and purposes; and sometimes the desires and cravings of men after it are enlarged too far, and become criminal, and so the root of all evil to them: and now there is a *vein* for it in the earth, or a mine in which it may be dug for, and found, in which it runs as veins in a man's body, in certain ramifications, like branches of trees, as they do; and the inhabitants of Hispaniola, and other parts of the West Indies, when found out by Columbus, which abounded with gold mines, declared that they found by experience that the vein of gold is a living tree, (and so the same, perhaps, may be said of silver,) and that it spreads and springs from the root, which they say extends to the centre of the earth by soft pores and passages of the earth, and puts forth branches, even to the uppermost part of the earth, and ceases not till it discovers itself unto the open air; at which time it shews forth certain beautiful colours instead of flowers, round stones of golden earth instead of fruits, and thin plates instead of leaves[q]; so here there is a vein, or a *going out for the silver*[r], by which it makes its way, as observed of the gold, and shews itself by some signs and tokens where it may be found; or rather this egress is made for it, by opening the mine where it is, digging into it, and fetching it out of it, and from whence great quantities are often brought. In Solomon's time it was made as the stones in Jerusalem, 1 Kings x. 27. *and a place for gold* where *they fine it*; there are particular places for this most excellent of all metals, which has its name in Hebrew from its yellow colour; all countries do not produce it; some are famous for it, and some parts of them, as the land of Havilah, where was gold, and that gold was good, Gen. ii. 11, 12. and Ophir; hence we often read of the gold of Ophir, so called from the place where it was found, as in this chapter, ver. 16. and now the Spanish West Indies; but nearer to Job than these gold was found; there were not only mountains that abounded with gold near to Horeb, in the desert of Arabia[s], but it was to be found with the Sabeans[t], the near neighbours of Job; yea, the Ophir before referred to was in Arabia. Some understand this of the place where pure gold is found ready fined, and needs no melting and refining; and of such Pliny[u] speaks, and of large lumps and masses of it; but for the most part it lies in ore, which needs fining; and so here it may intend the place where it is found in the ore, and from whence it is taken and had to the place where it is fined; for melting-places used to be near where the golden ore was found; and so when Hispaniola was first found by Columbus, the gold that was dug out of the mountains of Cibana, and other places, were brought to two shops, which were erected with all things appertaining to melt and fine it, and cast into wedges; and so early as that, in these two shops, were molten yearly three hundred thousand pound weight of gold[w].

Ver. 2. *Iron is taken out of the earth*, &c.] Very easily, and in great plenty, and is more common, being in most countries, is nearer the surface of the earth, and here said to be taken *out of the dust*[x]; which, being melted in a furnace, produces iron, a metal very serviceable for various uses, and without which there is scarce any thing to be done, and therefore was with brass of early invention. Tubal-Cain, a son of Lamech, supposed to be the Vulcan of the Heathens, a worker in iron, is said to be the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron, Gen. iv. 22. *and brass molten out of the stone*: out of a brassy stone,

[p] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 3.
[q] Peter Martyr. Decad. 3. l. 8.
[r] מוצא exitus, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius, Michaelis; egressio, Vatablus.
[s] Hieron. de loc. Heb. fol. 90. A.
[t] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 28.
[u] Ut supra, c. 4.
[w] P. Martyr. Decad. 1. l. 10.
[x] מעפר e pulvere, V. L. Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Coccejus, Michaelis, Schultens.

called *cadmai*, as Pliny says, and also out of another, as he observes[y], called *chalcites*, found in Cyprus, where was the first invention of brass, according to him, and hence perhaps copper had its name; but it is plain from Scripture, the places before referred to, that it was invented elsewhere, and long before Cyprus was known: or a *stone melted becomes brass*, see Deut. viii. 9. and xxxiii. 25. of these four metals was the image in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, which represented the four monarchies of the world, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, Dan. ii. 32, 33. and to them are compared, and by them are represented many things in Scripture.

Ver. 3. *He setteth an end to darkness*, &c.] Some understand this and what follows of God, who, by making the luminaries, has fixed the periods and revolutions of light and darkness, of day and night; or who has determined the times before appointed, for the discoveries of things in nature, as mines of gold, silver, and precious stones, how long they should lie in darkness, and then be brought to light, and who searches out the perfection of all things in nature; and makes them known to men, when he himself and his ways are not to be found out unto perfection by men; but rather this is to be understood of the miner that digs for the above metals, who, when he opens a mine, lets in natural light, or carries artificial light along with him, and so puts an end to the darkness which had reigned there before, even from the creation: *and searcheth out all perfection*; searches thoroughly the mines he opens, and gets all he can out of them, and searches perfectly into the nature of the ore; he finds, and tries, and proves it, what it is, its worth and value: *the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death*; searches and digs through them, to get at what he is seeking; or brings stones, precious stones, to light, which lay in darkness from the beginning, and in such places which were the shadow of death, and looked dismal and horrible, and even threatened with death, to get into and fetch them out: so spiritual miners, that search into the mines of the Scriptures, should not be discouraged with darkness and difficulties that may attend their search; but should continue it, in order to find out truths that have lain in darkness, more precious than gold and silver, and the richest gems; and such who search for them in like manner as miners do shall find them, Prov. ii. 4, 5.

Ver. 4. *The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant*, &c.] Or, *so that there is no inhabitant*[z]; of the mine, as the miner may be said to be, who lives there continually; and, when a flood of water arises, which is an usual thing in mines, he is obliged to flee, and make haste to save his life: even the waters *forgotten of the foot*; such as never any foot of man touched, or was acquainted with, being subterraneous water, and never seen with the eye of man before, and who before knew not there were such floods under ground[a]. A like figurative expression in Psal. cxxxvii. 5. *they are dried up, they are gone away from men*; though such a flood of waters rise apace, and flow in with great force, and threaten the miners' lives, and the ruin of their works; yet they are not discouraged, but by means of engines, pumps, and buckets, and such-like things, draw up the waters, and clear the mines of them; and they are gone from the workmen, who return to their work again, and go on with their mining: and so sometimes spiritual miners are interrupted by a flood of Satan's temptations, the world's persecutions, and various afflictions; but, by the assistance of the spirit and grace of God, whereby a standard is lifted up against them, they get clear of them, and receive no hurt by them, but go on cheerfully in the work of the Lord, Isa. lix. 19. Rev. xii. 15, 16.

Ver. 5. As for *the earth, out of it cometh bread*, &c.] That is, bread-corn, or corn of which bread is made, particularly wheat; which falling, or being cast into the earth, rises up and brings forth fruit, and, when ground into flour, makes fine bread; and to this same original the psalmist ascribes bread, which strengthens man's heart, Psal. civ. 14, 15. The West-Indians formerly made their bread of roots of the earth, particularly one called *jucca*[b]; so Cæsar's soldiers in distress made bread of a root called *chara*, steeped in milk[c]: *and under it is turned up as it were fire*; coal, which is fuel for fire; for, as in the earth are mines for gold and silver, iron and brass, out of which they are dug, or the ore of them, so there is coal under the earth; which, when turned up, or dug, is taken for firing; or brimstone, or sulphureous matter, which is easily inflammable; and sometimes the same earth, the surface of which is covered with corn, out of which bread cometh, underneath are coal, or sulphur, and such-like combustible matter: some think precious stones are meant, which glitter and sparkle like fire; see Ezek. xxviii. 14.

Ver. 6. *The stones of it* are *the place of sapphire*, &c.] In some parts of the earth its stones are a quarry of sapphires, put here for all precious stones: this is a most excellent precious stone, of a sky-colour, with golden specks, and was one of the stones in the breast-plate of the high-priest; and by which are represented the pavement under the feet of the God of Israel, the throne of Christ, his bowels and affections for his people, the comeliness of them, and the glory of his church in the latter day, Exod. xxiv. 10. and xxviii. 18. Ezek. i. 26. Cant. v. 14. Lam. iv. 7. Isa. liv. 11. *and it hath dust of gold*; some parts of the earth abound with the dust of gold; its dust is gold, or it hath gold as plenty as dust; though some think this refers to the sapphire in the preceding clause, which, as Pliny says[d], has *pulvis aureus*, dust of gold, in it, and shines and sparkles with golden points, or specks; and so say other writers[e]; but the word used rather signifies clods, lumps, and masses of gold, which better agree with the earth; and, besides, no very good reason can be given why there should be such a particular description of the sapphire, whereas the earth is the original of that, and of all the other things before spoken of.

Ver. 7. There is *a path which no fowl knoweth*, &c.] A path made by miners to the gold, silver, brass, and

[y] Nat. Hist. l. 34. c. 1, 2.
[z] מעם גר qui accolas non fert, Tigurine version; dimisso accola, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ut non sit accola, Mercerus.
[a] Vid. Senecæ Nat. Quæst. l. 5. c. 15.

[b] P. Martyr, Decad. 1. l. 1.
[c] Cæsar. Comment. Bell. Civil. l. 3. c. 48.
[d] Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 9.
[e] Ruæus de Gemmis, l. 2. c. 2.

iron ores; to the places where gems and precious stones lie; the way to which was never seen, and could never have been discovered by the most sharp-sighted fowl, as *the eagle*[d]; which some think is particularly intended; and the Greek word for an eagle seems to be derived from the word used in the text: this fowl, the king of birds, as it is the swiftest, it is the most quick-sighted of any; but, though it is eager, and looks out sharp after its prey, and which it beholds at a great distance, and in the most secret lurking-places, and flies unto it, and seizes upon it at once, yet it never could look into the bowels of the earth, or discover a track leading thereunto; in this it is outdone by the diligent and laborious miner, who is not at a loss to make his way into the inmost and darkest recesses of the earth: *which the vulture's eye hath not seen*; which is next to the eagle, and some of them are of the species of it, and is a very sharp-sighted creature, even to a proverb, as well as voracious, which makes it diligent to search everywhere for its prey; and yet this creature's sharp and piercing eye never saw the path the miners make by digging into the earth, in order to get metals and minerals from it. Some understand this path of subterraneous paths in nature, made of God, through which rivers of water pass that were never seen by creatures of the quickest sight; it may rather be applied to the paths of God in providence, which are unsearchable and past finding out, by men of the most sagacious and penetrating capacities, though they will hereafter be made manifest; and also to his paths of love, grace, and mercy towards the sons of men, which are the deep things of God, searched into and revealed by his spirit, or otherwise could not be known; as well as to the ways and paths of righteousness and holiness, of faith and truth, of the word and ordinances God has revealed, as his mind and will his people should walk in, which otherwise would not be known, and are not by carnal men; and especially to the principal way and path, Christ Jesus, who is the way to the Father, the way to everlasting happiness, the way of life and salvation, the high way and way of holiness, in which men, though fools, shall not err, and of which some things are said in Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. which greatly agree with what are said of this path, here and in the following verse: this way of peace is not known by carnal men, nor the things of it discerned by natural men, though ever so sagacious; see Rom. iii. 17. Matt. xi. 25. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

Ver. 8. *The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.*] Or *upon it*[e]; such creatures that are exceeding fierce and cruel, hungry and voracious, eager after their prey, range here and there in pursuit of it, search every hole and corner, and rove in dens and caves of the earth; yet these never traversed such ways and paths the miners make to get out the wealth and riches of the earth. Wicked men are sometimes compared to lions, for their cruelty and oppression exercised on the saints, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against them, Psal. lvii. 4. and particularly tyrannical princes and persecutors, as the kings of Assyria and Babylon, and Nero the Roman emperor, Jer. l. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 17. these never trod the way of holiness, nor walked in the path of truth, nor knew the wisdom of God in a mystery, nor the Lord of life and glory, and the way of life and salvation by him; which is a way the unclean walk not in, or persons of such a temper and disposition; see Isa. xxxv. 8, 9. The former clause may be rendered, as it is by some, *the children of pride*[f], and as it is in ch. xli. 34. which is the only place besides this where it is used; and so the Septuagint version, *the children of proud men*: and may be accommodated to self-righteous persons, who are proud boasters of themselves and of their works, and go about to establish their own righteousness, and despise and will not submit unto the righteousness of Christ; these tread not in nor walk upon the good old way, and the only way of life, righteousness, and salvation, by Christ.

Ver. 9. *He putteth forth his hand upon the rock, &c.*] The discourse is carried on concerning the miner, and digger in the earth for metals and precious stones; who meeting with a rock or flint, and a ridge of them, is not discouraged, but goes to work therewith, and with his hammer in his hand lays upon the rock or flint, and beats it to pieces, and with proper instruments cuts through it; and using fire and vinegar, as Pliny[g] observes, makes his way into it, and oftentimes by splitting it discovers gold[h] or silver, or precious stones, in it: *he overturneth the mountains by the roots*; or turns them up from the roots; he roots them up, he undermines them; he turns up the earth at the roots of them, to get what is hid at the bottom, or in the bowels of them. Some understand this, and what is said in the following verses, of God, and of wonderful things done by him; so Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and others; and to whom indeed such things are sometimes ascribed in Scripture: he touches the hills, and they smoke; lays his hand on the rock, and removes it out of its place; it was he that smote and opened the rock at Horeb, and the waters gushed out; yea, turned the rock into standing water, and the flint into a fountain of water: and he, in a figurative sense, has laid his hand on the rock Christ, and smote him with the rod of justice, whereby the blessings of grace come flowing down upon his people; and he it is that puts forth his hand of powerful and efficacious grace upon the rocky hearts of men, and with the hammer of his word breaks them to pieces, and takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh: and he also, in a literal sense, overturns hills and mountains by their roots, through storms, and tempests, and earthquakes; and figuratively, kingdoms and states, that lie in the way of his interest; for what are these mountains before the great Zerubbabel? they soon and easily become a plain; and so breaks through all difficulties, which proverbially may be signified by removing mountains, that seem to obstruct and hinder the conversion and salvation of his people; he makes those mountains a way, and his high ways are exalted; see Cant. ii. 8.

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[d] עיט ad id alludit aquilæ Græcum vocabulum αετος, Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 1. c. 9. col. 39. Broughton renders it *a kite*.

[e] עליו super eam, Schultens.

[f] בני שחץ filii superbiæ, Mercerus, Beza, Bolducius, Tarablas.

[g] Nat. Hist. l. 33. c. 4. — Montem rumpit aceto, Juvenal. Sat. 10. v. 153.

[h] Ibid.

Isa. xlix. 11. Zech. iv. 7. but the former sense is best, and most agreeable to the context.

Ver. 10. *He cutteth out rivers among the rocks, &c.*] By cleaving rocks asunder in order to find out things of value in the cliffs of them; or by cutting his way through them, the miner opens a course for rivers and floods of water, to drain off from his mines, and so can go on with his works more comfortably, and with success; though sometimes they sink through high rocks, till they go so far below their basis, that they can go no further for water, in some places forty or fifty fathom deep[j]: *and his eye seeth every precious thing*; in the cliffs of the rock, or at the bottom of the rivers and floods, as they go off, or in the mines he digs, even gold or silver, or precious stones: hence came the fable of Lynceus, and from him the phrase of Lyncean eyes[k], who was said to see all things under the earth, because he was the first that searched for metals, as brass, silver, &c. and in search of them carried lamps, or links, under the earth[l]. This verse is also by some ascribed to God, who is said to cleave the fountain and the flood, and to dry up mighty rivers; and also to open rivers in high places, in hills, mountains, and rocks, as well as sometimes in the middle of the valleys, Psal. lxxiv. 15. Isa. xli. 19. and who, in a spiritual sense, has cut out and opened the river of his pure love and grace, which flows from the throne of God and the Lamb; and the fulness of grace in Christ, which is as rivers of water in a dry land; and the graces of the Spirit in his people, which flow out of them as rivers of living water; and his word and ordinances in his church, which are the rivers of pleasure he makes his saints to drink of in it: and his eye of omniscience, which sees all things in particular, sees all the precious things in nature; the precious things of heaven, and earth, and sea; the precious things brought forth by the sun and moon; and the precious things of the ancient mountains and everlasting hills, the gold, silver, and precious stones that lie hid in the bowels of them, Deut. xxxiii. 13—16. and who also sees all precious persons, and things, in a spiritual sense; he beholds his precious Son, his precious blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, with delight and pleasure; and his eye of love, grace, and mercy, is upon the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, jewels, and precious stones; and sees all the precious graces of the Spirit in them, with acceptance and good will.

Ver. 11. *He bindeth the floods from overflowing, &c.*] As the miner finds ways and means of cutting through rocks, and draining and carrying off the waters in his mine; so he makes use of other methods of restraining and keeping back the waters from coming into and overflowing his works, and even *from weeping*[m], as in the original text; he binds them up so firmly, and stops every avenue and passage so close, that the waters cannot so much as ooze, or distil and drop as a tear from the eye: *and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light*; the several metals and minerals, gems and precious stones, that lay hid in the bosom of the earth, are fetched out, and brought to light by the diligence and labours of the miner; the same that are called stones of darkness, and of the shadow of death, ver. 3. This verse is likewise by several interpreted of God, and of what is done by him in the things of nature and providence; he it is that at first shut up the sea with doors; made the cloud its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling-bands, in which he wrapped and bound it, as an infant, and still sets bars and doors to it, and says, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, Job xxxviii. 8—11. and, in a spiritual sense, he restrains the floods of affliction from overflowing and overwhelming his people; and, when the temptations of Satan come in like a flood upon them, his spirit sets up a standard against them, which keeps them off from doing them any hurt; and, when the wrath of persecutors rises up against them, and threatens them with destruction, he withholds those proud waters from going over their souls and overwhelming them: and so likewise it is he that bringeth hidden things to light, things in nature men had never seen or known before; things in providence, dark and intricate; things in grace, out of the sight of the most penetrating understanding: he reveals the secrets of his love and grace to them that fear him; the glorious scheme of salvation by Christ, which was hid in himself, in the thoughts, purposes, and counsels of his heart; the mysteries of his Gospel, hid from the wise and prudent; and life and immortality itself, or the way to it, which he has brought to light through the Gospel; yea, he brings to light all the hidden things of a man's heart, and sets them before him, and convinces him of them in a loving way; and if not now, he will hereafter bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, 1 Cor. iv. 5. but, as before observed, it is best to understand the whole paragraph of miners; of their sagacity in opening mines, and searching into the bowels of the earth, where none were ever before them; and of their indefatigableness, industry, and labour therein, and of the success that attends them; Job's design being to shew, that things rich and valuable, and most remote from the sight of men, may, by diligent application, be investigated and obtained; yet such wisdom is not attainable as to understand the reason of the various dealings of God with the sons of men, both good and bad; and therefore, after all he had said on the above subject, still the question is as follows.

Ver. 12. *But where shall wisdom be found? &c.*] Though there is a vein for silver, a track where that lies, and is to be come at, and a place where gold is found, and where it may be fined, and parts of the earth, out of which brass and iron, and bread-corn, may be produced, and even from whence may be fetched brilliant gems and precious stones; which, though attended with many difficulties, in cutting through rocks, draining rivers, and restraining the waters, yet are got over through the art and skill, industry, diligence, and labour of men; so that their eyes behold every precious thing their minds desire, and they bring to light

[j] Philos. Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 459.
[k] Horat. Sermon. l. 1. Satyr. 2. v. 90.
[l] Palæphat. de Incredib. c. 10.

[m] מבכי a fletu, Montanus, Bolducius, Junius & Tremellius, Michaelis, Schultens; so Broughton; a stillatione, Vatablus, Mercerus, Drusius.

what have been laid up in darkness from the creation of the world: but, though these things may be found by search and labour, the question is, what vein is there for wisdom, or where is the place in which that may be found? by which may be meant the wisdom of God, as a perfection in him; which, though displayed in some measure in the works of creation and providence, yet not completely, and especially in his dealings with the children of men; in all which there is undoubtedly the wisdom of God; yet it is such a depth as is unfathomable by mortals: such are God's dealings with men in a way of distinguishing grace and mercy, as that he should take no notice of any of the whole body of apostate angels that sinned against him, but doomed them all to destruction; and yet there should be a philanthropy, a love of men in him, and such as to give his son to die for them, and redeem them from ruin and destruction; also that he should make a difference among men, and ordain some to eternal life, whilst others are fore-ordained to condemnation and death, when all were in the same situation, condition, and circumstances; and such likewise were his dealings with the Israelites, and other nations of the world, part of which Job was not a stranger to; as his choosing them to be his peculiar people before all others, and bestowing peculiar favours upon them, not because they were more in quantity, or better in quality, but because this was his pleasure; when he suffered all other nations to walk in their own ways, for many hundreds of years, and winked at the times of their ignorance; and yet, after a long course of time, rejected the people of the Jews, and wrote a *lo-ammi* on them, and took out from the Gentiles a people for his name; so that they, who were not a people, were called the people of God, and the Jews were broken off, and the Gentiles grafted in; and when the fulness of them is brought in, there will be a turn again, and then all Israel shall be saved: upon all which the apostle breaks out in this exclamation, which may serve as a comment on this text, *oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* Rom. xi. 33. particularly here may be meant the wisdom of God in his dealings with men, good and bad, in afflicting good men, and in suffering the wicked to prosper: this is a fact Job had fully proved, and it cannot be denied; and there is, no doubt, much of the wisdom of God herein; he does all things well and wisely; as he cannot do an unjust thing, so neither an unwise one; though his wisdom is unsearchable, his judgments are a great deep, and not to be fathomed by men, not only not by weak men and wicked men, but even by the wisest and best of men, as Asaph and Jeremiah: and this being the case, Job suggests to his friends, that the dealings of God with him, and the reasons of them, and his wisdom in them, were not to be searched out by them; and that they should forbear imputing his afflictions to hypocrisy, or to secret sins indulged by him; but to leave all, without making rash censures and wrong constructions, until the time should come when the judgments of God should be made manifest; such wisdom and knowledge, as to account for God's different dealings with men, being too wonderful, too high to attain unto, and quite out of their reach. The Jews, as particularly Jarchi, understand by wisdom the law, not to be found in the depth or in the sea; and illustrate the words by Deut. xxx. 11—14. but it is much better to interpret it of the Gospel, to which the apostle applies the above passage, Rom. x. 6, 7. in which there is a glorious display of the wisdom of God, in all the truths and doctrines of it; that it is a mysterious wisdom, hidden wisdom, hid from the wise and prudent, and not to be attained unto by the light of nature and carnal reason; it contains the deep things of God, which the spirit of God alone searches and reveals; but why may not Christ, the Wisdom of God, be thought of? since many things are said in the following verses, as are of Wisdom, as a divine Person, in Prov. viii. 13, 14, 15. in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid, and on whom the spirit of wisdom and counsel rests, as Mediator; and who, as a divine Person, is the only wise God, and our Saviour: and to this question in Job's time, *where shall wisdom be found?* the only answer to be given is, that he, the Logos, or Wisdom, was with God, as one brought up with him, rejoicing always before him; and that he lay in his bosom, Prov. viii. 30. John i. 1, 18. and to the same question in our time it must be returned, that he is in heaven at the right hand of God; but that there is no coming at the true knowledge of him by the light of nature, or by the law of Moses, but by means of the Gospel, and through the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. The first of these senses, respecting the wisdom of God in his different dealings with men, good and bad, is most generally given into by interpreters, and seems to suit well with the preceding dispute between Job and his friends: but if we look forward in the chapter, we shall find this question repeated, and an answer given to it as in the negative, so in the affirmative, that God knows the place of it; that he has searched it out, seen it, and declared it; and it is this, *the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom: and to depart from evil is understanding*, ver. 20, 23, 27, 28. by which it should seem, that this wisdom is supernatural wisdom, or understanding in men; which lies in the fear of God, and the effects of it; in a spiritual knowledge of God and Christ, or of God in Christ; and in that godliness which is profitable in all things; and in that wisdom which comes from above, and is opposed to that which is earthly, sensual, and devilish, and is not to be found in carnal hearts, nor its worth known by carnal men, nor to be obtained by any thing in nature ever so valuable, but is the gift of God, the wisdom he makes men to know, in the hidden part, Psal. li. 6. *and where is the place of understanding*, to attain to the understanding of the mysteries of Providence, or of Christ, or of the Gospel; or to have a spiritual understanding of divine things, and experience of them, which only is the gift of God, 1 John v. 20. for, by wisdom and understanding are meant one and the same, as they often are, whether understood as a thing or person; see Prov. i. 2. and ii. 2. and iii. 13. and viii. 12, 14.

Ver. 13. *Man knoweth not the price thereof, &c.*] The worth and value of it, what price to set upon it, or offer and give for it; nor does he know where to find an equivalent to it, or what is a valuable consideration for it: as for the wisdom of God in his deal-

ings with men, if a man was to give all the substance of his house to know the secret reasons of them, it would utterly be contemned; yea, if he had all the riches in the world in his possession, and would offer them on that consideration, he would not be able to attain the knowledge of them: or *the order thereof* [v]; the order of divine Providence, the wise disposal of things, and the reasons thereof. In the first sense it is applicable to all the things before mentioned; to spiritual wisdom in men, supernatural grace, experimental religion, and real godliness; the worth of which is not known by carnal men, they despise it, and scoff at it; and to the Gospel, which is reckoned foolishness by them, and is of no account; and so is Christ himself rejected and disallowed of men, though chosen of God, and precious both to him and them that believe, who only know the price and value of him: *neither is it found in the land of the living*: meaning not wisdom, though that in every sense is not from below, or earthly, but from above, and heavenly, but the price of it; and the sense is, that there is nothing in the whole globe that is equal to its worth, or can be proposed as a valuable consideration for it.

Ver. 14. *The depth saith, it is not in me*, &c.] That is, the deep places of the earth, that are dug in it, the mines, and the like, could they speak, they would say there are no metal, nor minerals, no rich treasures of gold and silver ore, of pearls and precious stones, in the bowels of it, that are of the value of wisdom, or to be compared to it: *and the sea saith*, it is *not with me*; had that a voice to speak, it would freely declare, that there is nothing in its vast compass, at the bottom of it, or to be got out of it, as corals that grow in it, and pearls fished from thence, after mentioned, that are a sufficient price for wisdom. Some understand these words, the former part of miners and colliers, and such sort of men, that dig and live in the depths of the earth; and the latter part of mariners, that are employed on the sea, who are generally ignorant and carnal men, and void of the knowledge of wisdom in every view of it; but the sense first given is best.

Ver. 15. *It cannot be gotten for gold*, &c.] Having in general said that there is nothing in the whole compass of the terraqueous globe, nothing that is upon the surface of the earth, or in the bowels of it, or in the vast ocean, that is an equivalent price for wisdom, Job descends to particulars, and instances first in gold, that being the most valuable of metals; the word here used for it signifies *shut up* [w], because it is first shut up in the earth, out of which it is dug, and when taken from thence, and refined, and made into coins or vessels, it is shut up among the treasures of men; the words may be more literally rendered, *gold shall not be given instead of it* [x]; as a sufficient price, or valuable consideration for it: *neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof*; in former times this metal used to be delivered, in buying and selling, not by the number and value of pieces, but by weight, in rude masses and lumps, and even when coined into shekels; see Gen. xxiii. 16.

Ver. 16. *It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir*, &c.] Which is often spoken of in Scripture as choice gold, if not the best; see the note on ch. xxii. 24. the sense is, that the gold of Ophir is not of the value of wisdom, or of the same worth with that, and so not sufficient to purchase it: *with the precious onyx and sapphire*; two precious stones that were in the breastplate of the high-priest, of which see the notes on Exod. xxviii. 9, 18, 20. but not so precious, or of such value as wisdom. Pliny [y] speaks of the onyx-stone as in Arabia, near which Job lived, and who doubtless was acquainted with it and its worth, and also with the sapphire he makes mention of before, ver. 6. see the note there. The word for *valued* is by some rendered *strowed* [z], as goods are when they are exposed to sale; but wisdom should not be laid, or put on a level with these, though so excellent and precious.

Ver. 17. *The gold and the crystal cannot equal it*, &c.] Crystal was found in an island of the Red sea, situated before Arabia, called Neron, and in another, which from a gem found in it bears the name of Topazion, and may be thought therefore to be well known by Job; and though it is not now of so much account, it formerly was very valuable. Pliny [a] makes mention of a crystal vessel, sold for 150,000 sesterces, about 1,250 pounds sterling; and of two crystal cups broke by Nero in his fury, on hearing of some losses, to punish the then present age, that no other men might drink out of them: some render it *amber*, which is found in Prussia, and being at a great distance from Job's country, might be the more valuable there; and Pliny [b] speaks of it as had in as great esteem as gems: the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin versions, and others, translate it *glass* [c]; which had its original from Phœnicia, near Judea; so Pliny says [d], from the lake Cendevia, within the roots of Mount Carmel, in Phœnicia, near Judea, springs the river Belus, from whence glass came first; and he speaks of Sidon (a city in Phœnicia) as famous for it; and Tacitus [e] observes, that the river Belus glides in the Jewish sea, and about the mouth of it sand is gathered and mixed with nitre, and boiled into glass; and this being near the country where Job dwelt, it is thought he had knowledge of it; and from this passage some [f] have concluded the great antiquity of glass; and if it is true what Ælianus [g] relates, that when the monument of the ancient Belus (the first king of Babylon) was dug up by Xerxes, the son of Darius, that there was found a glass urn, where lay a body in oil, it must be in use before the times of Job. An Arabic chronologer [h] affirms what he had from men conversant in history, that in Egypt, after the flood, there were men learned in various sciences, and among the rest in alchymy, and had knowledge of burning glasses; though the invention of these, and of a glass globe, is ascribed to Archimedes [i], who lived somewhat

[v] ערכה ordinem ejus, Montanus, Bolducius.
[w] סגור συγκλεισμόν, Sept. conclusum, Tigurine version; clausum, Bolducius.
[x] לא יתן תחתיה non dabitur pro ea, V. L. Montanus, Schultens.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 6.
[z] תסלה verbum significat sternere, Michaelis.
[a] Ut supra, c. 2.
[b] Ib. c. 5.
[c] זכוכית ὕαλος, Sept. vitrum, V. L. Tigurine version, Cocceius.
[d] Ut supra, l. 36. c. 26. Joseph. de Bello Jud. l. 2. c. 10. sect. 2.
[e] Hist. l. 5. c. 7.
[f] Neri Præfat. ad. lib. de re vitriaria.
[g] Var. Hist. l. 12. c. 3.
[h] Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. p. 33.
[i] Vid. Fabricii Bibliothec. Gr. l. 3. c. 22. sect. 11. 12.

later than 200 years before Christ. There was great plenty of glass very early in Ethiopia, after mentioned, in which they enclosed their dead, that they might be seen through it [k]; and if it was in use in Job's time, and especially if it was then a late invention, it might be highly valued, and therefore placed here with things of the greatest worth. In the times of Nero, Pliny says [l], two small glass cups were sold for 6,000 sesterces, or 45 pounds sterling, and according to others near 50 pounds; and the same writer relates, that in the times of Tiberius an art was found out to make glass flexile and malleable; but was ordered to be destroyed, lest the value of gold, silver, and brass, should be lessened by it. The Targum renders the word here used a looking-glass; see the note on Josh. xi. 8. Some think the diamond or adamant is meant, and others that it is a general name for all sorts of precious stones, they being clear, transparent, and lucid, as the word signifies: *and the exchange of it* shall not be *for jewels of fine gold*; set in fine gold, or *vessels* of it, more valuable than gold itself, being made of gold, purified, refined, and wrought by art into curious forms; and yet wisdom is so valuable as not to be exchanged for these. Mr. Broughton takes this fine gold, or gold of Phaz, to be the same with Fess in Barbary, which had its name from a heap of gold there found when its foundation was laid; for *fess* with the Arabs signifies gold [m].

Ver. 18. *No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls*, &c.] Coral is a marine plant, is as hard as a stone, and of such value as to be reckoned among precious stones; see the note on Ezek. xxvii. 16. In Arabia Felix, on the shore of the Red sea, is a place called Coralia [n]; it may be from coral found there. Pearls are from shell-fish taken out of the sea, though these seem rather intended in the next clause: the words *ramoth* and *gabish* are left untranslated by some, and by others are taken for precious stones, though unknown, so called because they are found in high places, which both words signify. The Targum renders the first by *sandalchin*, and seems to be the same with the sardonyx, a precious stone found in Arabia, and which found there is by Pliny [o] said to excel. Junius and Tremellius render it by *sandastros*; which, as Pliny says [p], some call Garamantis, being bred in a place of that name in India; and he also observes, that it is found in Arabia towards the south, and has shining golden drops in the body of it; it is a sort of a carbuncle. *Gabish* seems to have some affinity with *chabazios*, mentioned by Orpheus [q] as a precious stone; but whatever precious stones are meant, as it is hard to determine what, they are not to be spoken of with wisdom, or to be compared to it: *for the price of wisdom is above rubies*; or rather pearls, as Bochart [r] seems to have abundantly proved, who renders the words, "the "extraction of wisdom is greater than the extraction "of pearls;" and so the Targum; there being, as he thinks, an allusion to the extraction of pearls out of the sea by divers into it [s]; who get them through much art, difficulty, and danger; and he observes, that there is a double extraction, or drawing them out, first of the shell-fish out of the sea, and then of the pearls out of the shells; but the drawing out of wisdom, or the attainment of that, is more difficult, and superior to it, as well as attended with greater advantage; see Prov. iii. 15. and the note on Lam. iv. 7. and though of pearls some are very large, Oviedo [t] speaks of one that weighed 31 carats, and another 26; some as big as hazel-nuts, and even as a middling walnut, and of very great price, as that bought by Pope Paul at 44,000 ducats [u]; that by Philip the Second, of the size of a pigeon's egg, valued at 144,000 ducats; that drank by Cleopatra at a draught, reckoned worth 80,000 pounds sterling; and that of the emperor of Persia, bought at 110,400 pounds [w]; yet the price of wisdom is above them.

Ver. 19. *The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it*, &c.] Not Ethiopia Abyssina, or that which lies beyond Egypt in Africa; for, as Ludolphus [x] says, there are no gems found there, or very rarely; but Cush, as the word is, or Arabia Chusæa, the same with the country of Midian, and the parts adjacent; see Hab. iii. 7. hence Zipporah, the wife of Moses, who was of that country, is called an Ethiopian woman, Numb. xii. 1. and this was near Job's country, who knew the produce of it; and here the topaz is found, as many writers observe. Diodorus Siculus says [y], in Ophiodes, an island in the Arabian gulf, belonging to the Troglodytes, the topaz is found, which is a very clear stone, pleasant to the sight, like to glass, and affording a wonderful golden colour; and with him Strabo [z] agrees, who relates there is an island called Ophiodes, from its being freed from serpents by the king's orders, which killed men that came thither for topazes; which, he says, is a clear stone of a golden colour, and so refulgent, that it is not easy to see it in the day-time, being so surrounded with light; but at night it is seen by those that gather it, who set a vessel for a sign, and then dig for it in the day-time; and, he adds, a multitude of men are hired by the kings of Egypt, to gather and keep these stones, and men from stealing them; and, according to Archelaus [a], the topaz is found in Chitis, an island in Arabia, where the Troglodytes digging for herbs and roots find it; and, as Juba relates [b], there is an island called Topazion, in the Red sea, 300 furlongs from the continent, which is cloudy, and is therefore often sought for by navigators; whence he says it had its name Topazion, which in the language of the Troglodytes signifies to seek, and the topaz itself in their language so signifies; in the Samaritan version of Exod. xxxix. 10. it is called Dachetah, from the Arabic word [c] *Dachatz*, the language of the Troglo-

[k] Diodor. Sic. l. 2. p. 102. Herodot. Thalia, sive, l. 3. c. 24.
[l] Ut supra.
[m] Leo African. Descript. Africæ, l. 3. p. 272.
[n] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 28.
[o] Ib. l. 37. c. 6.
[p] Ib. c. 7.
[q] Περὶ λίθων, p. 240.
[r] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 5. c. 6. col. 681, &c.
[s] Of fishing for pearls in this way, see the Account of it in Vartoman. Navigat. l. 3. c. 2. in P. Martyr. Decad. 3. l. 2. and Oviedo de Occident. Ind. c. 4. and with nets, Ælian. de Animal. l. 15. c. 8. Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 9. c. 35.
[t] Ut supra.
[u] P. Martyr, Decad. 3. l. 10.
[w] See Chambers's Dictionary on the word *Pearl*.
[x] Hist. Ethiop. l. 1. c. 7.
[y] Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 172.
[z] Geograph. l. 16. p. 529.
[a] Apud Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 8.
[b] Apud ib.
[c] Vid. Castel. Lex. Heptaglott. col. 696, 693.

dytes, which signifies to seek and search by removing the earth with the foot. This island seems to be the same with Topazos, which Pliny[d] says is an island of the Arabians, and gave name to a gem, meaning the topaz; but the truth rather is, that the gem gave name to the island: upon the whole, it is no wonder, as Braunius[e] observes, that this gem should be called by Job the Arabian topaz. The Targum here calls it a green pearl; and some have thought the emerald is meant, which is of that colour; and the emeralds of Ethiopia are praised by some, according to Juba[f]; and in Egypt were emerald-mines the Ethiopians laid a claim to[g]; and there were emeralds also in Arabia, as the above Juba relates: however, be this what it may, as it is most likely to be the topaz, it is not equal in value to wisdom, no, not the largest topaz ever known; not even that of the great Mogul, which weighs more than 157 carats, valued at 271,500 French pounds[h]; and according to Tavernier[i] it weighs almost 158 carats, and was bought at Goa for almost 272,000 florins: *neither shall it be valued with pure gold*; that is most refined and freed from dross; they are not to be laid together as of equal value; the same word is used here as in ver. 16. see the note there.

Ver. 20. *Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?*] The same questions as in ver. 12. repeated to set forth the superior excellency of wisdom, and to carry on the discourse, and lead on to other things concerning it.

Ver. 21. *Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living*, &c.] Meaning not the beasts of the field, as some interpret it; this makes the sentiment jejune and trifling; but rational creatures, men, so the Septuagint, Eve is said to be the mother of, Gen. iii. 20. wisdom, as a perfection in God, displayed in his works of creation and providence, is but imperfectly known by men; and the secret reasons of his providential dealings with men, good and bad, are hid from all at present: and as for spiritual wisdom or godliness, and the Gospel of Christ, and Christ himself, they are hid from the eyes of all natural and carnal men, though ever so wise and prudent in other things: *and kept close from the fowls of the air, or heaven*[k]; either the devils so called, because they dwell in the air, and are the posse or power of the air, Eph. ii. 3. and because of their ravenous and cruel disposition, and swiftness to do mischief; see Luke viii. 5, 12. or rather the holy angels, as Jarchi, whose habitation is in heaven, and who are swift to do the will of God, and are represented as having wings like fowls: though these know much, yet the wisdom of God in his providence, in the doctrines of the Gospel, and Christ himself, the Wisdom of God, are in a good measure hid from them; at least their knowledge is imperfect, and they are desirous of prying more into these things: unless men of the most piercing and penetrating geniuses, that soar aloft in the things of nature, and make the greatest discoveries therein, and yet know nothing of divine and spiritual things, of the arcanas of Providence or of grace, should be meant.

Ver. 22. *Destruction and death say*, &c.] Meaning the dead that are in the pit of destruction, the grave; not their dead bodies there, devoid of life and sense, and know not any thing, but their souls; either the damned in hell, or the saints in heaven: the Targum is, the house of destruction, and the angel of death; or rather it regards such as are dead, who whilst alive had only a report of this wisdom; wherefore if their records and writings, or traditions handed down from them, are inquired into, the result of the information they will give concerning it will amount to no more than this: *we have heard the fame thereof with our ears*; it has been reported to us there is such wisdom, but what it is we know not; and this is all that we can say about it.

Ver. 23. *God understandeth the way thereof*, &c.] And he only; not the way that men can come at the knowledge of wisdom, which at present appears to be past finding out; but rather the way which wisdom itself takes, and is in the deep, and its footsteps not known by any other, and the grounds and reasons of its taking such a course it does; which are only understood by the Lord: it may be applied to spiritual wisdom in men, and the way to come at it; which God only knows and instructs in, and is his special and peculiar gift; and to Christ, the wisdom of God, and the way which he has taken in the council and covenant of grace and peace, for the salvation of his people; and which he took in time, in the assumption of human nature, and by sufferings and death to obtain it for them: *and he knoweth the place thereof*; the seat of wisdom within himself, the source of all his dealings with men, his sovereign will and pleasure in his own heart; the place of spiritual wisdom and knowledge, the heart of a regenerate man, where his Gospel is, and has come with power, and took place and works effectually; and where Christ, the Logos, the Wisdom of God is, even with himself, and in his bosom, as in the times of Job, and now at his right hand, in human nature.

Ver. 24. *For he looketh to the ends of the earth*, &c.] In this and some following verses, reasons and proofs are given, which abundantly shew that God must know the way and place of wisdom; since all the parts and places of the earth, even to the ends of it, are seen by him, and all creatures and things in it; nor is there any thing in heaven, earth, and hell, that is hid from him; and therefore if there is a way to it, or a place for it, he must needs know it; where its direction is, or where it steers its course, and takes up its abode: *and seeth under the whole heaven*; the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, the inhabitants of the world, and all that is done in it; every thing falls under the eye of his omniscience, and under the notice of his providence, which extends to all creatures and things throughout the whole earth, and under the compass of the heavens; and since all places and persons are obvious to his view, and all subject to his all-wise and disposing providence, and are ordered, directed, and governed, according to his sovereign will

[d] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 29.
[e] De Vest. Sacerdot. Heb. p. 649.
[f] Apud Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 5.
[g] Heliodor. Ethiop. l. 8. 1. & 9. 6.
[h] Schenchzer. Physic. Sacr. p. 747.
[i] Apud Braunium de Vest. Sacerdot. Heb. p. 649, 650.
[k] השמים cœli, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

and pleasure; the path of wisdom, and the place of understanding, he must be acquainted with; and particularly his all-seeing eye, and all-powerful providence, are concerned in the following things, and in which there are wonderful proofs of his knowledge and wisdom.

Ver. 25. *To make the weight for the wind,* &c.] He indeed makes the wind itself, holds it in his fists, and brings it forth out of his treasures, and lets it go, or restrains it, at his pleasure; he gives it an inclination to this or that or the other point of the heavens, and a force to blow with, greater or lesser, as he pleases, either for the good and benefit of men, or for the punishment of them; he raises the stormy wind, which fulfils his word and his will; and he makes it subside and become a calm when he thinks fit; he can make it heavier or lighter, add to or take from its weight, so that it becomes more or less pressing on bodies it meets with; he can make a rough wind, and stay that in the day of his east wind; he can make the rain in some sense a weight to it; he can wet its wings with it, and bear it down, and cause it to rest and be still; and he that knows from whence it comes, and whither it goes, though we do not, being wholly under his direction, must know the way and place of wisdom: *and he weigheth the waters by measure;* or, *in a measure*[k]; in the hollow of his hand, where he poises them; see Isa. xl. 12. some, because there is a seeming impropriety in weighing by, or with a measure, render it *out of a measure*[l]. Mr. Broughton translates the words, *and held the waters in a measure:* in his hand, as before, or in the sea; weight and measure being both applied to the waters, may denote the perfect and exact knowledge God has of them, and of his great and diligent concern in Providence about them, he ordering and disposing of them according to his will; and which is greatly the sense of the word used for weighing; and so the Targum paraphrases it, " the waters he prepares (orders or disposes of) by measure." These waters, as they seem to be distinguished from rain in the next verse, may design the waters of the sea and rivers; with these the earth at first was covered, which being ordered off of it, and a place provided for them, they were gathered into it, and measured and bounded in it by shores and sand, that they might not overflow the earth; which is a wonderful instance of the providence of God, in weighing and measuring the waters; of which also there was a singular instance at the general deluge, when the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep broke up, which overflowed the whole earth, and the highest mountains in it; and after a time went off at the command of God, and the earth was dry as before: the tides, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, and the flux and reflux of rivers, from and to the same place, are surprising things, and wholly owing to the power and providence of God; the causes and reasons of which are unknown to us, but are well known to him, who weighs and measures the waters, which flow in a regular course; and who therefore must know the way and place of wisdom and understanding.

Ver. 26. *When he made a decree for the rain,* &c.] Decreed within himself that he would give it; for rain is his gift alone, and which none of the vanities of the Gentiles can give, and a wonderful blessing to the earth it is; and which God bestows on all sorts of men, both good and bad, and causes it to fall sometimes on one place and sometimes on another, sometimes in greater, sometimes in lesser showers; and according to his sovereign pleasure he gives or withholds it; the effects of which are quickly seen. Mr. Broughton renders the clause, *he made a bound for the rain, and a way for the lightning of thunder,* or *the lightning and the thunder,* as Ben Gersom, who thinks the copulative ו, *and,* is wanting. Thunder is from God, it is his voice, and the word here used is in the plural number, *voices*[m], signifying various claps of thunder; and lightning generally accompanies it, which, though first perceived, they are both at once, the eye doing its office quicker than the ear; and a cloud also is usual; and so some render the word for lightning, as in Zech. x. 1. it may signify the way of the lightning out of the thunder-cloud, and attending claps of thunder; the thunder breaks the cloud, and makes a path for the lightning: the Targum is, " a " path for the lightnings, which run with the voices " or thunders;" but, though the course or path the lightning steers is very quick and very extensive from east to west, and cannot be traced by us, God that made it knows it, and he knows the path and place of wisdom. Sephorno interprets this of the thunder and lightnings at the giving of the law, which he understands by wisdom, as do other Jewish writers: Pliny[n] speaks of thunder and lightning as chance matters; but Seneca[o] more truly ascribes them to divine power and Providence, as here.

Ver. 27. *Then did he see it, and declare it,* &c.] His own wisdom, when he made and executed his decrees concerning rain, lightning, and thunder; he saw it in himself, and as it appeared in the works of his hands, which he looked on and approved of, and saw that all was very good; and he declared it to others, by his works of nature and providence; for they declare the glory of God, and particularly the glory of his wisdom: *he prepared it, yea, and searched it out;* he prepared it in his counsels, according to which he wrought all things in the creation, and still does in Providence; and his searching out denotes his perfect knowledge of it, and the way and course of it, or he takes with it, though it is unsearchable, and past finding out by us. Mr. Broughton understands this of a person, as do some others, even Christ, the Wisdom of God; rendering the words, *then he saw her, and shewed her,* &c. and so the passages in Prov. viii. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. may be a comment on these words and the foregoing; for when the above decrees were formed in the divine mind, then he *saw* his Wisdom, his Logos, his eternal Son; for he was by him, and with him, and in him, lying in his bosom; he looked at him in creation, and made man after his image, the idea he had formed of his human nature, and made all things for his sake; and he viewed him

[k] במדה in mensura, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Bolducius, Beza.
[l] Ex mensura, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus.
[m] קולות vocum, Piscator, Mercerus, Drusius.

[n] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 43.
[o] Nat. Quæst. l. 2. c. 12. 31.

with the utmost delight and pleasure, as being the express image of his person: he *declared* him to be his only-begotten Son, saying, *this day I have begotten thee*, Psal. ii. 7. he made him known to the angels, as the Targum here expresses it, and what he designed to do by him, and with him: which occasioned the revolt of many of them from him; and he declared him to Adam as soon as there was an opportunity and occasion for it; he *prepared* him in his eternal purposes to be the Redeemer and Saviour of his people, to be the Head of the church, and the Judge of quick and dead; he *searched* him out in his infinite wisdom, and found him, singled him out, laid help on him, with his holy oil anointed him, and appointed him to be the ransomer of his chosen ones, Job xxxiii. 24. Psal. lxxxix. 19, 20.

Ver. 28. *And unto man he said*, &c.] What follows; unto Adam, so some render it, as Mr. Broughton; taking what is after delivered to be said to the first man; either by suggesting it to his mind and conscience, and inscribing it on his heart, where the law of God was written, and by which he was directed to fear God and avoid evil; or by the express command he gave him not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; thereby instructing him to fear him, and abstain from evil; which, had he done, would have been his highest wisdom, and a proof of it, and of his understanding; but it seems best to understand it in general of the sons of men, as the Targum and others: this is the substance of what God says in his works, which are done that men might fear him, and stand in awe of him, Psal. xxxiii. 6, 7, 8. Eccl. iii. 14. and in his word, and by his prophets, and their ministry in all ages; whereby it appears, that this is the whole of men, to fear God and keep his commandments, Eccl. xii. 14. Some render the words, *but unto men he said*[p]; though he knows his own wisdom, and the way and place of it, the course it steers in Providence, and has seen, observed, and shewn it; has prepared, disposed, ordered, and searched it out, and perfectly knows it, and the causes and reasons of it; yet he has not thought fit to make these known clearly to men; who therefore must be content they should be secrets to them, and attend to the wisdom which is revealed, and is of the greatest importance and consequence to them; namely, what follows, *behold, the fear of the Lord*, that is *wisdom;* by which is meant, not a fear of his wrath, and of eternal damnation, but an affection for God with reverence of him; such as is peculiar to children, a godly filial fear; and which is consistent with strong faith, great joy, and true courage; is opposite to pride and self-confidence, and takes in the whole worship of God, both external and internal: and it is called the fear of the Lord, because he is the object and author of it; it is not from nature, or in men naturally, but comes from the grace of God, and is a gift of it; it is wrought in conversion, and is increased by the discoveries of the love and goodness of God; and is that wisdom which God makes his people know, in the hidden part; no man is wise till he fears the Lord; and when that grace is put into him, he begins to be wise, for this is the beginning of wisdom, Prov. i. 7. and ix. 10. and is a principal part of it, and very profitable to men, both for this life, and for that to come; and therefore it is their highest wisdom to be concerned for it: the heart of God is towards them that fear him; his eye is upon them; his hand communicates to them; his secret is with them; he sets a guard of angels about them; causes the sun of righteousness to arise on them, and he has laid up much for them, for time and eternity: *and to depart from evil is understanding;* this is the fruit and effect of the fear of the Lord, through which men have an hatred of sin, and an aversion to it, and are careful not to commit it; through it they depart from evil, and abstain from all appearance of it; see Prov. viii. 13. and xvi. 6. and it puts them upon a regard to God and his commandments, and to all that is good, and which is an evidence and proof of a good understanding, Psal. cxi. 10. Now Job suggests by this, that his friends should be solicitous about, and satisfied with, such wisdom and understanding as this, and not pry into the secrets of Providence, and the wisdom of that, which are not to be found out; and so cease to charge him with being an hypocrite, and a wicked man, because of the dealings of God with him, which were not to be accounted for: and by this Job appears to be a good man, and had an experience of what he here expresses; that he was one that feared God and eschewed evil, according to the testimony given of him, ch. i. 1, 8. and this he gave proof of in his former life and conversation; of which an account is given in the following chapter.

CHAP. XXIX.

In this chapter Job gives an account of his former life, and wishes it was with him now as then; and which he describes with respect to his own person, and the favours he personally enjoyed, whether temporal or spiritual, ver. 1—5. with respect to his family and domestic affairs, ver. 5, 6. with regard to the esteem he had from men of every age and station, ver. 7—11. the reasons of which were the mercy and compassion he shewed to the poor, the fatherless, and the widow, and the justice he administered in the execution of his office as a magistrate, ver. 12—17. in which honour and prosperity he expected to have lived and died, ver. 18, 19, 20. and which he further describes by the respect he had among men, and the power and authority he exercised over them, ver. 21—25.

Ver. 1. *Moreover*, Job *continued his parable*, &c.] Or *added to take* it *up*[q], that is, he took it up again, and went on with his discourse; he made a pause for

[p] ויאמר ειπε δε, Sept. dixit autem, Tigurine version, Beza; dixit vero, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[q] ויוסף שאת addidit assumere, Montanus, Bolducius, Mercerus; addidit tollere, Drusius.

awhile, waiting to observe whether any of his three friends would return an answer to what he had said; but perceiving they were not inclined to make any reply, he began again, and gave an account of his former life, in order to shew that he was far from being the wicked man, or being so accounted by others, as his friends had represented him: and *said*; as follows.

Ver. 2. *Oh that I were as in months past, &c.*] Which is either an earnest wish for restoration to his former state of outward prosperity; which he might desire, not through impatience and discontent under his present circumstances, or from a carnal and worldly spirit; but either that the present reproach he lay under from his friends might be taken off, he observing that they accounted him a wicked man and an hypocrite, because of his afflictions; wherefore he judged, if these were removed, and he was in as prosperous a condition and in as good circumstances as before, they would entertain a different opinion of him; or, that his words might be better attended to, as they were by men, both young and old, and even princes and nobles before, it being a common case, that what a poor and distressed man says is not regarded; or that he might be in a capacity of doing good to the poor and fatherless, the widow and the oppressed, as he had formerly; or, this wish is only made to introduce the account of his former life, by which it would appear, that he was not the man his friends had represented him to be, from the favour he was in with God, and from the respect shewn him by men, and the many good things done by him: but since, by various expressions, which before had dropped from his lips, it appears, that he had no hope nor expectation of ever being restored to his former outward happiness; this may be considered as a wish for the return of spiritual prosperity, wishing he was in as good frames of soul, and as much in the exercise of grace, and was as holy, as humble, as spiritual, and heavenly-minded, as he was when he had so much of the world about him; and that he had but the like communion with God, and his gracious presence with him, as he had then. The state of the Lord's people, Godward, is always the same; his election of them stands sure; the covenant of grace with them is unalterable; their interest in a living Redeemer always continues; grace in them is a principle, permanent and perpetual; but there may be, and often is, an alteration in their frames, and in the exercise of their graces, and in the open regard of God unto them; their graces may be low in exercise; there may be a decay of the life and power of godliness; their frames may change, and the presence of God may be withdrawn from them, and they may have no view of interest in salvation, at least not have the joys of it; wherefore, when sensible of all this, may be desirous it might be with them as it was before; that God would turn them again, and cause his face to shine upon them, that they might be comfortable; the particulars of Job's former case follow, which he desires a renewal of: *as in the days when God preserved me*; either in a temporal sense; God having set an hedge of special providence about him, whereby he and his, his family and substance, were remarkably preserved; but now this was plucked up, and all were exposed to ravage and ruin; or in a spiritual sense, as he was both secretly and openly preserved, and as all the Lord's people are, in Christ, and in his hands, and by his power, spirit, and grace: the Lord preserves their souls from the evil of their own hearts, sin that dwells in them, that it shall not have the dominion over them; from the evil that is in the world, that they shall not be overcome by it, and carried away with it; and from the temptations of Satan, so as not to be devoured and destroyed by him, and from a final and total falling away; he preserves them in his own ways, safe to his kingdom and glory; but sometimes all this does not appear so evident unto them, as it might not to Job at this time; who observed the workings of his corruption, and the breaking out of them, in passionate words, wishes, and curses, and the temptations of Satan, who was busy with him to go further lengths, even to blaspheme and curse God; so that he might fear that God his defence was departed from him, the return of which he was desirous of; see Isa. xlix. 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 3. *When his candle shined upon my head, &c.*] Which may be understood either of outward prosperity, sometimes signified by a candle, ch. xviii. 5, 6. and xxi. 17. and may be called the candle of the Lord, because it is from him, it is of his lighting and setting up; and its shining on his head may denote the large measure and degree of it possessed by him, in allusion to torches carried on high to light with; or lamps, or candles, set up in the higher part of the house to give the more light; or to the sun in the firmament, and especially when in its meridian, and shines clearest right over our heads, and casts no shadow: or else it may be understood of light in a figurative sense, not of the light of nature in men, which, though called the candle of the Lord, Prov. xx. 27. yet, in man's fallen state, shines not clearly; and with respect to this there was no difference in Job than heretofore; but rather it is the light of grace, the true light, which had shone upon him and in him, but now not so clearly as formerly, and as he could wish for; or else the word of God, which is a light unto the feet, and a lamp to the path; or it may be, best of all, the favour of God, the light of his countenance he had before enjoyed, having had a comfortable display of his love, a clear view of interest in it, and had the blessings of it bestowed upon him, and enjoyed by him; and nothing was more desirable by him, as is by every good man, than the return of the light of God's countenance; and that he might be remembered with his special favour, as his people are, and as he had been in times past: and when *by his light I walked through darkness*; that is, either by the light of outward prosperity he had escaped those calamities, distresses, and dangers, and got over those difficulties which attended others, though now surrounded with them; or by the light of divine grace, or of the word of God, and especially by and in the light of God's countenance, he walked cheerfully and comfortably, without any fear of the darkness of affliction and calamities, or of the dark valley of the shadow of death, or of the prince of darkness, or of the darkness of hell and damnation; but now clouds of darkness being about him, and he without the light of God's countenance, could not see

the way in which he walked, and therefore wished that that again might be lifted up upon him.

Ver. 4. *As I was in the days of my youth, &c.*] Either taken literally, he being one like Obadiah, that feared God from his youth upward; or figuratively, for his former state of prosperity, when he was like a tree in autumn laden with ripe and rich fruit, and in great abundance: and so some render the words *in the days of my autumn*, or *autumnity*[r]; though it may respect the time of his first conversion, the infancy and youth of his spiritual state, who, when first regenerated, was as a new-born babe, and then became a young man, and now a father in Christ, his living Redeemer: and Job wishes it was with him as in his youth, or in the early days of his conversion, at which season, generally speaking, there are great zeal and fervency of spirit, a flow of love and affection to God and the best things; large discoveries of his love, much sensible communion with him, and enjoyment of his presence; wherefore such returning seasons are desirable; see Jer. ii. 2, 3. *when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle*; either the secret power and providence of God, which was upon his house and family, and all that belonged to him; or the secret of his love, which was manifested to him, and is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear the Lord, as Job did; who had secret communion with God, his fellowship was with him; he dwelt in the secret place of the Almighty, and was taken into his secret chambers, where he had the greatest familiarity with him, see Psal. xxv. 14. Some observe the word for *secret* is used for an *assembly*[s], and take the sense to be, that the assembly of the saints and people of God was in his tabernacle or house; there they met together for religious worship, and where Job had often a comfortable opportunity, and wishes for the same again, see Psal. xlii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 5. *When the Almighty was yet with me, &c.*] Not merely by his powerful and providential presence, as he is with all men; but in a special manner by his gracious presence, which is a wonderful and distinguishing favour; but sometimes the people of God are without it, at least they think so, and which was now Job's case, see ch. xxiii. 2, 3, 8, 9. and therefore he desires he would return to him, and shew him his face and favour: *when my children were about me*; as olive-plants about his table, in their youth; when he looked at them with great delight and pleasure, as his growing hopes; and, when grown up, and were not far from him, but were round about him, and lay near his heart, and whose welfare, temporal and spiritual, he was solicitous for; but now they were all taken away from him, and were no more: the word for *children* signifies also *servants*[t], and may take in them, of whom he had many to do his work and business; to attend upon him, to wait his orders, and execute them, and guard his person; but now many of them were slain by the Sabeans and Chaldeans, and by fire from heaven; and those he had were very disrespectful to him, see ch. xix. 15, 16.

Ver. 6. *When I washed my steps with butter, &c.*] Not the steps of his house or palace; for to have done this, or his servants by his orders, as it would have been a very great impropriety, so a piece of great prodigality, which Job could never have been guilty of; but either his footsteps, the prints of his feet; and the sense be, that his cattle produced such a vast quantity of milk, that when his servants brought it from the fields to the dairy, their milk-pails ran over in such abundance, that Job could not step out of his house, and take a walk in his fields, but he stepped into puddles of milk, of which butter was made: this is an exaggerated phrase, like that by which the land of Canaan is described as *flowing with milk and honey*: or rather this is to be understood of the washing of his feet, which are the instruments of stepping or walking. It was usual in those times, in the eastern countries, to wash their feet upon travelling, or at festivals; but then this was commonly done with water, not with butter, see Gen. xviii. 4. and xix. 2. Luke vii. 44. and the meaning can only be, that Job had such abundance of milk, or butter made of it, that he could, if he would, have washed his feet in it; indeed, they had used to anoint the feet with ointment; but whether cream or butter was any ingredient in it, and so the part is put for the whole, is not certain, see Luke vii. 38. Job xii. 3. besides, that would have been more properly expressed by anointing than washing; it seems to be an hyperbole, an expression like that of Zophar, in ch. xx. 17. signifying the vast abundance of the increase and produce of Job's kine; who is said to wash his feet in milk or butter, as Asher is said to dip his feet in oil, because of the great plenty of it, Deut. xxxiii. 24. the spiritual meditation upon the words may be this; the feet of the best of saints need washing, there being many failings and infirmities in their walk and conversation; in which they gather much pollution and filth daily; the proper wash for this is the blood of Christ, of which the laver in the tabernacle and temple was a type, at which the priests washed their hands and feet; but the word of God, called the sincere milk of the word, is the instrument or means of washing, or of directing souls to the fountain opened to wash in; so that with respect to that, the feet of saints, as the eyes of Christ, may be said to be washed with milk: *and the rock poured me out rivers of oil*; another hyperbolical expression, like that in Deut. xxxii. 13. where honey is said to be sucked out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; as honey may be got out of a rock, because bees may make their nests and hives there, where it is laid up by them; so oil, in like manner, may be had from the flinty rock, olive-trees growing on hills, mountains, and rocks, which yield oil in great abundance; near Jerusalem was a mount called Olivet, from thence: the land of Edom, or Idumea, where Job lived, abounded with cragged mountains and rocks; and there might be in Job's estate such on which olive-trees grew in great plenty, as to produce vast quantities of oil: it is a very fanciful thought of Bolducius, that this rock was no

[r] בימי חרפי in autumno dierum meorum, Hottinger. Thesaur. Philolog. p. 507. in diebus autumnitatis meæ, Schultens; so the word signifies in Arabic, vid. Golium, col. 1415. Lud. Capell. in loc.

[s] בסוד in societate Dei, Pagninus, Beza; societas Dei, i. e. congregatio, Bolducius; so Jarchi.

[t] נערי juvenes mei, Tigurine version; vel famuli vel filii, Mercerus, Drusius; so Jarchi.

other than a stone vessel, in which was oil, somewhat like the alabaster box in Matt. xxvi. 7. and which was plentifully poured on Job, when he was anointed high-priest: and another learned man[s], though he rejects the notion of its being a vessel for sacred use, yet is willing to allow it was an oil-vessel for common use: as to the spiritual sense, it may be observed, that a rock in Scripture often signifies a divine Person; it is an emblem of Christ, as oil also is of the spirit of God and his grace; and which flows from Christ, who is full thereof, and that in such great abundance, as to be expressed by rivers; see 1 Cor. x. 4. Matt. xxv. 3, 4. John i. 14, 16. and vii. 38.

Ver. 7. *When I went out to the gate through the city*, &c.] Job having described his former state of happiness by the personal favours he enjoyed, and by the prosperity of his family, and his abundance of plenty at home, proceeds to give an account of the honour and respect he had from men of every age and rank abroad: though he had an affluence of the things of this world, he did not indulge himself at home in ease and sloth; but went abroad to take care of the public welfare, maintain public peace, and administer public justice among his neighbours; performing the office of a civil magistrate, which is often expressed in Scripture by going in and out before the people: Job went out from his own house to the gate of the city, where a court of judicature was kept, as it was usual in those times and countries to hold them in the gates of the city; see Zech. viii. 16. and to which he passed through the city, very probably, in great pomp and splendour, suitable to his office and character, which drew the eyes and attention of the people to him; by which it should seem that his house was on one side of the city, and the gate where justice was administered was on the other; though it may be rendered, *over the city*[t], and the sense be, that he passed along as he that was over the city, the chief man in it, and president of the court of justice, see 2 Kings x. 5. when *I prepared my seat in the street*; where he sat, not as a teacher, though he was an instructor, not only of his family, but of his neighbours, as Eliphaz himself testifies, ch. iv. 3, 4. and it was usual for such to have seats to sit upon, as those had who succeeded Moses, and are said to sit in his chair; and it was usual to call to men and instruct them in open public places; hence Wisdom is said to utter her voice in the streets, in the opening of the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors, Prov. i. 20, 21. and viii. 3. but Job here speaks of himself as a civil magistrate, as a judge upon the bench, who had a seat or throne erected for him to sit upon, whilst he was hearing and trying causes; and this was set up in the street under the open air, before the gate of the city, where the whole city might be convened together, and hear and see justice done to their neighbours; in such a street, before the gate of the city, Ezra read the law to Israel; and in such an one Hezekiah got the people of Israel together, and spoke comfortably to them when invaded by Sennacherib; see Neh. viii. 2, 3, 2 Chron. xxxii. 6. and the Arabs, to this day, hold their courts of justice in an open place under the heavens, as in a field, or in a market-place[u]; and it is right that courts of justice should be open and accessible to all.

Ver. 8. *The young men saw me, and hid themselves*, &c.] Through a veneration of him; which was much, since young men, through a vain conceit and opinion of themselves, are apt to treat their superiors in age with slight, neglect, and contempt; or through fear, lest he should spy them, and call them to him, and examine them closely concerning their conduct and behaviour, and reprove them for their youthful follies he might have knowledge of: *and the aged arose and stood up*; as he passed by them, to shew their respect unto him; or when he came into court, they rose up, and continued standing until he had took his seat; and even then kept the same posture, attending to his counsel and instruction, to his definitive sentence and decision of matters in debate; though they were venerable persons themselves, and such as before whom young men were to arise, Lev. xix. 32. and were also men of wisdom and prudence, ch. xii. 12. yet these men rose and stood up, paying a deference to Job's superior sense and judgment.

Ver. 9. *The princes refrained talking*, &c.] Who were in court before Job came in, and were either talking with one another about indifferent matters, or were giving their opinion in a case before them; but no sooner did Job make his appearance, but they left off talking, and would not proceed any further; they laid a restraint upon their words, and curbed themselves from speaking any more till they had heard his opinion: *and laid their hand on their mouth*; as a token of silence, Judg. xviii. 19.

Ver. 10. *The nobles held their peace*, &c.] These may be in some respects inferior to the others; not princes of the blood, or sons of kings, who were properly princes, and yet great personages, of a noble extraction, and of considerable families: some think the leaders and generals of armies are meant, commanders and captains, and such-like military officers, those sons of Mars, who are generally bold and daring, boisterous and blustering, and full of talk; and yet even these held their peace in the presence of Job; or their *voice* was *hid*[w]; it could not be heard: *and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth*; so that they had no use of it, and it was as if they had none, see Ezek. iii. 26. Here are various expressions made use of, signifying the profound silence of great personages whilst Job was present; and this silence was owing either to a consciousness of their own weakness, and lest they should, by speaking before him, betray it, and he should expose them; or to the desire they had of hearing Job's opinion first, which was as an oracle to them, and usually determined matters in debate before them: such high sentiments did they entertain of Job's good sense and abilities.

Ver. 11. *When the ear heard* me, *then it blessed me*, &c.] The ear of the common people assembled together to hear causes tried, and how they would go;

[s] Fortunat. Schacch. Elaeochrysm. Myroth. l. 2. c. 79. p. 715.

[t] עלי קלת super civitatem, Pagninus, Montanus, Schmidt; super urbe, Schultens.

[u] Norden's Travels in Egypt and Nubia, vol. 2. p. 140, 141, 158. See Joseph. Antiqu. l. 13. c. 5. sect. 6.

[w] נחבאו occultabatur, Drusius; occultabat se, Piscator.

when they heard Job give his opinion in court, or the definitive sentence passed by him as a judge, they all applauded his wisdom and justice; they highly praised and commended him; in which sense the word *blessed* is used, Prov. xxxi. 28. or they wished a blessing on him; they prayed for his welfare, as it becomes people to do for those that are in authority, especially wise and faithful magistrates; or they accounted him a blessed man, and called him so, Luke i. 48. as he was, both in a temporal sense, being blessed with a great plenty of earthly things, and also blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, with an abundance of grace, and with a title to eternal glory; as well as he was blessed as a magistrate, with great wisdom, and with great integrity and uprightness in the discharge of his office: *and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me*: of his gracefulness and gravity, of his honesty and faithfulness, of his good behaviour among his neighbours, and of his wise conduct in the courts of judicature.

Ver. 12. *Because I delivered the poor that cried*, &c.] This honour and esteem he had not because of his grandeur and riches, because of his worldly wealth and substance, but because of the goodness of his disposition, and because of the good he did to men, his acts of pity and compassion to the poor, and of the justice he did to all men; the poor and the afflicted, when they cried to him for help, he delivered them out of the hands of their oppressors: *and the fatherless*; the care and defence of which belongs to judges and civil magistrates, see Psal. lxxxii. 1, 2, 3, 4. and him that *had none to help him*: as the poor and fatherless seldom have; there is power on the side of the oppressors of them, but they have few or none to take their parts, and to be their comforters, Eccl. iv. 1. in these instances Job imitated God, and was a follower of him, as a dear child of his; who, when this and the other poor man cries unto him, he hears, saves, and delivers out of all their troubles; he is the helper, yea, the father of the fatherless, and the judge of the widow; and, when there is no help from men, he is a present help in times of need.

Ver. 13. *The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me*, &c.] That were ready to perish through the oppression of others, or through want of the necessaries of life, or through false charges brought, and through false witness bore against them, and so liable to a sentence of condemnation to death, or having it passed upon them; but Job taking their part, and searching thoroughly into their cause, not only respited them from destruction, but cleared them from the charges laid against them, and which brought the blessing of those persons on him; who blessed God for him, and blessed him, wished a blessing on him in their prayers to God, who had been such a happy instrument of their deliverance from ruin and destruction: see Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. and xxxi. 5, 6. *and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy*: by relieving her wants, defending her cause, and punishing those that oppressed her; which is the reverse of the character Eliphaz gives of Job, ch. xxii. 9.

Ver. 14. *I put on righteousness, and it clothed me*, &c.] Not the righteousness of his living Redeemer, the robe of righteousness and garment of salvation he had from him; though he had put on that by faith, and it was his clothing in the sight of God, which covered his person, and covered all his sins from the avenging eye of divine justice; and in which he was presented before God unblamable and irreprovable in his sight, and with which he was adorned and beautified, being made perfectly comely through it, and completely justified by it; but legal righteousness in the administration of his office as a magistrate; he put it on, that is, he exercised it, and he exercised it constantly from morning to night, and day after day; as a man puts on his clothes in a morning, and keeps them on all the day, and which he is always repeating; and it was as visible in him, and to be seen and observed by all, as the clothes on his back; and it covered him all over as a garment does; no blemish was to be seen in him, or blame to be cast upon him, throughout the whole course of his administration; and this was a fence unto him against all calumny and reproach, as garments are against the inclemency of the weather; see 1 Sam. xii. 3, 4, 5. so a godly conversation in the exercise of graces and virtues, and in the performance of duties both to God and man, is sometimes expressed by a putting them on, as garments are put on: see Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10, 12, 14. and these are an outward clothing to appear in before men, and should be shewn forth with meekness and wisdom, so as to be beheld by men; and should be continually exercised and constantly performed; and then they are a covering with respect to men, and they appear harmless, blameless, and without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; and thus, by well doing, put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and such to the blush, those who falsely accuse their good conversation: and this in every sense was Job's case: *my judgment was as a robe and diadem*; such as the high-priest among the Jews wore in the execution of his office, which made him look grand and majestic; and it was usual in Job's time, as it is in ours, and has been the custom in all ages and countries, for judges and civil magistrates to be clothed in a different manner from others, as it is proper they should, to command an awe and reverence of them among the common people, and make them respectable to them: but Job did not so much regard his purple robe he was clad in, or the distinguishing turban he wore on his head, or whatever it was, and which might bear some resemblance to a mitre or a diadem; as it was his great concern to administer justice, which he reckoned his greatest honour, and was more ornamental to him than all the shewy ensigns of his office; and it was this which gave him honour and esteem among all sorts of men, high and low: and his regard to the poor, before observed, did not arise from a foolish commiseration of them as poor men, and in order to get himself a name for his pity to them, but proceeded upon a principle of justice and equity, which he made the rule of his administration; he did not countenance the poor in his cause right or wrong; not the quality of the person, but the righteousness of his cause, was what he attended to; and he took his part not merely because he was a poor man, but seeing his cause was just.

Ver. 15. *I was eyes to the blind*, &c.] Either in a literal sense: there was a law in Israel against putting

a stumbling-block before the blind, and a curse pronounced on those that caused them to wander out of the way; which implied that they ought to remove all impediments out of their way, and should lead, guide, and direct them in the right way; and this Job might do, if not in his own person, yet by his servants, and so was as eyes unto them, and especially by taking care of and providing for persons in such circumstances: or rather in a civil sense; such who were in perplexity and distress, oppressed by their neighbours, but did not know how to get justice done them, what steps to take, or methods to pursue, to obtain their right or secure it; these Job instructed with his good advice and counsel, and put them into a way of proceeding whereby they could be extricated out of their difficulties, and peaceably enjoy their own, see Numb. x. 31. and it might be true of him in a spiritual sense; that he was eyes to his blind Heathen neighbours among whom he dwelt; who were ignorant of God, and of the living Redeemer, and of the way of life and salvation by him, and of their miserable and lost estate, and of their need of a Saviour; not being acquainted with the nature of sin, and the sad consequences of it, and with the way of atonement for it, nor with the mind and will of God, and the worship of him; all which he might be a means of enlightening their minds with: Eliphaz owns he instructed many, ch. iv. 3. thus ministers of the Gospel are eyes to the blind; for though they cannot give eyes, or spiritual sight to men, which is only from the Lord, yet they may be instruments of opening blind eyes, and of turning men from darkness to light, as the word preached by them is a means of *enlightening the eyes*, Acts xxvi. 18. Psal. xix. 8. whereby men come to see their lost estate, and the way of salvation by Christ: *and feet was I to the lame*; either in a literal sense, as David was to Mephibosheth, when he sent for and maintained him at his own table, so that he had no occasion to seek for his bread elsewhere; and Job might make a provision in some way or another for such sort of persons; or rather in a civil sense, such who were engaged in lawsuits, and had justice on their side, but for want of friends or money, or both, could not carry them on; these Job supported and supplied, and carried them through their suits, and got their cause for them.

Ver. 16. *I was a father to the poor, &c.*] Not in a literal sense; for his children were rich as well as himself, while he had them; but in a civil sense, he was the patron of the poor; he was an advocate for them, he took their part, he pleaded their cause, defended their persons, and secured the little property they had; he had the pity and compassion of a father for them, and supplied their wants; he fed them and clothed them; he did not eat his morsel alone, but gave them a part of it, and warmed them with the fleece of his flock: *and the cause which I knew not I searched out*: any cause that was brought before him, he knew nothing of before, and which, upon the opening of it, did not appear plain and easy, but had its difficulties; this he closely examined, and searched thoroughly into the merits of, till it appeared plain to him on which side the truth and justice of it lay; he did not hurry it over, and pass sentence, having only in a superficial manner considered it, as is too often the case; but after a long examination of the contending parties, and of the witnesses on both sides, to whom he gave an impartial hearing, he pronounced the decisive sentence; see Prov. xxv. 2. and xxix. 7. Some think this refers to his diligent search and inquiry after causes that were not brought before him; he did not wait for application to be made to him, but hearing of, or upon inquiry finding, that there were persons oppressed and distressed by cruel men, he of himself voluntarily offered his assistance, searched into their cause, made himself master of it, and freed them from their distresses; so different were his behaviour and character from that of the unjust judge, Luke xviii. though others choose to render the words, *the cause of him that I knew not*, &c.[l]; of a stranger, of one that he had never seen before, of one that was most unknown to him in the world; the cause of such an one he took as much pains with to get the true knowledge of, and do justice to, as of the dearest relation, the nearest neighbour, and the most intimate friend and acquaintance that he had.

Ver. 17. *And I brake the jaws of the wicked, &c.*] Their jaw-teeth, or grinders, alluding to beasts of prey, who have such teeth, very large; the meaning may be, that Job confuted the arguments which wicked men made use of in their own defence, and against the poor, exposed the weakness of them, and made them ineffectual to answer their purposes; or disabled tyrants and cruel oppressors from doing any further hurt and damage to the fatherless and helpless; was an instrument in the hand of God of breaking the power, and weakening the hands of such persons, and hindering them from doing the mischief they otherwise would; see Prov. xxx. 14. Psal. iii. 7. and lviii. 6. *and plucked the spoil out of his teeth*; as David took the lamb out of the mouth of the bear and lion that came into his father's flock, and carried it off: thus Job delivered the poor out of the hands of such monsters in nature, comparable to beasts of prey, and saved them from being utterly ruined by them, and obliged them to restore unto them what they had in an unrighteous manner taken from them.

Ver. 18. *Then I said, I shall die in my nest, &c.*] Job, amidst all his prosperity, knew he should die, death and the grave being appointed for all men; and he often thought of it, and of the manner of it; but he concluded that death was as yet at some distance from him, as appears from the following clause; and that, when the time was come, he should not die on the ground, but in the city in which he lived[m], in his house, and on his bed; that he should die with all his children about him, like a bird in its nest full of young; whereas now he was stripped of them all, and like to die childless; that he should die amidst all his outward enjoyments, in an affluence of good things, in honour, credit, and esteem among men; whereas now he was deprived of all his substance, and

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[l] ידעתי quem non cognoveram, Junius & Tremellius, Michaelis; ignotissimi, Schultens.

[m] So Rufus Virginius used to call the villa where he dwelt, *senectutis suae Nidulum*, Plin. l. 6. Ep. 10.

had in contempt by friends and foes; and that he should die in great tranquillity of mind and peace of soul, in the enjoyment of the divine Presence, and under rich discoveries of his love and grace; whereas now God had hid himself from him, and the arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in him. Job now had dropped his former confidence, and yet after all he did die in all the circumstances he believed he should; see ch. xlii. 10—17. and this confidence might rise not from any mercenary spirit in him, as if this would be the fruit and reward of his integrity and uprightness, justice and faithfulness, and as due to him on that account; but from the promises of God, which to the patriarchs were usually of temporal blessings, as types of spiritual ones; though it may be there was in this somewhat of the infirmity of the flesh, as in David, Psal. xxx. 7. and an inattention to the uncertainty of all temporal enjoyments; nor might he then be so well acquainted with the doctrine of the cross he now had an experience of: *and I shall multiply my days as the sand;* which is not to be numbered; an hyperbolical expression, to denote the long life he expected to enjoy, and which was promised to good men; and which Job, notwithstanding his present despair of it, was favoured and satisfied with, Psal. xci. 16. Job xlii. 16, 17. Some versions render it, *as the phœnix* [a], a bird of that name, spoken of by many writers as a very long-lived one; some say it lived 500 years [b], others 540 [c], others 600 [d]; yea, some, and so the Jewish writers, as Jarchi and others [e], make it to live 1,000 years, and some say [f] more; and it is reported of it, though not with sufficient evidence, that there is never but one of the kind at a time; which, perceiving its end drawing near, it makes a nest of cassia, frankincense, and other spices, and sets fire to it, and burns itself in it, and that out of its ashes comes forth an egg, which produces another; and some of the ancient writers, as Tertullian [g] particularly, have made use of this as an emblem of the resurrection; and to which some think Job has here respect; that he should live long like this bird, and then die and rise again; but inasmuch as this seems to be a fabulous bird, and that there is not, nor ever was, any such in being, it can't well be thought that Job should allude unto it; though his making mention of his nest, in the former clause, may seem to favour it, and which has induced some to give into it [h]: others render it, *as the palm-tree* [i]; between which and the phœnix there is thought to be some likeness on account of duration [k], and both in the Greek tongue have the same name; the palm-tree is an evergreen, and endures a long time; Pliny [l] speaks of a palm-tree in his time at Delos, said to have been there from the days of Apollo, which is supposed to be 1,400 years; and it is observed [m], that this tree does continue two or three hundred years; and this version may seem to be countenanced and confirmed by what follows: but since the Hebrew word here used is never used but of sand, it is best so to understand it here, seeing it as fully answers Job's purpose; which was to express his confidence of a very long life. Sand is frequently used in Scripture for what is innumerable; so ψαμμακόσια in Aristophanes [n], for what can't be numbered, and are equal to a mountain of sand.

Ver. 19. *My root was spread out by the waters, &c.*] According to our version and others, Job here, and in the following verses, gives the reasons of his hope and confidence of his long life, and quiet and comfortable death amidst all his prosperity and happiness; which were founded upon his flourishing circumstances, and the great respect that was shewn him among men; and this is the sense, if we read the words in the past tense, as we and many others do; or in the present tense, *my root is spread,* &c. as others; but there are some interpreters, both Jewish and Christian [o], that render them in the future tense, here and to the end of the chapter; and so they are a continuation of Job's hope and trust, in the times of his prosperity, that things would always continue as they were with him, and much more abundantly; and indeed all is true of Job, in every sense, and all may be taken into the account; and that these words, and the following, as they describe what had been, and at the then present time, when he concluded the above in his mind, was his case, so they may also declare what he believed would be always his case to the end of his days. Here he compares himself to a tree well rooted and happily situated by plenty of water, and which may be expressive both of his temporal and spiritual prosperity: his outward prosperity seemed to him to have been well settled and established, being like a tree that had taken root, and was like to continue, being watered with the favour and blessing of God, which maketh rich; and as to his spiritual estate, he was like a tree planted by a river of water, to which good men are often compared in Scripture, Psal. i. 3. Isa. xliv. 4. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. they are in general called trees of righteousness, and are sometimes likened to particular trees, as to olives, cedars, and palm-trees; and some think, as Pineda, that it is to the latter Job here has respect: the last clause of the preceding verse being in the Latin Vulgate version so rendered as to countenance this sense; and it may be observed that this tree having thick long leaves, and fruit full of juice, and its wood spongy, requires much water; and, as Pliny [p] says, delights in watery places; nor is it content with rain, but is better satisfied with waters flowing about it; hence it is often found necessary to dig about it, and lay its roots open, that the waters may more easily come at them, and flow about them [q];

[a] כחול sicut phœnix, Pagninus; so Mercer. Piscator.
[b] Herodot. Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 73. Pompon. Mela de Situ Orbis, l. 3. c. 9. Philostrat. Vita Tyanaei, l. 3. c. 14. Ælian. de Animal. l. 6. c. 58. Tacit. Annal. l. 6. c. 28.
[c] Solin. Polyhistor. c. 46.
[d] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 2.
[e] Bereshit Rabba, sect. 19. fol. 15. 2. Yalkut in loc. par. 1. fol. 113. 2.
[f] Vid. Texelii Phœnix, l. 2. c. 1. p. 140.
[g] De Resurrectione, c. 13. Vid. Clement. Rom. Ep. 1. ad Corinth. p. 60. & Felii Not. in ib.

[h] Vid. Texelii Dissert. de Phœnice, &c. sect. 5.
[i] ὥσπερ στέλεχος φοίνικος, Sept. sicut palma, V. L.
[k] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 4.
[l] Ib. l. 16. c. 44.
[m] Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. 1. vol. 4. p. 757.
[n] Acharnes. Act. 1. Sc. 1. & Scholia in ib.
[o] Jarchi, Ben Gersom, Bar Tzemach, Schmidt, Schultens.
[p] Nat. Hist. l. 13. 4.
[q] Palladius apud Scheuchzer, ut supra, p. 759.

and so the words here in the original text are, *my root* was, is, or shall be *open to the waters*[d]: good men, as they are rooted in the love of God, and in the person of Christ, so they have, as Job had, the root of the matter in them, the truth of grace, or a principle of grace; which is watered, and kept alive and flourishing, by the love and favour of God shed abroad in the heart; by fresh supplies of grace out of the fulness of Christ, who is the fountain of gardens, and well of living waters; and by the means of grace, the word and ordinances, the still waters to which saints are led, and by which they are made to lie down, and where they are watered, refreshed, and comforted: *and the dew lay all night upon my branch;* so that the water being at his root below, and the dew on his branch above, he must be in a fruitful and flourishing condition: the dew is a great blessing to the earth, to trees, herbs, and plants, and the cause of great fertility; and this may respect Job's temporal happiness, in the health and prosperity of his children, who were to him what branches are to a tree; and in the affluence of worldly good things, with which through the blessing of God, as dew upon him, he abounded; and may also have regard to his spiritual affairs: believers in Christ are branches in him, as Job was one; and the dew of divine grace and favour lies upon them continually, even in the darkest seasons; which revives and refreshes their souls, and makes them fruitful in the exercise of grace, and performance of good works: see Prov. xix. 12. Hos. xiv. 5, 6, 7. the dew falls in the night, and the sooner it falls the longer it lies, and is most useful: some render the words *upon my harvest*, or *mowing*[e]; the dew is of great use in harvest-time; mowers and reapers choose the morning to work in, when the stalks are moistened by the dew; and which is of use to keep the ears of corn from shedding by swelling the fibres, and so retaining the grains in their proper places[f]; see Isa. xviii. 4.

Ver. 20. *My glory* was (is or shall be) *fresh in me*, &c.] Or *new*[g]; renewed day by day, having fresh additions made unto it; which was true of Job's temporal honour from among men; as a prince and civil magistrate, he had the honour given him that was due unto him, and this was continually increasing; and also of his spiritual glory, which lay, as every good man's glory does, in the grace of God wrought in him, and in the righteousness of Christ put upon him, Psal. xlv. 9, 13. which grace is renewed and increased in them by the Holy Spirit, and is therefore called the renewing of the Holy Ghost; and which righteousness is revealed *from faith to faith*, from a lesser degree of it to a greater: *and my bow was renewed in my hand;* *is* or *shall be;* meaning either his authority as a civil magistrate, increasing daily to the terror of evil-doers, and to the praise, profit, and defence of them that did well; or his strength, as Gersom interprets it, his spiritual strength, as in Isa. xl. 31. where the same word is used as here; so that he grew stronger and stronger in faith and other graces, and went from strength to strength; the bow was a warlike instrument, and required strength to draw it, and is put for it; see Gen. xlviii. 22. and xlix. 24.

Ver. 21. *Unto me men gave ear*, &c.] Or give ear, or shall give ear, being all ear; all attention to him, listening to what he said with the utmost diligence and earnestness; even all sorts of men, high and low, rich and poor, princes, nobles, and common people; this they had done, and Job concluded they still would do the same; see ver. 9, 10. *and waited;* patiently, without any weariness, with pleasure and delight, without giving any interruption, or wishing his discourse was ended; and though continuing ever so long, were not impatient until it was finished: *and kept silence at my counsel;* which was the thing waited for, and which when given, it was to the highest satisfaction; they acquiesced in it, and shewed their approbation of it by their silence, not having any thing to object to it, any alteration to be made in it, or any thing to be added to it; but being so complete and full, they were ready to take it at once, and act according to it; Job's counsel being like that of Ahithophel, which was as the oracle of God.

Ver. 22. *After my words they spake not again*, &c.] Did not or would not make any reply to them; they did not attempt to change and alter them, to add unto them, or take from them, or in any wise to correct them, and much less to contradict them, and treat them with contempt; or *differed not*, as Mr. Broughton renders it; differed not from them, but agreed to them; and differed not among themselves, but united in what Job said, as being full to the purpose, after which nothing more could be said; see Eccl. ii. 12. *and my speech dropped upon them;* his prophecy, as Jarchi, prophesying being expressed by dropping, Amos vii. 16. his doctrine dropped from his lips like the honeycomb, and was sweet, grateful, and delightful to his hearers, as the church's lips, Cant. iv. 11. or rather like the rain, as in Deut. xxxii. 2. when it falls and drops gently and easily, and so penetrates and soaks into the earth, and abides and does good: in like manner, when good and sound doctrine drops upon the hearers, so as to enter into their hearts, and work effectually in them, it does them good, and they rejoice at it, and are far from having any thing to say against it.

Ver. 23. *And they waited for me as for the rain*, &c.] The former rain, as appears by the following clause, which fell in autumn, about October, after seed-time, in order to nourish and cherish it, and bring it up; now as the husbandman waited for this, was in daily expectation of it, and greatly desired it, and longed for it; see Jam. v. 7. so the people waited for Job, for his coming into their public assemblies, whether civil or religious, and longed to hear him speak, for their counsel and instruction, for their comfort and direction in all things they stood in need of: *and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain;* which fell in the spring about March, in the time of harvest, which was of use to plump the grains of corn, and make them fuller, and the flour finer; now Job's hearers opened their mouths, as the dry

[d] פתוח אלי מים aperta ad aquas, Montanus, Boldocius, Mercerus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis, Schultens.

[e] בקצירי in messe mea, Montanus, Tigurine version; in segete mea, Cocceius; so the Targum.

[f] Vid. Scheuchzer, ut supra.

[g] חדש nova, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis, Schultens.

and parched earth gapes for rain; or the husbandman, or the gardener, as the Targum, opens his mouth, and asks and prays for rain; or as a hungry and thirsty man opens his mouth to take in refreshment, or expresses thereby his desire of it; or as persons somewhat deaf open their mouths to hear the better, there being a way through the mouth to the internal ear, as anatomists[h] observe; which lies through the Fallopian duct, out of the palate, to the internal cavity of the ear, called the *concha*; wherefore such persons naturally open their mouths when they would hear attentively; all which expresses the eager desire of Job's hearers after his doctrine, which, like the rain, would be useful, profitable, and edifying to them; their view was not to indulge their curiosity, to please their ears, but to affect their hearts, and instruct their minds.

Ver. 24. *If I laughed on them, they believed it not,* &c.] Not that he at any time laughed at them, by way of derision; but when in a cheerful frame of mind, or in a merry mood, he used freedom and familiarity, and jested with them; but they could not believe that he did jest, or was in jest, he being a man always of such gravity and seriousness, that they concluded the smile on his countenance, and the pleasant turn of his expression, had a serious meaning in them; or such familiarity with them was so pleasing to them, that they could scarcely for joy believe that he did condescend to indulge such an air of pleasantry: or as Mr. Broughton renders it, and so some others to the same sense, *they would not be bold*[i]; familiarity with them did not breed contempt, as it sometimes does; they did not presume upon it, and grow bold and insolent, and make him their equal, and jest with him again; but still there was an awe upon them, and they behaved with reverence to him; and to shew how great it was is the design of the expression: *and the light of my countenance they cast not down*; they did not ruffle his mind, or disturb the serenity of it; or cause him to change his countenance, through any bold and indecent behaviour towards him, encouraged by the freedom and pleasantry he used with them; they did not put him to shame, or provoke him to anger and displeasure by any unbecoming deportment; they kept their distance, they did not detract from his authority and majesty, or in the least lessen that, but behaved with the same reverence and regard to him they ever did; see Gen. iv. 6.

Ver. 25. *I chose out their way,* &c.] When his friends and neighbours came to him for advice in things civil, he marked out their way for them, directed what steps to take, what methods to pursue for their good; they desired him to choose for them, preferring his judgment to theirs, and were determined to abide by his choice of ways and means, and to follow his counsel; and in religious matters, he instructed them in their duty, both towards God and men, and proposed unto them what was most eligible, both with respect to doctrine and practice; and *sat chief* in all their public assemblies; he presided in their councils and courts of judicature; and when met together for religious worship, he sat in the chair of the teacher, and instructed them; he was chief speaker, as the Heathens said of the Apostle Paul, Acts xiv. 12. *and dwelt as a king in the army*, or *troop*[k]. Mr. Broughton renders it *with a garrison*; Job was surrounded with multitudes of persons, that waited upon him on one account or another, who were ready to receive his words, and be obedient to them, as a king or general in the midst of an army, surrounded by his general officers, and the whole army encamped about him, doing him honour, and ready to obey whatever commands or instructions he should give them; some conclude from hence that Job was really a king, *as* being not a note of similitude, but of truth and reality, as in Matt. xiv. 2. and so he might be; for in those times and countries every city almost had its king; though this is not necessarily supposed here; for the phrase seems only to denote the authority and influence Job had over men by his advice and instruction, which were as much regarded as from a king; and the majesty he appeared in, and the reverence in which he was had: *as one that comforteth the mourners*: which some restrain to the king in his army, and connect them therewith thus, *when he comforteth the mourners*[l]; the soldiers mourning for some loss sustained, and slaughter made among them; whose minds the king or general by a set speech endeavours to cheer, and comfort, and allay their fears, and animate them to intrepidity and fortitude, when all eyes are upon him and attentive to him; and so attentive were Job's hearers to him. Bar Tzemach observes, that the copulative ו, or *and*, is wanting, and so is a clause by itself, and expresses something distinct from the former, and may be supplied, *and I was as one that comforteth the mourners*; as a wise man that comforteth them, as Aben Ezra explains it; like one that made it his business to visit mourners in affliction, on account of the death of a relation, and the like: see Job xi. 19. and speaks comfortable words to them, to support them under their sorrow; when such an one used to speak alone, and all stood silent before him, and attentive to him; and in a like position was Job, when he gave his instructions to those about him; and he was, no doubt, a comforter of mourners himself, being either in temporal afflictions, or in spiritual troubles; comforted those that were cast down in either sense, and was a type of Christ, who was appointed to comfort all that mourn in Zion.

[h] Schenckzer, ut supra.

[i] לא יאמינו non tamen sibi sumebant audaciam, Michaelis; neque tam audaces fiunt, Reimar apud Schultens.

[k] בגדוד in agmine, Montanus, Bolducius; in turma, Mercerus, Drusius, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens.

[l] כאשר quando, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius; quum vel quando, Schmidt.

CHAP. XXX.

JOB in this chapter sets forth his then unhappy state and condition, in contrast with his former state of prosperity described in the preceding chapter: things had taken a strange turn, and were just the reverse of what they were before; he that was before in such high esteem and credit with all sorts of men, young and old, high and low, rich and poor, now is had in derision by the meanest and basest of men, whose characters are described, ver. 1—8. and the instances of their contempt of him by words and gestures are given, ver. 9—14. he who enjoyed so much ease of mind, and health of body, is now filled with distresses of soul, and bodily diseases, ver. 15—19. and he who enjoyed so much of the presence of God, and communion with him, and of his love and favour, was now disregarded, and, as he thought, cruelly used by him, who not only had destroyed his substance, but was about to bring him to the grave, ver. 20—24. all which came upon him, though he had a sympathizing heart with the poor, and them that were in trouble, and when he expected better things, ver. 25—28. and he closes the chapter, lamenting his sad and sorrowful circumstances, ver. 29, 30, 31.

Ver. 1. *But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, &c.*] Meaning not his three friends, who were men in years, and were not, at least all of them, younger than he, see ch. xv. 10. and xxxii. 6, 7. nor were they of such a mean extraction, and such low-lived creatures, and of such characters as here described; with such Job would never have held a correspondence in the time of his prosperity; both they and their fathers, in all appearance, were both great and good; but these were a set of profligate and abandoned wretches, who, as soon as Job's troubles came upon him, derided him, mocked and jeered at him, both by words and gestures; and which they might do even before his three friends came to him, and during their seven-days' silence with him, and whilst this debate was carrying on between them, encouraged unto it by their behaviour towards him; to be derided by any is disagreeable to flesh and blood, though it is the common lot of good men, especially in poor and afflicted circumstances, and to be bore patiently; but to be so used by junior and inferior persons is an aggravation of it; as Job was, even by young children, as was also the prophet Elisha, see ch. xix. 18. *whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock;* either to have compared them with the dogs that kept his flock from the wolves, having some good qualities in them which they had not; for what more loving or faithful to their masters, or more vigilant and watchful of their affairs? or to set them at meat with the dogs of his flock; they were unworthy of it, though they would have been glad of the food his dogs ate of, they living better than they, whose meat were mallows and juniper-roots, ver. 4. and would have jumped at it; as the prodigal in want and famine, as those men were, would fain have filled his belly with husks that swine did eat; but as no man gave them to him, so Job disdained to give the meat of his dogs to such as those; or to set them over[m] the dogs of his flock, to be the keepers of them, to be at the head of his dogs, and to have the command of them; see the phrase in 2 Sam. iii. 8. or else to join them with his dogs, to keep his flock with them; they were such worthless faithless wretches, that they were not to be trusted with the care of his flock along with his dogs. It was usual in ancient times, as well as in ours, for dogs to be made use of in keeping flocks of sheep from beasts of prey, as appears from Orpheus[n], Homer[o], Theocritus[p], and other writers; and if the fathers of those that derided Job were such mean, base, worthless creatures, what must their sons be, inferior to them in age and honour, if any degree of honour belonged to them?

Ver. 2. *Yea, whereto might the strength of their hands profit me, &c.*] For though they were strong, lusty, hale men, able to do business, yet their strength was to sit still and fold their hands in their bosoms, so that their strength was of no profit or avail to themselves or others; they were so slothful and lazy, that Job could not employ them in any business of his to any advantage to himself; and this may be one reason, among others, why he disdained to set them with the dogs of his flock to keep it; for the fathers seem to be intended all along to ver. 8. though it matters not much to which of them the words are applied, since they were like father like son: *in whom old age was perished?* who did not arrive to old age, but were soon consumed by their lusts, or cut off for their sins; and so the strength and labour of their hands, had they been employed, would have been of little worth; because the time of their continuance in service would have been short, especially being idle and slothful: some understand it of a lively and vigorous old age, such as was in Moses; but this being not in them, they were unfit for business, see ch. v. 26. or they had not the endowments of old age, the experience, wisdom, and prudence of ancient persons, to contrive, conduct, and manage affairs, or direct in the management of them, which would make up for lack of strength and labour. Ben Gersom, Bar Tzemach, and others, interpret the word of time, or the time of life, that was perished or lost in them; their whole course of life, being spent in sloth and idleness, was all lost time.

Ver. 3. *For want and famine they were solitary, &c.*] The Targum interprets it, without children; but then this cannot be understood of the fathers; rather through famine and want they were reduced to the utmost extremity, and were as destitute of food as a rock, or hard flint, from whence nothing

[m] עם כלבי super canes, Noldius, p. 739. No. 1825.
[n] De Lapidibus, Hypoth. ver. 53, 54.

[o] Iliad. 10. ὡς κύνες ἀμφὶ μῆλα, &c. v. 183. & Iliad 12. v. 303.
[p] Χ' ἀμῶ ἐστι κύων φιλοποίμνιος, &c. Idyll. 5. v. 106. & Idyll. 6. v. 9, 10.

is to be had, as the word signifies, see ch. iii. 7. *fleeing into the wilderness in former time desolate and waste:* to search and try what they could get there for their sustenance and relief, fleeing through fear of being taken up for some crimes committed, or through shame, on account of their miserable condition, not caring to be seen by men, and therefore fled into the wilderness to get what they could there: but since men in want and famine usually make to cities, and places of resort, where provision may be expected; this may be interpreted not of their flying into the wilderness, though of their being there, perhaps banished thither, see ver. 5. but of their *gnawing*[g], or biting the dry and barren wilderness, and what they could find there; where having short commons, and hunger-bitten, they bit close; which, though extremely desolate, they were glad to feed upon what they could light on there; such miserable beggarly creatures were they: and with this agrees what follows.

Ver. 4. *Who cut up mallows by the bushes,* &c.] Which with the Troglodytes were of a vast bigness[h]; or rather *upon the bush*[i] or *tree;* and therefore cannot mean what we call mallows, which are herbs on the ground, and grow not on trees or bushes; and, besides, are not for food, but rather for medicine: though Plutarch[k] says they were the food of the meaner sort of people; so Horace[l] speaks of them as such; and the word in the original is near in sound to a mallow; but it signifies something salt, wherefore Mr. Broughton renders it *salt herbs:* so Grotius, such as might grow by the sea-side, or in salt marshes; and in Edom, or Idumea, where Job lived, was a valley of salt, see 2 Kings xiv. 7. Jarchi says it is the same with what the Syrians in their language call *kakuli*, which with them is a kind of pulse; but what the Turks at this day call *kakuli* is a kind of salt herb, like to *alcali*, which is the food of camels[m]: the Septuagint render the word by *alima;* and, by several modern learned men, what is intended is thought to be the *halimus* of Dioscorides, Galen, and Avicenna; which is like unto a bramble, and grows in hedges and maritime places; the tops of which, when young and tender, are eaten, and the leaves boiled for food, and are eaten by poor people, being what soon filled the belly, and satisfied; and seem to be the same the Moors call *mallochia*, and cry about the streets, as food for the poor to buy[n]: however it appears upon the whole to be the tops or leaves of some sort of shrub, which mean people used to gather and live upon. The following story is reported in the Talmud[o] concerning King Jannai, who "went to Cochalith in the wilderness, and there subdued sixty fortified towns; and, "upon his return, he greatly rejoiced, and called all "the wise men of Israel, and said unto them, our fathers ate *malluchim* (the word used in this text of Job) "at the time they were employed in building the sanctuary; so we will eat *malluchim* on remembrance of "our fathers; and they set *malluchim* on tables of "gold, and they ate;" which the gloss interprets herbs; the name of which, in the Syriac language, is *kakuli:* the Targum is, who plucks up thorns instead of eatable herbs. Some[p] render the word nettles, see ver. 7. *juniper-roots for their meat, or bread*[r]; with the roots of which the poor were fed in time of want, as Schindler[s] observes: that bread may be, and has been made out of roots, is certain, as with the West Indians, out of the roots of *ages* and *jucca*[t]; and in particular juniper-roots in the northern countries have been used for bread[u]; and there were a people in Ethiopia above Egypt, who lived upon roots of reeds prepared, and were called *rhizophagi*[w], root-eaters: some render the words, *or juniper-roots to heat,* or *warm with*[x], as the word is used in Isa. xlvii. 14. and coals of juniper have in them a very great and vehement heat, see Psal. cxx. 3, 4. but if any part of the juniper-tree was taken for this purpose, to warm with when cold, one should think the branches, or the body of the tree, should be cut down, rather than the roots dug up: another sense is given by some[y], that meat or bread is to be understood of the livelihood these persons got by digging up juniper-roots, and selling them: there are others that think, that not the roots of juniper, but of *broom*[z], are meant, whose rape, or navew, or excrescence from the roots of it, seem to be more fit food. All this agrees with the Troglodytes, whom Pliny[a] represents as thieves and robbers, and, when pressed with famine, dig up herbs and roots: cutters of roots are reckoned among the worst of men by Manetho[b].

Ver. 5. *They were driven from among men,* &c.] From towns and cities, and all civil society, as unfit to be among them; not for any good, it may be observed, but for crimes that they had done, like our felons, and transported persons: *they cried after them as after a thief;* as they were driven and run along, the people called after them, saying, there goes a thief; which they said by way of abhorrence of them, and for the shame of them, and that all might be warned and cautioned against them; and, generally speaking, such as are idle and slothful, and thereby become miserable, are pilferers and thieves.

Ver. 6. *To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys,* &c.] Or *brooks*[c], in such hollow places as were made by floods and streams of waters: *in caves of the earth, and in the rocks:* where they betook themselves for fear of men, and through shame, being naked and misera-

[g] ערקים ציה qui rodebant in solitudine, V. L. rodentes siccitatem, Schultens.
[h] Diodorus Siculus, l. 3. p. 173.
[i] עלי שיח super virgulta, Montanus, Schultens; super arbustum, Bochart.
[k] In symposio septem sap.
[l] ——— me pascunt olivæ.
Me cichorea levesque malvæ.
Carmin. l. 1. Ode 31. & Epod. Ode 2.
[m] Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 760.
[n] Ibid. vid. Reinesium de Lingua Punic. c. 9. S. 20, 21.
[o] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 66. 1.
[p] David de Pomis Lexic. fol. 88. 3.

[r] לחמם panis eorum, Montanus, Michaelis, Schultens.
[s] Lexic. col. 1773.
[t] Pet. Martyr. de Angleria, decad. 1. l. 1.
[u] Olaus Magnus, de Ritu Gent. Septent. l. 12. c. 4.
[w] Diod. Sic. l. 3. p. 159.
[x] Ad calefaciendum se, Pagninus; so Kimchi, Sepher Shorash. rad. חמם.
[y] Hillerus apud Schultens in loc.
[z] שרש רתמים radix genistarum, Michaelis, Schultens; so some in Mercerus, Drusius, & Gussetius, p. 839.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 37. c. 8.
[b] Apotelesm. l. 4. v. 183.
[c] בערוץ נחלים torrentium, Tigurine version, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

ble, and not fit to be seen: Job has respect to the Horites and Troglodytes, his neighbours, who dwelt in such places chiefly.

Ver. 7. *Among the bushes they brayed*, &c.] Like wild asses; so Sephorno, to which wicked men are fitly compared, ch. xi. 12. or they *cried*, or *groaned*[m], and *moaned* among the bushes, where they lay lurking; either they groaned through cold, or want of food; for the wild ass brays not but when in want, ch. vi. 5. *under the nettles they were gathered*; or *under thistles*[n], as some, or *under thorns*, as [o] others; under thorn-hedges, where they lay either for shelter, or to hide themselves, or to seize upon a prey that might pass by; and so were such sort of persons as in the parable in Luke xiv. 23. it not being usual for nettles to grow so high as to cover persons, at least they are not a proper shelter, and much less an eligible one; though some render the words, they were *pricked*[p], blistered and wounded, a word derived from this being used for the scab of leprosy, Lev. xiii. and so pustules and blisters are raised by the sting of nettles: the Targum is, " under thorns they were associated together;" under thorn-hedges, as before observed; and if the juniper-tree be meant in a preceding verse, they might be said to be gathered under thorns when under that; since, as Pliny[q] says, it has thorns instead of leaves; and the shadow of it, according to the poet[r], is very noxious and disagreeable.

Ver. 8. They were *children of fools*, &c.] Their parents were fools, or they themselves were such; foolish children, or foolish men, were they that derided Job; and their derision of him was a proof of it: the meaning is not that they were ideots, or quite destitute of reason and natural knowledge, but that they were men of slender capacities; they were *Nabal*-like, which is the word here used of them; and, indeed, it may easily be concluded, they could not have much knowledge of men and things, from their pedigree, education, and manner of living before described; though rather this may signify their being wicked men, or children of such, which is the sense of the word *fool* frequently in the Psalms of David, and in the Proverbs of Solomon; and men may be fools in this sense, as having no understanding of divine and spiritual things, who yet have wit enough to do evil, though to do good they have no knowledge: *yea, children of base men*, or *men without a name*[s]; a kind without fame, Mr. Broughton renders it; an infamous generation of men, famous for nothing; had no name for blood, birth, and breeding; for families, for power and authority among men, having no title of honour or of office; nor for wealth, wisdom, nor strength, for which some have a name; but these men had no name but an ill one, for their folly and wickedness; had no good name, were of no credit and reputation with men; and perhaps, strictly and literally speaking, were without a name, being a spurious and bastardly breed; or living solitary in woods and deserts, in cliffs and caves; they belonged not to any tribe or nation, and so bore no name: *they are viler than the earth*; on which they trod, and who are unworthy to tread upon it; and out of which their vile bodies were made, and yet were viler than that which is the basest of the elements, being most distant from heaven, the throne of God[t]; they were not so valuable as some parts of the earth, the gold and silver, but were as vile as the dross of the earth, and viler than that; they were crushed and bruised, and *broken* more than the earth, as the word[u] signifies; they were as small and as contemptible as the dust of the earth and the mire of the streets, and more so; or than the men of the earth, as Aben Ezra observes, than the meanest and worst, and vilest of men: Mr. Broughton renders it, *banished from the earth*: smitten, stricken, and drove out of the land where they had dwelt, ver. 5. whipped out of it, as some translate the word[w], as vagabonds; as a lazy, idle, pilfering set of people, not fit to be in human society; and by such base, mean, low-lived people, were Christ and his apostles ill-treated; see Matt. xxiii. 33. and xxvii. 27, 39, 44. Acts xvii. 5.

Ver. 9. *And now am I their song*, &c.] The subject of their song, of whom they sang ballads about the streets, in public places, and at their festivals and merriments, as Christ the antitype of Job was the song of the drunkard, Psal. lxix. 12. see Lam. iii. 14. or the meaning may be, they rejoiced in his afflictions and calamities, and made themselves merry with them, which was cruel and inhuman, as David's enemies did in his, and those abject, mean, base people, like those that derided Job: and so the Edomites rejoiced over the children of Judah, in the day of their destruction, and as the inhabitants of Popish countries will rejoice over the witnesses when slain, and make merry, Psal. xxxv. 15, 16. and Obad. ver. 12. Rev. xi. 9, 10. *yea, I am their by-word*; all their talk was about him continually, and at every turn would use his name proverbially for an hypocrite, or a wicked man; and thus Christ, of whom Job was a type, became a proverb in the mouth of the Jews, Psal. lxix. 11. and as the Jews themselves now are with others, Jer. xxiv. 9.

Ver. 10. *They abhor me*, &c.] As it is no wonder they should, since his inward and most intimate friends did, ch. xix. 19. they abhorred him, not for any evil in him; Job was ready enough to abhor that himself, and himself for it, as he did when sensible of it, ch. xlii. 6. but for the good that was in him, spoken or done by him; which carried in it a reproof to them they could not bear; see Amos v. 10. they abhorred him also because of his present meanness and poverty, and because of his afflictions and distresses, and particularly the diseases of his body; so Christ was abhorred by the Scribes, Pharisees, and elders of the people, the three shepherds his soul loathed, and their soul abhorred him for his meanness and for his ministry: and even by the whole nation of the Jews, by the body of the people, particularly when they preferred Barabbas,

[m] ינהקו clamabant, Vatablus, Mercerus; so Ben Gersom; gemebant, Michaelis; so Broughton.
[n] תחת חרול sub carduis, Vatablus.
[o] Sub sentibus, V. L. sub vepreto aliquo, Tigurine version; sub vepribus, Cocceius; sub spina, Noldius, p. 193. Schultens.
[p] יספחו pungebantur, Junius & Tremellius; se ulcerant, Gussetius, p. 565. so Ben Gersom; they smarted, Broughton.

[q] Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 24.
[r] Juniperi gravis umbra—— Virgil. Bucolic. Eclog. 10.
[s] בלי שם absque nomine, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; so Beza, Mercerus, Piscator, Drusius, Michaelis, Cocceius.
[t] See Weemse's Observat. Natural. c. 3.
[u] נכאו contriti, Montanus, Bolducius; so the Targum.
[w] Flagellati, Schultens.

a thief and a murderer, to him; see Zech. xi. 8. Isa. xlix. 7. *they flee from me*: as from some hideous monster, or infectious person, as if he had the plague on him, or some nauseous disease, the stench of which they could not bear; so Christ his antitype was used by his people; when they saw him in his afflictions they hid their faces from him, did not care to look at him, or come nigh him, Isa. liii. 3. *and spare not to spit in my face*: not in his presence only, as some think, which is too low a sense, but literally and properly in his face, when they vouchsafed to come near him; in this opprobrious way they used him, than which nothing was a greater indignity and affront; and we need not scruple to interpret it in this sense of Job, since our Lord, whose type he was in this and other things, was so treated, Isa. l. 6. Matt. xxvi. 67. and xxvii. 30.

Ver. 11. *Because he hath loosed my cord*, &c.] Not his silver cord, for then he must have died immediately, Eccl. xii. 6. though it may be understood of the loosening of his nerves through the force of his disease, and the afflictions he endured from God and man, see ver. 17. or rather of the shattered state and condition of his family and substance; which, whilst he enjoyed, he had respect and reverence from men; but now all being loosed, scattered, and destroyed, he was treated with derision and scorn; or, better still, of his power and authority as a civil magistrate, by which, as with a cord, he bound many to subjection and obedience to him, and which commanded reverence of him; but this being now loosed and removed from him, persons of the baser sort behaved in an insolent manner towards him; there is a *keri*, or a marginal reading of this clause, which we follow; but the *cetib*, or written text, is *his cord*; and so Mr. Broughton renders it, *he hath loosed his string*; which he explains of the string or rein of his government, that holdeth base men from striving with the mighty, and which comes to the same sense; for the power and authority Job had as a governor were of God, and which he had now loosened; the allusion may be to the string of a bow, which being loosed, it cannot cast out the arrow; and respect may be had to what Job had said, ch. xxix. 20. *my bow was renewed in my hand*; it then abode in strength, and its strength was renewed; but now he had lost his power and strength, at least it was greatly weakened, that he could not defend himself, nor punish the wicked: *and afflicted me*; that is, God, who is also understood in the preceding clause, though not expressed. Job's afflictions were many, and there were second causes of them, who were the movers, instruments, and means of them, as Satan, the Sabeans and Chaldeans, yet they were of God, as the appointer, orderer, and sender of them; and so Job understood them, and always as here ascribed them to him; wherefore there was a just cause for them, and an end to be answered by them, and it became Job patiently to bear them, and to wait the issue of them: now, on this account, the above persons were emboldened and encouraged to use Job in the ill manner they did: *they have also let loose the bridle before me*; the restraints that were upon them when Job was in his prosperity, and had the reins of government in his hand; these they now cast off, and shewed no manner of reverence of him, nor respect for him; and the bridle that was upon their mouths, which kept them from speaking evil of him while he was in power, now they slipped it from them, and gave themselves an unbounded liberty in deriding, reproaching, and reviling him; see Psal. xxxix. 1. and this they did before him, in his presence and to his face, who before were mute and silent.

Ver. 12. *Upon my right hand rise the youth*, &c.] *Springeth*, as Mr. Broughton translates the word; such as were just sprung into being, as it were; the word[n] seems to have the signification of young birds that are not fledged; have not got their feathers on them, but are just got out of the shell, as it were; and such were these young men: some render the word *the flower*[o]; as if the flower of men, the chief and principal of them, were meant, such as were Job's three friends, who are here distinguished from the mean and baser sort before spoken of; but the word even in this sense signifies young men, who are like buds and flowers just sprung out, or who are beardless boys, or whose beards are just springing out; so the young priests are in the Misnah[p] called *the flowers of the priesthood*: now such as these rose up, not in reverence to Job, as the aged before did, but in an hostile way, to oppose, resist, reproach, and deride him; they rose up on his right hand, took the right hand of him, as if they were his superiors and betters; or they stood at his right hand, took the right hand to accuse him, as Satan did at Joshua's; see Psal. cix. 6. Zech. iii. 1. *they push away my feet*; they brought heavy charges and violent accusations against him, in order to cast him down, and trample upon him; nor would they suffer him to stand and answer for himself; he could have no justice done him, and so there was no standing for him. If this was to be understood literally, of their pushing at him to throw him down to the ground, or of an attempt to trip up his heels, so that his feet were almost gone, and his steps had well nigh slipped, it was very rude and indecent treatment of him indeed: *and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction*; as, in besieging a town, mounts, forts, and batteries are raised to destroy it, so those persons made use of all ways and means to destroy Job; or they trod upon him, and made him as a path or causeway to walk upon, in order utterly to destroy him. Mr. Broughton renders the words, *they cast upon me the causes of their wo*; imputed all their calamities and miseries to him, reproached him on that account, and now were resolved to revenge themselves on him.

Ver. 13. *They mar my path*, &c.] Hindered him in the exercise of religious duties; would not suffer him to attend the ways and worship of God, or to walk in the paths of holiness and righteousness; or they reproached his holy walk and conversation, and treated it with contempt, and triumphed over religion and godliness: *they set forward my calamity*; added affliction to affliction, increased his troubles by their reproaches and calumnies, and were pleased with it,

[n] פרחח pullities, Schultens.
[o] Flos, Schmidt, Michaelis.

[p] Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 7.

as if it was profitable as well as pleasurable to them, see Zech. i. 15. *they have no helper;* either no person of note to join them, and to abet, assist, and encourage them; or they needed none, being forward enough of themselves to give him all the distress and disturbance they could, and he being so weak and unable to resist them; or there is *no helper against them*[s]; none to take Job's part against them, and deliver him out of their hands, see Eccl. iv. 1.

Ver. 14. *They came* upon me *as a wide breaking in of waters, &c.*] As when a wide breach is made in the banks of a river, or of the sea, the waters rush through in great abundance, with great rapidity and swiftness, and with a force irresistible; and in like manner did Job's enemies rush in upon him in great numbers, overwhelming him in an instant, and he not able to oppose them; or as, when a wide breach is made in the wall of a city besieged, the besiegers pour themselves in, and bear down all before them: and thus Job in a like violent manner was run upon, and bore down by the persons before described: *in the desolation they rolled themselves* upon me; as when a breach is made in a bank of a river, or of the sea, the waters roll themselves, one wave and flood over another; or, as when a breach is made in a wall, *in the broken place they tumble;* as Mr. Broughton renders it; the soldiers tumble one over another in haste, to get possession and seize the plunder: in such-like manner did Job's enemies roll themselves on him, in order to crush and destroy him; and it may be rendered, *because of the desolation*[t], because of bringing calamity on him in order to make him desolate; they came pouring in upon him with all their numbers, force, and strength, to bear him down, and crush him to the earth, as grass may be rolled upon, and beaten down by heavy bodies.

Ver. 15. *Terrors are turned upon me,* &c.] Not the terrors of a guilty conscience, for Job had a clear one, and held fast his integrity; nor the terrors of a cursing and condemning law, for he knew he was justified by his living Redeemer, and his sins forgiven for his sake; nor the terrors of death, for that he had made familiar to him, and greatly desired it; nor the terrors of a future judgment, for there was nothing he was more solicitous for than to appear before the judgment-seat of God, and take his trial there; but the afflictions that were upon him from the hand of God that was turned on him, who now hid his face from him, and withheld the influences of his grace and favour, and appeared as an enemy, and as a cruel one to him; the reason of all which he knew not, and this threw him into consternation of mind, and filled him with terror. Some[u] read the words "my glory is turned "into terrors;" instead of being in the honour and glory, prosperity and happiness, he had been in, he was now possessed of terrors and distresses of various kinds: others render the words, *he is turned against me, as terrors,* or *into terrors,* or *with* them[v]; God cannot be turned or changed in his nature, in his will, counsel, purposes, and decrees, nor in his love and affection to his people; but he may turn in the outward dispensations of his providence according to his unchangeable will, as from evil to good, Jonah iii. 9, 10. from doing good to evil, Isa. lxiii. 10. this is complained of by the church, Lam. iii. 3. and deprecated by Jeremy, ch. xvii. 17. or there is *a turn, terrors are upon me;* there was a very visible turn in Job's affairs in many respects, in his health, substance, and family, and particularly in this; whilst he was in his office as a civil magistrate, and in all the glory of it, he was a terror to evil-doers; and young men, when he appeared, hid themselves for fear of him; but now those impudently rise up against him, and are terrors to him: or there is an *overthrow*[w], an overturning of things, as of his civil and temporal affairs, so of his spiritual ones; instead of that peace, serenity, and tranquillity of mind he had enjoyed: now nothing but terror and distress of mind on account of his afflictions and troubles: *they pursue my soul as the wind;* terrors one after another; they pursued him closely, with great swiftness, and with a force irresistible, like the wind; they pursued his soul, his life, and threatened the taking away of it: the word for *soul* is not the usual word for it; it signifies *my principal one,* as in the margin, as the soul is the principal part of man, the immortal breath of God, the inhabitant in the tenement of the body, the jewel in the cabinet, immaterial and immortal, and of more worth than the whole world; or *my princely one,* being of a princely original, is from God, the Father of spirits, of a noble extract: Mr. Broughton renders it my *nobility,* having princely rule and government in the body; that using the members of the body as its instruments; and especially it may be said to have such rule, when grace is implanted in it, as a ruling governing principle; and the Targum is, my principality or government: it may be rendered, *my free*[x], liberal, ingenuous, and munificent one: Job had such a generous and beneficent soul; but now all means of exercising generosity and liberality were cut off from him; and particularly he had had a free ingenuous one, as he was actuated by the free spirit of God, Psal. li. 12, where this word is used; but now terrors pursuing him, a spirit of bondage unto fear was brought upon him: some[y] consider it as an apostrophe to God, *thou pursuest my soul, O God,* &c.; but rather the meaning is, a distress or affliction pursued it, or every one of the above terrors: *and my welfare passeth away as a cloud;* or *my salvation*[z]; not spiritual and eternal salvation, that was firm and stable, being fixed by the unalterable decree of God, secured in the covenant of grace, and engaged for to be wrought out by his living Redeemer, and of which he had an application by the Spirit of God, and was possessed of the blessings of it; and though the joys and comforts of it, and views of interest in it, may go off for a while, yet Job seems to have had a strong faith of interest in it, and

[s] למו adversus illos, Beza, Schmidt, Michaelis; so Noldius, p. 514.
[t] תחת שאה pro desolatione, Pagninus, Montanus; propter vastationem, Noldius, p. 773. No. 1864.
[u] So some in Bar Tzemach in loc.
[v] ההפך עלי בלהות conversus est contra me, sicut terrores, Schmidt; in meros terrores, vel cum terroribus, Michaelis.

[w] Eversio, Schultens.
[x] נדבתי principalem meum, Mercerus; meam principem, Vatablus, Piscator; meam spontaneam, Pagninus, Montanus, Michaelis; meam ultroneam, Drusius; generosum meum spiritum, Schultens.
[y] Schmidt.
[z] ישעתי salus mea, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

a lively and well-grounded hope of its being his, ch. xiii. 15, 16. and xix. 25. but his temporal salvation, health, and happiness, were gone suddenly, swiftly, utterly, entirely, totally, as a cloud dissolved into rain, or dissipated by the rays of the sun, or driven away with the wind, so as to be seen no more; nor had he any hope of its being restored to him: some understand this, as Sephorno, of the salvation with which he had saved others; but it was no more in the power of his hands, and the remembrance of it was gone from those who shared in it; see Hos. vi. 4. and xiii. 3. Isa. xliv. 22.

Ver. 16. *And now my soul is poured out upon me*, &c.] Either in prayer to God for help and deliverance; or rather he was dissolved as it were in floods of tears, because of his distress and anguish; or his spirits were sunk, his strength and courage failed, and his heart melted, and was poured out like water; yea, his soul was pouring out unto death, and he was, as he apprehended, near unto it; his body was so weakened and broken by diseases, that it was like a vessel full of holes, out of which the liquor runs away apace; so his life and soul were going away from him, his vital spirits were almost exhausted: *the days of affliction have taken hold upon me*: afflictions seize on good men as well as others, and on them more than others; and there are certain times and seasons for them, appointed and ordered by the Lord; and there is a limited time, they are not to continue always, only for some days, for a time, and but a little time, and then they will have an end; but till that time comes, there can be no deliverance from them; being sent they come, coming they seized on Job, they laid hold on him, they *caught* him, as Mr. Broughton renders it, and held him fast, and would not let him go; nor could he get clear of them till God delivered him, who only can and does deliver out of them in his own time and way.

Ver. 17. *My bones are pierced in me in the night-season*, &c.] Such was the force of his disease, that it pierced and penetrated even into his bones, and the marrow of them; and such the pain that he endured in the muscles and tendons about them, and especially in the joints of them, that it was as if all his bones were piercing and breaking to pieces; he was in a like condition the sick man is described in ch. xxxiii. 19. and as David and Hezekiah were, Psal. vi. 2. Isa. xxxviii. 13. and what aggravated his case was, that this was *in the night-season*, when he should have got some sleep and rest, but could not for his pain: some render the words by supplying them thus; God, or the disease, or the pain, pierced my bones in the night-season; or *the night pierced my bones from me*; so Mr. Broughton; but rather they may be rendered, and the sense be, "in the night-season every one of my "bones pierce *the flesh* that is upon me:" his flesh was almost wasted and consumed, through the boils and ulcers on him, and he was reduced to a mere skeleton; and when he laid himself down on his bed, these pierced through his skin, and stuck out, and gave him exquisite pain: *and my sinews take no rest*; being contracted; or his nerves, as the word in the Arabic language signifies, as is observed by Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Donesh, and others; which were loosened, and the animal spirits were sunk, and he so low and dispirited, that he could get no rest: or the pulsatile veins and arteries, as Ben Gersom and Elias Levita[a], in which the pulse beats, and which beats with less strength when persons are asleep than when awake; but such was the force of Job's disease, that it beat even in the night, when on his bed, so strongly, that he could take no rest for it; the pulse beats, as physicians say[b], sixty times in a minute, and double the number in a burning fever, and which might be Job's case. Some take the word in the sense of fleeing or gnawing[c], as it is used ver. 3. and interpret it either of his enemies, who pursued after him, and had no rest in their beds, but went out in the night to inquire and hear what they could learn concerning him and his illness, whether it was become greater[d]; or who devoured him by their calumnies and detractions, and could not sleep unless they did mischief to him; see Prov. iv. 16, 17. or of the worms with which his body was covered, and which were continually gnawing, never rested, nor suffered him to take any rest; the Targum is, they that gnash at me rest not.

Ver. 18. *By the great force* of my disease *is my garment changed*, &c.] Either the colour of it, through the purulent matter from his ulcers running down upon it, or penetrating through it; or by reason of it he was obliged to shift himself, and to have change of raiment very frequently; or the supplement, *of my disease*, may be left out, and the sense be, with great force, through main strength, and with much difficulty, his garment was changed, was got off from him, sticking so close to him, and another put on: *it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat*: his disease encompassed him about on all sides as the collar or edge of his coat encompassed his neck, and cleaved as close, and was as tight unto him as that, and threatened him perhaps with a suffocation or strangling; see ch. vii. 15. the allusion is to garments used in the eastern countries, which were only open at top and bottom; at the top there was a hole to put the head through when put on, and a binding about it, and a button to it, or some such thing, which kept it tight about the neck; see Exod. xxviii. 32.

Ver. 19. *He hath cast me into the mire*, &c.] As Jeremiah was literally; here it is to be understood in a figurative sense; not of the mire of sin, into which God casts none, men fall into it of themselves, but of the mire of affliction and calamity; see Psal. xl. 2. and lxix. 2. and which Job here ascribes to God; and whereby he was in as mean, abject, and contemptible a condition, as if he had been thrown into a kennel, and rolled in it; and he speaks of it as an act of God, done with contempt of him, and indignation at him, as he apprehended it. Some Jewish writers[e] interpret it, *he taught me in the mire, or it taught me*: his disease, his ulcers taught him to sit down in the mire, or in the

[a] In Tishbi, p. 67. So Lud. Capellus in loc.
[b] Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 764.
[c] ערקי & rodentia mea, Schultens; fugientia membra mea, so some in Michaelis.
[d] Vid. Bar Tzemach in loc.
[e] Vid. Jarchi & Bar Tzemach in loc.

midst of ashes, ch. ii. 8. but though this reading might admit of a good sense, as that Job was taught, as every good man is, many useful lessons in and by afflictions; yet it seems to be a sense foreign from the words: *and I am become like dust and ashes*; a phrase by which Abraham expresses his vileness, meanness, and unworthiness in the sight of God, Gen. xviii. 27. Job, through the force of his disease, looked like a corpse, or one half dead, and was crumbling and dropping into the dust of death and the grave, and looked livid and ash-coloured; and even in a literal sense was covered with dust and ashes, when he sat among them, ch. ii. 8. though here it chiefly respects the miserable, forlorn, and contemptible condition in which he was.

Ver. 20. *I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me*, &c.] Which added greatly to his affliction, that though he cried to the Lord for help and deliverance, yet he turned a deaf ear to him; and though he heard him, as undoubtedly he did, he did not answer him immediately; at least not in the way in which he desired and expected he would: crying is expressive of prayer, and supposes distress, and denotes vehemence of spirit: *I stand up*; in prayer, standing being a prayer-gesture, as many observe from Jer. xv. 1. see the note on Matt. vi. 5. or he persisted in it, he continued praying, was incessant in it, and yet could obtain no answer; or this signifies silence, as some [f] interpret it; he cried, and then ceased, waiting for an answer; but whether he prayed, or whether he was silent, it was the same thing: *and thou regardest me not*: the word *not* is not in this clause, but is repeated from the preceding, as it is by Ben Gersom and others; but some read it without it, and give the sense either thus, thou considerest me whether it is fit to receive my prayer or no, so Sephorno; or to renew my strokes, to add new afflictions to me, as Jarchi and Bar Tzemach; or thou lookest upon me as one pleased with the sight of me in such a miserable condition, so far from helping me; wherefore it follows.

Ver. 21. *Thou art become cruel to me*, &c.] Or *turned*, or *changed* [g], to be cruel to me. Job suggests that God had been kind and gracious to him, both in a way of providence, and in shewing special love and favour to him, in a very distinguishing manner; but now he intimates his affections were changed and altered, and these were alienated from him, and his love was turned into an hatred of him; this is one of the unbecoming expressions which dropped from his lips concerning God; for the love of God to his people is never changed; it remains invariable and unalterable, in all dispensations, in every state and condition into which they come; there may be some of God's dispensations towards them, which may have the appearance of severity in them; and he may make use of instruments to chastise them, which may use them cruelly; but even then his bowels yearn towards them, and, being full of compassion, delivers out of their hands, and saves them, Jer. xxx. 14. and xxxi. 20. Hos. xi. 8, 9. *with thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against me*: God has a strong hand and arm, and none like him, and sometimes he puts forth the strength of it, and exerts his mighty power in afflicting his people, and his hand presses them sore, and they can scarcely stand up under it; and then it becomes them to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, and patiently bear it; and sometimes they take him to be their adversary, an enemy unto them, and filled with hatred of them, indignation against them, setting himself with all his might and main to ruin and destroy them; and this is a sad case indeed, to have such apprehensions of God, though unjust ones; for, as if God be for us, who shall be against us? so if he be against us, it signifies little who is for us; for there is no contending with him, ch. ix. 3, 4.

Ver. 22. *Thou liftest me up to the wind*, &c.] Of affliction and adversity, to be carried up with it, and tossed about by it, as chaff or stubble, or a dry leaf, being no more able to stand up against it than such things are to oppose the wind; though some interpret this of God's lifting him up in his state of prosperity, in which he was very visible and conspicuous to all, and enjoyed much light and comfort; but then he raised him to such an estate, with a view to cast him down, and that his fall and ruin might be the greater; and so this is observed as a proof of his being become cruel to him: *thou causest me to ride* upon it; seemingly in great pomp and state, but in great uncertainty and danger, being at best in a slippery place, in very fickle circumstances, as the event shewed; or rather the sense is, that he was swiftly carried into destruction, as if he rode on the wings of the wind to it, and was hurried thither at once, as soon as he was taken up with the tempest of adversity: *and dissolvest my substance*: his outward substance, his wealth and riches, his family, and the health of his body, all which as it were melted away, or were carried away as with a flood; and so as the metaphor of a tempestuous wind is used in the former clause, here that of an overflowing flood, which removed from him what seemed to be the most solid and substantial: the word is sometimes used for wisdom, and even sound wisdom, Prov. ii. 7. Mic. vi. 9. wherefore some have interpreted it of his being at his wits' end, of losing his reason and understanding, and which were at least disturbed and confounded by his afflictions; but his discourses and speeches shew the contrary, and he himself denies that wisdom was driven from him, ch. vi. 13.

Ver. 23. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death*, &c.] Quickly and by the present affliction upon him; he was assured, as he thought, that this was the view and design of God in this providence, under which he was to bring him to death and the grave; that he would never take off his hand till he had brought him to the dust of death, to that lifeless dust from whence he had his original; otherwise, that he would be brought thither, sooner or later, was no great masterpiece of knowledge; every man knows this will be the case with him as with all; death is become necessary by sin, which brought it into the world, and the sentence of it on all men in it, and by the decree and appointment of God, by which it is fixed and settled that all should

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[f] Jarchi, Ben Gersom, and Bar Tzemach.

[g] תהפך mutatus es, V. L. Tigurine version; versus es, Beza, Piscator; so Drusius, Cocceius, Vatablus, Michaelis, Mercerus, Schultens.

die: and this is confirmed by all experience in all ages, a very few excepted, only two persons, Enoch and Elijah: sometimes the death of persons is made known to them by divine revelation, as to Aaron and Moses; and sometimes it may be gathered to be nigh from the symptoms of it on the body; from growing diseases, and the infirmities of old age; but Job concluded it from the manner of God's dealing with him, as he thought in wrath and indignation, determining to make an utter end of him: *and to the house appointed for all living*; the grave, which is the house for the body when dead to be brought unto and lodged in; as the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, is for the soul in its separate state, until the resurrection-morn; which house or grave is man's long home, Eccl. xii. 5. and this is prepared and appointed for all men living, since all must die; and all that die have a house or grave, though that is sometimes a watery, and not an earthy one; however the dust of every body has a receptacle provided for it, where it is reserved until the time of the resurrection, and then it is brought forth, Rev. xx. 13. and this is by divine appointment; the word used signifies both an appointed time and place, and is often used of the Jewish solemnities, which were fixed with respect to both; and also of the people or congregation that attended them; the grave is the general rendezvous of mankind, and both the time when and the place where the dead are gathered and brought unto it are fixed by the determinate will and counsel of God.

Ver. 24. *Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the grave*, &c.] Or, *verily* [h], truly he will not, &c. I am well assured he never will, meaning either he never would stretch out his hand to shut up the grave; or rather keep it shut, and prevent Job from going down into it; or to open it, and fetch him out of it when in it: God is indeed able to do either of these, and has done it; sometimes, when persons are brought as it were to the gates of death and the grave, he says to them, Return; yea, when they are brought to the dust of death, he prevents them going into the grave, by restoring them to life before carried thither, as the Shunamite's son, Jairus's daughter, and the widow's son of Naim, even when he was carrying to his grave; some have been laid in the grave, and God hasstretched out his hand, and raised them up again; as the man that was laid in Elisha's grave, and Lazarus after he had lain in the grave some days; but such things are not usually done; in common, when a man dies, and is laid in the grave, he rises not again, till the heavens be no more; and this Job was persuaded would be his case: *though they cry in his destruction*; that is, though the friends and relations of the sick person, or the poor that he has been kind and bountiful unto, should cry unto God, whilst he is destroying him by the diseases upon him, and which threaten him with destruction, that he would spare his useful and valuable life; yet he is inexorable, and will not hear, but go on with what he intends to do, and takes him off by death, and lays him in the grave, the pit of destruction, so called because it wastes and consumes bodies laid in it; and when once laid there, all cries for a restoration to life again are vain and fruitless. Some take these words as expressed in a way of solace, as if Job comforted himself with this thought under his present afflictions, that, when once he was brought to death and the grave, there would be an end of all his sorrows; the hand of the Lord, that was now stretched out on him in a terrible way, would be no longer stretched out on him; he would then cease to afflict him, and he should be where the weary are at rest; and so the last clause is read with an interrogation, *is there any cry, or do any cry, in his destruction* [i]? no, when death has done its office, and the body is laid in the grave, there is no more pain nor sorrow, nor crying; all tears are wiped away, and there is no more sense of afflictions and sufferings; they are all at an end. Mr. Broughton renders these words as to the sense the same, and as in connexion with the following ones, *and prayed I not when plague was sent? when hurt came to any, thereupon cried I not?* and so do some others [k].

Ver. 25. *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble?* &c.] In outward trouble, whether personal in his own body, or in his family, or in his worldly affairs, or from wicked men, the men of the world; or in inward trouble, in soul-trouble, on account of in-dwelling sin, the breakings forth of it, the lowness of grace, as to exercise, the hidings of God's face, and the temptations of Satan: or *for him that is hard of day* [l]; with whom times are hard, the days are evil, with respect either to things temporal or spiritual; now Job had a sympathizing heart with such persons; he wept with them that wept; his bowels yearned towards them; he felt their sufferings and their sorrows, which is a Godlike frame of soul; for God, in all the afflictions of his people, is afflicted; a disposition of mind like that of the living Redeemer, who cannot but be touched with the feeling of the infirmities of saints, having been in all points tempted as they; and is a fruit of the Spirit of God, and very becoming the relation the saints stand in to one another, being members of the same body, and of each other; and therefore, when one member suffers, all the rest should sympathize with it, and, being brethren, should be loving, pitiful, and courteous to each other; and should consider that they also are in the body, and liable to the same distresses, whether outward or inward: was not *my soul grieved for the poor?* in general, and especially for the Lord's poor, for such in all ages have been chosen and called by him; for these Job was grieved at heart, when he saw their distress through poverty; and he not only expressed his concern for them by tears and words, but by distributing liberally to their necessities, ch. xxxi. 17—20. and by which he shewed his grief was real, hearty, and sincere, as here expressed; his *soul* was grieved, and he was sorry at his very heart for them: some render the words, *was not my soul like a pool of water* [m]? not only

[h] אך verum, Mercerus; profecto, Drusius, Bolducius; sane, Tigurine version.

[i] אם בפידו להן שוע aut clamant aliqui post obitum suum? Tigurine version; si in contritione ejus eis clamor? Montanus, Bolducius.

[k] Junius & Tremellius.

[l] לקשה יום ob durum die, Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius; cui dura erant tempora, Junius & Tremellius; et cui durus dies, Cocceius.

[m] עגמה restagnavit, sonic in Mercerus.

his head and his eyes, as Jeremiah's on another account, but his soul melted, and flowed like water with grief for them; and others, as Mr. Broughton, *did not my soul burn for the poor?* with sorrow for them, and an ardent desire to relieve them; see 2 Cor. xi. 29. now this was the frame of Job's mind in the time of his prosperity, very different from that in Amos vi. 4, 5, 6. and was certain and well known; he could appeal to all that knew him for the truth of it, it being what none could deny that had any knowledge of him; yea, he could appeal to an omniscient God, he was now speaking to, for the truth of it; nay, it is delivered in the form of an oath, *if I did not weep*, &c.[a], as in ch. xxxi. 16—22.

Ver. 26. *When I looked for good*, &c.] As he thought he might reasonably expect it; since he had shewn such a sympathizing spirit to persons in trouble, and such pity and mercy to the poor: in the time of his prosperity, he looked for a continuance of the good things he enjoyed, and expected to have had them for many years to come, and to have died in the possession of them, ch. xxix. 18. and even in his adversity, though he had received evil things at the hand of God, which he took patiently; yet at first he did not think they would always continue, but that there would be a turn of affairs, and he should again receive good at his hands; and he had been looking for it, as good men have reason to expect it; since God is good and does good, and especially to his own people, and has laid up goodness for them that fear him, and such an one Job was; and has promised good things unto them, both temporal and spiritual; for godliness and godly men have the promise of this life, and of that which is to come: but Job was disappointed in his expectation; for, says he, *then evil came* unto me, the evil of affliction, one upon the back of another, even when in the height of his prosperity; and since repeated evil, new afflictions, came upon him by the appointment, order, and direction of God: *and when I waited for light*; for the light of outward prosperity, such as he had formerly enjoyed; and for the light of God's countenance, which he most earnestly sought after, and longed for, and was in a waiting posture for it, as good men have reason to be; since light is sown for them in the purposes and decrees of God, in his counsel and covenant, in his Gospel, and the promises of it; and therefore should wait for the springing of it up, as the husbandman does for the springing up of the corn sown in the earth, and lying under the clods; and seeing that to the upright there arises light in darkness; and though God hides his face from them for a moment, he will have mercy on them, and therefore should wait his time to be gracious to them; but Job had waited long, and, as he thought, to no purpose: *for there came darkness*: the darkness of adversity, still thicker and darker, and no appearance of spiritual light and favour, or any discoveries of the love of God to him, or enjoyment of his presence; see Jer. viii. 15. Isa. lix. 9.

Ver. 27. *My bowels boiled, and rested not*, &c.] All contained within him, his heart, lungs, and liver, in a literal sense, through a violent fever burning within him; or figuratively, being under great distress and trouble, by reason of his afflictions, outward and inward, see Jer. iv. 19. Lam. i. 20. *the days of affliction prevented me*: came sooner upon him than he thought, he did not expect the evil days to come, and the years draw nigh in which he should have no pleasure, until he was more advanced in years, and the time of his dissolution was at hand; they came at once, and unawares, upon him, when he looked not for them: some render the word *met me*[b], unexpectedly; or rather, they *rushed upon me*[c], in an hostile way; came in troops, and invaded and surrounded him, see ch. xix. 12.

Ver. 28. *I went mourning without the sun*, &c.] So overwhelmed with grief, that he refused to have any comfort from, or any advantage by the sun; hence Mr. Broughton renders it, *out of the sun*; he did not choose to walk in the sunshine, but out of it, to indulge his grief and sorrow the more; or he went in black attire, and wrapped and covered himself with it, that he might not see the sun, or receive any relief by it: or *I go black*, but *not by the sun*[d]; his face and his skin were black, but not through the sun looking upon him and discolouring him, as in Cant. i. 6. but through the force of his disease, which had changed his complexion, and made him as black as a Kedarene, or those that dwell in the tents of Kedar, Cant. i. 5. and he also walked without the sun of righteousness arising on him, with healing in his wings, which was worst of all: *I stood up, and I cried in the congregation*: either in the congregation of the saints met together for religious worship, where he cried unto God for help and deliverance, and for the light of his countenance, ver. 20. or such was the extreme anguish of his soul, that when a multitude of people got about him to see him in his distressed condition, he could not contain himself, but burst out before them in crying and tears, though he knew it was unbecoming a man of his age and character; or he could not content himself to stay within doors and sooth his grief, but must go abroad and in public, and there expressed with strong cries and tears his miserable condition.

Ver. 29. *I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.*] Or ostriches, as the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; either he was obliged to dwell with such persons as were comparable to these creatures for their devouring words, hissing noise, and venomous speeches, or for want of compassion, and for their cruelty, as David is said to be among lions, Psal. lvii. 4. or also, he was like unto them, being solitary and alone, all his friends and acquaintance standing at a distance from him, as these creatures love lonesome and desolate places; or because of the wailing and howling noise they make, to which his mournful notes bore some resemblance, see Mic. i. 8. and the note there; or because, when these creatures cry and howl, and make a noise, no mercy is shewn to them, none pities or regards them; and so it was with him; though he stood and cried in ever so public a manner, none had any compassion on him.

Ver. 30. *My skin is black upon me*, &c.] Either

[a] אם לא בכיתי si non deflevi, Tigurine version; si non flevi, Piscator.

[b] קדמני occurrerunt mihi, Piscator, Cocceius.

[c] Incursarunt me, Schultens.

[d] בלא חמה non propter solem, Vatablus; non a sole, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Mercerus; non ab solem, Piscator.

through deep melancholy, as may be observed in persons of such a disposition, through grief and trouble; or rather through the force of his disease, the burning ulcers and black scabs with which he was covered, as the Jews were through famine, in their captivity, Lam. iv. 8. and v. 10. and *my bones are burnt with heat*: with the heat of a burning fever; which not only made his inwards boil, but reached to his bones, and dried up the marrow of them. Galen says[r] that bones may become so dry as to be crumbled into sand: the Syriac version is "my bones are burnt as his who is in a hot wind;" such as were common in the eastern countries, which killed men at once, and they became as black as a coal[s].

Ver. 31. *My harp also is turned to mourning*, &c.] Which he used, as David, either in religious worship, expressing praise to God thereby, or for his recreation in an innocent way; but now it was laid aside, and, instead of it, nothing was heard from him, or in his house, but the voice of mourning: *and my organ into the voice of them that weep*: another instrument of music, which had its name from the pleasantness of its sound, and was of early use, being first invented by Jubal, Gen. iv. 21. but not that we now so call, which is of late invention: those instruments which Job might have and use, both in a civil and in a religious way, were now, through afflictions, become useless to him, and neglected by him; or these expressions in general may signify, that, instead of mirth and joy he was wont to have, there were nothing now to be heard but lamentation and woe; see Lam. v. 15. Amos viii. 10.

CHAP. XXXI.

In this chapter Job gives an account of himself in private life, of the integrity and uprightness of his life, and his holy walk and conversation, with this view, that it might be thought that the afflictions which were upon him were not on account of a vicious course of life he had indulged unto, as was suggested; and he clears himself from various crimes which it might be insinuated he was guilty of, as from unchastity; and he observes the method he took to prevent his falling into it, and the reasons that dissuaded him from it, ver. 1—4. from injustice in his dealings with men, ver. 5—8. from the sin of adultery, ver. 9—12. from ill usage of his servants, ver. 13, 14, 15. from unkindness to the poor, which he enlarges upon, and gives many instances of his charity to them, ver. 16—23. from covetousness, and a vain confidence in wealth, ver. 24, 25. from idolatry, the worship of the sun and moon, ver. 26, 27, 28. from a revengeful spirit, ver. 29, 30, 31. and from inhospitality to strangers, ver. 32. from covering his sin, ver. 33. and fear of men, ver. 34. and then wishes his cause might be heard before God, ver. 35, 36, 37. and the chapter is closed with an imprecation on his head if guilty of any injustice, ver. 38, 39, 40.

Ver. 1. *I made a covenant with mine eyes*, &c.] Not to look upon a woman, and wantonly gaze at her beauty, lest his heart should be drawn thereby to lust after her; for the eyes are inlets to many sins, and particularly to uncleanness, of which there have been instances, both in bad men and good men, Gen. xxxiv. 2. 2 Sam. xi. 2. so the poet[t] represents the eye as the way through which the beauty of a woman passes swifter than an arrow into the hearts of men, and makes impressions there; see 2 Pet. ii. 14. hence Zaleucus ordered adulterers to be punished, by plucking out the eyes of the adulterer[u]; wherefore Job, to prevent this, entered into a solemn engagement with himself, laid himself under a strong obligation, as if he had bound himself by a covenant, made a resolution in the strength of divine grace, not to employ his eyes in looking on objects that might insnare his heart, and lead him to the commission of sin; he made use of all ways and means, and took every precaution to guard against it; and particularly this, to shut or turn his eyes from beholding what might be alluring and enticing to him: it is said[w] of Democritus, that he put out his eyes because he could not look upon a woman without lusting after her: *why then should I think upon a maid?* of corrupting and defiling her, since he had made a covenant with his eyes, and this would be a breach of that covenant: and therefore, besides the sin of lusting after her, or of corrupting her, he would be a covenant-breaker, and so his sin would be an aggravated one: or he made a covenant with his eyes, to prevent any impure thoughts, desires, and inclinations in him; for the eye affects the heart, and stirs up lust in it, and excites unclean thoughts and unchaste desires: this shews that the thought of sin is sin; that fornication was reckoned a sin before the law of Moses; and that Job better understood the spirituality of the law than the Pharisees did in the time of Christ, and had the same notion of lust in the heart being fornication and adultery as he had; and that good men are not without temptation to sin, both from within and from without; and therefore should carefully shun all appearances of evil, and whatsoever leads unto it, and take every necessary precaution to guard against it.

Ver. 2. *For what portion of God is there from above?* &c.] What good portion, as the Targum paraphrases it, can impure persons expect from God? such who indulge themselves, and live in the sin of uncleanness, cannot hope to have any part in God, or a portion of good things from him; he is above, and in the highest heavens, and every good thing comes from thence, and from him there; and particularly the spiritual blessings, wherewith he blesses his people, are in heavenly places in Christ, and from thence come to them; and here a special respect may be had to God himself, who is the portion of his people, both in life and at death,

[r] Apud Barthelin. de Cruce, sect. 12. p. 107.
[s] See the note on ch. xxvii. 21.
[t] Musæus de Heron. & Leand. v. 92, &c.
[u] Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 13. c. 24.
[w] Tertullian. Apolog. c. 46.

and to all eternity; but men that live a vicious course of life cannot conclude they have any part in God and Christ, nor in the grace of God, and the blessings of it, nor enjoy communion with him: and what *inheritance of the Almighty from on high?* heaven is an inheritance which belongs to the children of God, and he, as their heavenly Father, has bequeathed it unto them; this is from the almighty God, God all-sufficient; he has chosen this inheritance for them, and appointed them unto it; this is laid up by him, and reserved in heaven for them; and he gives both a right unto it, and a meetness for it, and will put them into the possession of it: but then impure persons, as fornicators and adulterers, have no inheritance in the kingdom of God and of Christ, Eph. v. 5. and this was a reason with Job, and what had an influence on him, to be careful to avoid the sin of uncleanness. Some understand the words as a question concerning what would be the portion and heritage of a wicked man, a corrupter of virgins; the answer to which is given in the next verse, destruction and a strange punishment; this is their portion from God, and the heritage appointed to them by him; see ch. xx. 29.

Ver. 3. Is *not destruction to the wicked?* &c.] It is even to such wicked men, who live in the sin of fornication, and make it their business to insnare and corrupt virgins; and which is another reason why Job was careful to avoid that sin; wickedness of every sort is the cause of destruction, destruction and misery are in the ways of wicked men, and their wicked ways lead unto it, and issue in it, even destruction of soul and body in hell, which is swift and sudden, and will be everlasting: this is laid up for wicked men among the treasures of God's wrath, and they are reserved for that, and there is no way of deliverance from it but by Christ: *and a strange* punishment *to the workers of iniquity;* the iniquity of fornication and whoredom, Prov. xxx. 20. who make it their business to commit it, and live in a continued course of uncleanness and other sins; a punishment, something strange, unusual, and uncommon, as the filthy venereal disease in this world, and everlasting burnings in another; or *alienation*[f], a state of estrangement and banishment from the presence of God and Christ, and from the society of the saints, to all eternity: see Matt. xxv. 41. 2 Thess. i. 9. Luke xvi. 26.

Ver. 4. *Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?*] That is, God, who is above, and the Almighty that dwells on high; he looks down from heaven, and beholds all the ways and works, the steps and motions, of the children of men; there is no darkness where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves; the fornicator and adulterer choose the night-season for the commission of their sin, fancying no eye sees them; but they cannot escape the eye of God, who is omniscient; he observes the ways they walk in, the methods they take to compass their designs; he marks and counts every step taken by them, as he does indeed take notice of and reckons up every action of men, good and bad; and the consideration of this was another argument with Job to avoid the sin of uncleanness; for however privately he might commit it, so as not to be seen by men, it could not be hidden from the all-seeing eye of God. Some take these words to be an obtestation, or appeal to God for the truth of what he had said; that he made a covenant with his eyes, and took every precaution to prevent his falling into the sin of uncleanness; and he whose eyes were upon his ways, knew how holily and unblamably he had walked; or else, as if the sense was, that had he given in to such an impure course of life, he might expect the omniscient God, that is above, and dwells on high, would bring upon him destruction, and a strange punishment, since he is the avenger of all such; others connect the words with the following, doth he not see my ways and steps, whether I have walked with vanity, &c. or no?

Ver. 5. *If I have walked with vanity,* &c.] Or with vain men, as Bar Tzemach interprets it, keeping company and having fellowship with them in their vain and sinful practices; or in the vanity of his mind, indulging himself in impurity of heart and life; or rather using deceitful methods to overreach and defraud others; for this seems to be another vice Job clears himself of, acting unjustly in his dealings with men, or dealing falsely with them: *if my foot hath hasted to deceit;* to cheat men in buying and selling, being ready and swift to do it, and in haste to become rich, which puts men oftentimes on evil ways and methods to attain it; see Prov. xxviii. 20.

Ver. 6. *Let me be weighed in an even balance,* &c.] Or *in balances of righteousness*[g], even in the balance of strict justice, the justice of God; he was so conscious to himself that he had done no injustice to any man in his dealings with them, that, if weight of righteousness, which was to be, and was the rule of his conduct between man and man, was put into one scale, and his actions into another, the balance would be even, there would be nothing wanting, or, however, that would require any severe censure: *that God may know mine integrity;* God did know his integrity, and bore a testimony to it, and to his retaining it, ch. ii. 3. but his meaning is, that should God strictly inquire into his life and conduct with respect to his dealings with men, as it would appear that he had lived in all good conscience to that day, so he doubted not but he would find his integrity such, that he would own and acknowledge it, approve of it, and commend it, and make it known to his friends and others, whereby he would be cleared of all those calumnies that were cast upon him. Some connect these words with the following, reading them affirmatively, *God knows mine integrity;* he knows that my step has not turned out of the way of truth and righteousness; that my heart has not walked after mine eye, in lustful thoughts and desires; and that there is no spoil, nor rapine, nor violence in my hand, that I should deserve such a punishment as to sow, and another eat: thus Sephorno.

Ver. 7. *If my step hath turned out of the way,* &c.] The way of God, the way of his commandments, the good and right way, the way of truth and righteousness, so far as Job had knowledge of it: for, besides the law and light of nature the Gentiles had in com-

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[f] נכר & abalienatio, Munster; & alienatio, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius, Schmidt.

[g] בםאזני צדק in bilancibus justitiæ, Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius; so Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens.

man, good men had some revelation, and notions of the mind and will of God unto them, both before and after the flood, previous to the Mosaic dispensation; which in some measure directed them what way to walk in, with respect to worship and duty; and from this way Job swerved not; not that he walked so perfectly in it as to be free from sin, and never commit any; or that he never took a step out of the way, or stepped awry; but he did not knowingly, wittingly, and purposely turn out of the way; and when, through infirmity of the flesh, the temptations of Satan, and snares of the world, he was drawn aside, he did not obstinately and finally persist therein; though this may have respect not to sin in general, but to the particular sin he is clearing himself from, namely, dealing falsely and deceitfully with men, in whatsoever he had to do with them, in matters of *meum* and *tuum*; or with regard to the rules of justice and equity between man and man, he was not conscious to himself he had departed from them; a like expression to those in Psal. vii. 3, 4, 5. and xliv. 18. where some particular sin is referred unto: *and mine heart walked after mine eyes*; meaning not in the lust of uncleanness, of which he had spoken before, as such do whose eyes are full of adultery; but in the sin of covetousness, so Achan's heart walked after his eyes; and this is one of the three things the world is full of, and the men of it indulge themselves in, the lust of the eyes, 1 John ii. 16. the sense is, that when he saw the riches and wealth of others, he did not covet them, nor take any illicit methods to get them out of their hands; or, when he saw the goods they were possessed of, and had with them to dispose of, he did not take the advantage of their ignorance, or use any evil ways and means to cheat and cozen them of them: it is pleasing to the flesh for the heart to walk after the eye, or to indulge to that which it is taken with; but it is very vain and foolish, as well as very dangerous so to do, Eccl. ii. 10. and xi. 9. a good man chooses a better guide than his eyes; even to be a follower of God, to tread in the steps of his living Redeemer, to walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, and according to the law and will of God: *and if any blot cleaved to my hands*; any spot, stain, or blemish, as all sin is of a defiling nature, particularly the hands may be blotted by shedding innocent blood, by taking bribes to pervert judgment; which the Septuagint version directs to here; and by getting, holding, and retaining mammon of unrighteousness, or ill-gotten goods; which is what is chiefly if not solely intended here; for it may be rendered, *if any thing hath cleaved*, &c. so Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom; for the word signifies both a *blot* and *any thing*; and the Targum takes in both senses; the meaning seems to be, that there was not any thing of another man's in his hands, which he had taken from him by force and violence, or had obtained by any deceitful methods, and which he held fast, and it stuck with him as pitch to the hands, and he did not care to part with it, or restore it, whereby his hands were defiled; otherwise Job had no such opinion of the cleanness of his hands and actions, as if he thought there was no spot of sin in them, or only such as he could wash out himself; he clearly speaks the contrary, ch. ix. 30, 31. which is the sense of every good man, who, conscious of his spots and blemishes, washes his hands, his actions, his conversation-garments, and makes them white in the blood of the Lamb; and such, and such only, have clean hands.

Ver. 8. Then *let me sow, and another eat*, &c.] If what he had before said was not true; but he had turned out of the way of righteousness, and walked after the sight of his eyes, and the mammon of unrighteousness cleaved to his hands; then he wishes he might sow his fields, and another enjoy the increase of them, which is one of God's judgments threatened unto the wicked and disobedient, Lev. xxvi. 16. Deut. xxviii. 33. *let my offspring be rooted out*; but Job had no offspring or children at this time to be rooted out or destroyed; they were all destroyed already; some think therefore that this imprecation was made by him in the time of his prosperity, though here repeated as it was then, he made a covenant with his eyes; but then this might have been improved against him and retorted on him, that so it was according to his wish; and therefore he must have been guilty of the sin he would have purged himself from; others suppose that he refers to futurity, and to the offspring he hoped to have hereafter; and when he should have them, wishes they may be rooted out, if he had done what he denies he had; but it does not appear that Job had any hope at all of being restored to his former state of prosperity, and of being possessed of a family and substance again, but the reverse. Gussetius [e] will have it, that he means his grandchildren; those indeed are sometimes called a man's children, and may with propriety be said to be his offspring, they springing from him; and it is possible, that, as his sons were settled from him, they were married and had children; but this is not certain, or, if they had any, that these were not destroyed with them; wherefore it is best to take the word [f] in its first and literal sense, for what springs out of the earth, herbs, plants, and trees, as in Isa. xlii. 5. so Ben Gersom and Bar Tzemach, and which best agrees with the phrase of being *rooted out*, and with what goes before; that as he had wished that which was sown in his fields might be eaten up by another, so what was planted and grew up in his gardens, orchards, vineyards, and olive-yards, and the like, might be quite rooted out and destroyed; if he was not the man he declared himself to be, or had wronged any of their goods and property, then this would have been a just retaliation of him.

Ver. 9. *If mine heart have been deceived by a woman*, &c.] By another man's wife, by wantonly looking at her beauty, and so lusting after her; and so, not through any blame or fault of her's, or by any artful methods made use of by her, to allure and insnare; such as were practised by the harlot, Prov. vii. but by neither was the heart of Job deceived, and drawn into the sin of uncleanness; for he had made a covenant with his eyes, as not to look at a virgin, so much less at another man's wife, to prevent his lusting after her;

[e] Comment. Ebr. p. 338.

[f] צאצאי germina mea, Beza, Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius, Michaelis, Schultens.

and whatever temptations and solicitations he might have been attended with, through the grace of God, as Joseph was, he was enabled to withstand them; though as wise a man, and the wisest of men, had his heart deceived and drawn aside thereby, Eccl. vii. 26. or, *if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;* to meet with his wife there, and carry on an intrigue with her; or to take the opportunity of going in when opened, in order to solicit her to his embraces, knowing her husband to be from home; see Prov. v. 8. and vii. 8, 19.

Ver. 10. Then *let my wife grind unto another*, &c.] Which some understand literally, of her being put to the worst of drudgery and slavery, to work at a mill, and grind corn for the service of a stranger, and be exposed to the company of the meanest of persons, and to their insults and abuses; as we find such as were taken captives and made prisoners by an enemy were put unto, as Samson, Judg. xvi. 22. and it may be observed, that to grind in a mill was also the work of women, Exod. xi. 5. Matt. xxiv. 41. as it was in early times; Homer[c] speaks of it as in times before him: but others take the words in a figurative sense, as if he imprecated that she lie with another man, and be defiled by him, as the Targum, Aben Ezra, and others[d]; see Isa. xlvii. 1, 2. and in like manner the following clause: *and let others bow down upon her;* both which phrases are euphemisms, or clean and decent expressions, signifying what otherwise is not to be named; the Scriptures hereby directing, as to avoid unchaste thoughts, inclinations, and desires, and impure actions, so obscene words and filthy talking, as becometh saints: but there is some difficulty in Job's imprecating or wishing such a thing might befall his wife; it could not be lawful, if he had sinned, to wish his wife might sin also; or, if he was an adulterer, that she should be an adulteress; the sense is not, that Job really wished such a thing; but he uses such a way of speaking, to shew how remote he was from the sin of uncleanness, there being nothing more disagreeable to a man than for his wife to defile his bed; it is the last thing he would wish for: and moreover Job suggests hereby, that had he been guilty of this sin, he must own and acknowledge that he would be righteously served, and it would be a just retaliation upon him, should his wife use him, or she be used, in such a manner; likewise, though a man may not wish for nor commit a sin for the punishment of another; yet God sometimes punishes sin with sin, and even with the same kind of sin, and with this; so David's sin with Bathsheba was punished with Absalom lying with his wives and concubines before the sun, 2 Sam. xii. 11. see Deut. xxviii. 30.

Ver. 11. *For this is an heinous crime*, &c.] Adultery; it is contrary to the light of nature, and is condemned by it as a great sin, Gen. xx. 9. and xxvi. 10. as well as contrary to the express will and law of God, Exod. xx. 14. and, though all sin is a transgression of the law of God, and deserving of death; yet there are some sins greater and more heinous than others, being attended with aggravating circumstances; and such is this sin, it is a breach of the marriage-contract and covenant between man and wife; it is doing injury to a man's property, and to that which is the nearest and dearest to him, and is what introduces confusion into families, kingdoms, and states; and therefore it follows: yea, *it is an iniquity* to be punished by *the judges;* who might take cognizance of it, examine into it, and pass sentence for it, and execute it; and, if they neglect to do their duty, God, the Judge of all the earth, will punish for it in the world to come, unless repented of: *for whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*, Heb. xiii. 4. the punishment of adultery was death by the law of God, and that by stoning, as appears from Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 21. John viii. 4, 5. and it is remarkable, that the Heathens, who were ignorant of this law, enjoined the same punishment for it; so Homer[e] introduces Hector reproving Paris for this sin, and suggests to him, that if he had his deserved punishment, he would have been clothed with a *stone coat*, as he beautifully expresses it; which Suidas[f] explains, by being overwhelmed with stones, or stoned; as Eustathius[g].

Ver. 12. *For it is a fire that consumeth to destruction*, &c.] Referring either to the nature of the sin of uncleanness; it is inflammatory, a burning lust, a fire burning in the breast; see 1 Cor. vii. 9. or to the effect of it, either the rage of jealousy in the injured person, which is exceeding fierce, furious, and cruel, like devouring fire, not to be appeased or mitigated, Prov. vi. 34, 35. Cant. viii. 6. or else it may respect the punishment of this sin in the times of Job, and which we find was practised among the Gentiles, as the Canaanites, Job's neighbours, burning such delinquents with fire; see Gen. xxxviii. 24. Jer. xxix. 22, 23. or rather the wrath of God for it, which is poured forth as fire, and burns to the lowest hell, and into which lake of fire all such impure persons will be cast, unless the grace of God prevents; and which will be a fire that will consume and destroy both soul and body, and so be an utter and everlasting destruction, Rev. xxi. 8. *and would root out all my increase;* even in this world; adultery is a sin that not only ruins a man's character, fixes an indelible blot upon him, a reproach that shall not be wiped off, and consumes a man's body, and destroys the health of it, but his substance also, the increase of his fields, and of his fruits, and by means of it a man is brought to a piece of bread, to beg it, and to be glad of it, Prov. vi. 26, 33. and v. 10.

Ver. 13. *If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant*, &c.] Whether it was a cause that related to any controversy or quarrel among themselves when it was brought before him, he did not reject it, because of the meanness of the contending parties, and the state of servitude they were in; but he received it and searched into it, heard patiently what each had to say, examined them thoroughly, entered into the merits of the cause, and either reconciled them, or passed a righteous sentence, punished the delinquent, and protected the innocent:

[c] Odyss. 7. v. 107. & Odyss. 20. v. 109.
[d] So T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 10. 1. & Luther, Schmidt apud Stockium, p. 414.

[e] Iliad. 3. v. 57.
[f] In voce Λάϊνον.
[g] In Homer. ibid.

or, if it was a cause relating to himself, any complaint of their work, or wages, or food, or clothing, as it seems to be from what follows: *when they contended with me;* had any thing to complain of, or to object to him on the above account, or any other, where there was any shew or colour of foundation for it; otherwise it cannot be thought he would indulge a saucy, malapert, and contradicting behaviour in them towards him: masters in those times and countries had an unlimited, and exercised a despotic power over their servants, and used them with great rigour, and refused to do them justice upon complaints; but Job behaved as if he had had the rules of the apostle before him to act by in his conduct towards his servants, Eph. vi. 9. Col. iv. 1. and even condescended to submit the cause between him and his servants to other judges or arbitrators, or rather took cognizance of it himself, heard patiently and carefully what they had to allege, and did them justice.

Ver. 14. *What then shall I do when God riseth up?* &c.] That is, if he had despised and rejected the cause of his servants, or had neglected or refused to do them justice; he signifies he should be at the utmost loss to know what to do, what excuse to make, or what to say in his own defence, when God should rise up to defend the cause of the injured; either in a way of Providence in this life, or at the great day of judgment in the world to come, when every thing will be brought to account, and masters and servants must stand alike before the judgment-seat of God, to receive for the things they have done, whether good or evil: *and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?* when he makes a visitation among men, either in this world, even in a fatherly way, visits transgressions, and reproves and corrects for them; had he been guilty of ill usage of his servants, he must have silently submitted to such visitations and chastisements, having nothing to say for himself why he should not be thus dealt with; or in the world to come, in the great day of visitation, when God shall make inquisition for sin, and seek it out, and call to an account for it; and should this be produced against him, even contempt of the cause of his servants, he was sensible he could not answer him for it, nor for any one sin of a thousand, as no man will be able to do; but must be speechless, unless he has a better righteousness than his own to answer for him in that time to come. This is Job's first reason which deterred him from using his servants ill; another follows.

Ver. 15. *Did not he that made me in the womb make him?* &c.] And her also, both his man-servant and maid-servant: these were made by the Lord as Job was, and in a like place and manner as he himself; though parents are the instruments of begetting children, and of bringing them into the world, God is the Maker of men, as at the beginning, and all are alike made by him, in whatsoever rank, condition, and circumstance of life, whether masters or servants; and they are all fabricated in the same shop of nature, the womb of a woman: *and did not one fashion us in the womb?* that is, he who is the one God, according to Mal. ii. 10. God is one in nature and essence, though there are three Persons in the unity of the Godhead; and this one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, is the Creator of all men and things; hence we read of *Creators*, Eccl. xii. 1. and, though one God makes the bodies and creates the souls of men now as at the first, and all are formed and fashioned by him, high, low, rich and poor, bond and free; and they have all the same rational powers and faculties of soul, Psal. xxxiii. 15. as well as the same curious art and skill are employed in forming and fashioning their bodies and the members of them, in the lower parts of the earth, in their mother's womb; yea, they are fashioned *in one womb*[a], as the words will better bear to be rendered according to the position of them in the original and the accents; not indeed in the same identical womb, but in a like one: there are two words in the original here, both translated *womb;* the one signifies the *ovarium*, in which the conception is made; the other designs the secundine, in which the foetus is wrapped or covered; for so it may be rendered, *did he not cover us?* &c.[1]; though Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, and others, interpret it of the one God as we do: Job's reasoning is, that seeing he and his servants were equally the workmanship of God, and both made in the womb by him, and curiously fashioned alike, and possessed of the same rational powers, it would be unreasonable in him to use them ill, who were his fellow-creatures; and should he, he might expect the Maker of them both would highly resent it. Macrobius[k], an Heathen writer, gives a remarkable instance of the care heaven, as he expresses it, has of servants, and how much the contempt of it is resented thereby; and reasons much in the same manner concerning them as Job does here, that they are men, though servants; are of the same original, breathe in the same air, live and die as other men.

Ver. 16. *If I have withheld the poor from their desire*, &c.] Their reasonable desires, and which it was in his power to grant; as when they desired a piece of bread, being hungry, or clothes to cover them, being naked; but not unreasonable desires, seeking and asking great things for themselves, or unlimited and unbounded ones, such as the two sons of Zebedee desired of Christ, Mark x. 35. *or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;* through long waiting for, and expecting help and succour from him, and at last disappointed. Job did not use the widow in such a manner as to give her reason to hope for relief or counsel from him she came for, and make her wait long, and then send her away empty, as he was charged, ch. xxii. 9. but he soon dispatched her, by granting her what she sued to him for.

Ver. 17. *Or have eaten my morsel myself alone*, &c.] Though he had kept no doubt a plentiful table in the time of his prosperity suitable to his circumstances, yet had been no luxurious person, and therefore calls provisions a *morsel;* however, be it what it would, more or less, he did not eat it alone; what he had for himself the poor had a share of it with him, and the same he ate himself he gave to them: *and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof;* meaning the poor fatherless; for as to the rich fatherless, it was no charity to feed them: this verse contradicts the charge exhibited against him, ch. xxii. 7.

[a] ברחם אחד εν τη αυτη κοιλια, Sept. in utero uno, Munster; so Beza, Drusius, Michaelis.

[1] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 11.

[k] Vid. Hackman. Precidan. Sacr. p. 193.

Ver. 18. *For from my youth he was brought up with me as with a father*, &c.] That is, the poor or the fatherless, one or both; as soon as he was at years of discretion, and was capable of observing the distressed circumstances of others, he had a tender and compassionate regard to the poor and fatherless, and acted the part of a father to them; was as affectionately concerned for them as if he had been their father, and took such care of them as if they were his children; see ch. xxix. 16. *and I have guided her from my mother's womb*: the widow, by his counsel and advice: an hyperbolical expression, signifying how early he was a succourer of such persons, by giving his friendly advice, or needful assistance; the Vulgate Latin version renders it, *from my youth mercy grew up with me*, &c. a merciful disposition, a compassionate regard to the poor and fatherless; this was as it were connatural to him; for though there is no good disposition really in man, without the grace of God, of which Job might early partake, yet there is a shew of it in some persons, in comparison of others; some have a natural tender disposition to the poor, when others are naturally cruel and hardhearted to them; and so Mr. Broughton renders the words to this sense, "for from my youth this grew "with me as a father, and from my mother did I "tender it:" but the first sense seems best.

Ver. 19. *If I have seen any perish for want of clothing*, &c.] A man may be in such poor circumstances as to want proper clothing to cover his naked body with, and preserve it from the inclemencies of the weather, and for want of it be ready to perish or die with cold. Job denies he had seen any such; not that he had never seen persons in such perishing circumstances; but he had not seen them as to *despise* them, as the Vulgate Latin version, as to have them in contempt, or look at them with disdain because of their poverty and rags, or sordid apparel; or so as to *overlook* them, as the Septuagint version, to neglect them, and to take no notice of them, and make no provision for their clothing, a warm and comfortable garment, as in the next verse: *or any poor without covering*; without clothing sufficient to cover himself with, and keep him warm; Job had seen such objects, but he did not leave them in such a condition; he saw them, and had compassion on them, and clothed them.

Ver. 20. *If his loins have not blessed me*, &c.] Which were girded and covered with garments he gave him; which, as often as he put on and girded his loins with, put him in mind of his generous benefactor, and this put him upon sending up an ejaculatory wish to heaven, that all happiness and blessedness might attend him, who had so comfortably clothed him; see ch. xxix. 13. *and* if *he were* not *warmed with the fleece of my sheep*; not with a fleece of wool as taken off the back of the sheep, or with a sheep's skin, having the wool on it, but with it, as made up into cloth; with a woollen garment, which was a kind of clothing that very early obtained, and is what is warm and comfortable, see Deut. xxii. 11. Job clothed the naked, not with gay apparel, which was not necessary, but with decent and useful raiment, and not with the fleece of other men's sheep, but with the fleece of his own sheep, or with cloth made of the wool of his own flock, giving what was his own and not others; which always should be observed in acts of charity; see 2 Sam. xii. 4. Thus Christ, the antitype of Job, feeds the poor and the fatherless whom he finds, though he does not leave them so; it is at his own table, and with his own bread, with provisions of his own making; and clothes them with the robe of his righteousness, and garments of salvation, which is a clothing and a covering to them, and secures them from perishing, and causes joy and gladness in them, Isa. lxi. 10.

Ver. 21. *If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless*, &c.] Either in a menacing way, threatening what he would do to them; which, from a man of wealth and authority, a civil magistrate, a judge, is very terrible to the poor and fatherless; or in order to strike him, which would be to smite with the fist of wickedness; or give a signal to others, by lifting up the hand to smite, as Ananias gave orders to smite the Apostle Paul; or thereby to give his vote against the fatherless wrongly, suffrages being sometimes made by lifting up the hands; or hereby Job signifies, that he was so far from doing the fatherless any real injury, that he had not so much as lifted up his hand, and even a finger against him: *when I saw my help in the gate*; in the court of judicature held in the gate of the city, as was usual; though he knew he had the bench of judges for him, or they would give sentence in his behalf, and against the fatherless, if he did but hold up his hand, or lift up a finger to them, so ready would they be to take his part and be on his side; yet he never made use of his power and interest to their detriment, or took such an advantage against them.

Ver. 22. *Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade*, &c.] With which the upper part of it is connected; let it be disjointed from it, or rot and drop off from it; a dreadful calamity this, to lose an arm and the use of it, to have it fall off immediately, as a judgment from God, and in just retaliation for lifting up an hand or arm against the fatherless; as Jeroboam's arm withered when he put it forth from the altar, and ordered hands to be laid upon the prophet for crying against the altar, 1 Kings xiii. 4. *and mine arm be broken from the bone*: from the channel-bone, as the margin of our Bibles, or rather from the elbow, the lower part of the arm; and so may be rendered, *or mine arm*, &c. Eliphaz had brought a charge against Job, that the arms of the fatherless had been broken, and suggests that they had been broken by him, or by his orders, ch. xxii. 9. and Job here wishes, that if that was the case, that his own arm was broken: such imprecations are not to be made in common, or frequently, and only when a man's innocence cannot be vindicated but by an appeal to the omniscient God; an instance somewhat like this, see in Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6.

Ver. 23. *For destruction* from *God was a terror to me*, &c.] Though he feared not men, they being at his beck and command, ready to do any thing for him he should order, yet he feared God; and the dread of his resentment, and of destruction from him the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy, had such an influence on him as to deter and keep him from all unkindness to the poor, and injustice to the fatherless; he dreaded the destruction of himself, his family, and substance in this world, and everlasting destruction of soul and

body in the world to come; which of all things is to be feared, Matt. x. 28. and Old-Testament saints were much under a spirit of bondage to fear, and were actuated thereby; and, though Job might not be under any dread of eternal damnation, knowing his interest in the living Redeemer; yet he might fear temporal destruction, as it is certain he did; which thing he feared came upon him, though not for any crime or crimes he was guilty of, see ch. xxx. 25. he might fear, as a good man may, the chastisements and corrections of his heavenly Father: *and by reason of his highness I could not endure;* God is higher than the highest angels, or men; he is above all gods, so called; he is God over all, blessed for ever; and such is his height, his glory, and his majesty, that it is terrible, and the dread of them makes men afraid; nor can any sinner stand before him, nor withstand him, nor hope to prevail against him, nor flee from his presence, nor escape out of his hand, nor bear his wrath and indignation, and the lighting down of his arm; for what hands can be strong, or heart endure, when the almighty God deals with them? or Job's sense may be, that such an awe of the divine Being was always upon him, that he *could not* do any unkind thing to the poor, or unjust one to the fatherless.

Ver. 24. *If I have made gold my hope,* &c.] Job here purges himself from idolatry in a figurative sense, as he afterwards does from it, taken in a literal sense; for covetousness is idolatry, and a covetous man is an idolater; he worships his gold and silver, placing his affections on them, and putting his trust and confidence in them, Eph. v. 5. Col. iii. 5. for to make gold the object or ground of hope is to place it in the room of God, who is the Hope of Israel, and in whom every good man should trust, and whom he should make his hope, Jer. xiv. 8. and xvii. 13. not gold on earth, but glory in heaven, is what the good man is hoping for; and not riches, but Christ and his righteousness, are the foundation of such an hope; to make gold our hope is to have hope in this life, and to make a thing present the object of it; whereas true hope is of things not seen and future, and if only in this life good men have hope, they are of all most miserable; but they have in heaven a better and a more enduring substance, and a better ground for hope of that substance, than worldly wealth and riches can give: *or have said to the fine gold, thou art my confidence;* as bad men do, and good men are prone unto, and therefore to be cautioned against it, Psal. xlix. 6. and lii. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 17. for this is not only to trust in uncertain riches, and in unsatisfying ones, but to put them in the stead of God, who is or ought to be the confidence of the ends of the earth: not gold, but the living God, who gives all things richly to enjoy, is to be trusted in; when men covet riches, and trust in them as their security from evil, and that they may live independent of the providence of God, it is virtually to deny it, and carries in it secret atheism; as well as such a confidence is destruction of the worship of God, and such a temper makes a man an unprofitable hearer, plunges him into errors and hurtful lusts, and endangers his everlasting happiness, Hab. ii. 9. Matt. xiii. 22. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Mark x. 24. in after-times the Romans worshipped the goddess *Pecunia*, or money, as Austin [a] relates.

Ver. 25. *If I rejoiced because my wealth was great,* &c.] As it was, see ch. i. 2, 3. yet he did not set his heart upon it, please himself with it, indulge to a carnal joy on account of it, nor suffer it to engross his affections, or alienate them from God his chief joy; not but that a man may lawfully rejoice in the goodness of God unto him, in increasing his wealth, and praise him for it, who has placed him in such easy circumstances, and so comfortably provided for him and his family, and put him into a capacity to do good to others; and he may rejoice in what God has given him, and cheerfully partake of it, 1 Chron. xxix. 13, 14. Deut. xii. 7. Eccl. v. 19, 20. *and because my hand had gotten much;* though he had much wealth, he did not ascribe it to his own industry, and applaud his own wisdom and diligence, as men are apt to do, for all comes of God, and is owing to his blessing; he did not please himself when become rich, as if his own hand had found him much substance, as Ephraim did, Hos. xii. 8.

Ver. 26. *If I beheld the sun when it shined,* &c.] Some take this to be a reason why Job did not make gold his hope and confidence, because all sublunary and earthly enjoyments must be uncertain, fading, and perish, since the sun and moon are not without their deficiencies and changes, to which sense the Septuagint version inclines; others, as Nachmanides, that they are a denial that Job ascribed his wealth and substance to the influence of the heavenly bodies; and many interpreters are of opinion that they are a continuation of the same subject as before; Job hereby declaring that neither his eye nor his heart were set upon his outward prosperity, comparable to the light of the sun, and the brightness of the moon; that he did not secretly please himself with it, nor congratulate himself upon it, nor applaud his own wisdom and industry; and of late Schultens and others interpret it of flattering great personages, complimenting them, and courting their favour, which we call worshipping the rising sun; but I rather think it is to be understood, as it more generally is, of worshipping the sun and moon in a literal sense; which was the first kind of idolatry men went into; those very ancient idolaters, the Zabii, worshipped the sun as their greater god, as Maimonides [b] observes, to whom he says they offered seven bats, seven mice, and seven other creeping things, with some other things also; in after-times horses were offered to it, see 2 Kings xxiii. 11. So the ancient Egyptians worshipped the sun and moon, calling the one Osiris, and the other Isis [c]. The word for sun is *light*, and it is so called because it is a luminous body, and the fountain of light to others; it is called the greater light, Gen. i. 16. and from this Hebrew word *or*, with the Egyptians, Apollo, who is the sun, is called Horus, as Macrobius [d] relates; it is said to *shine*, as it always does, even when below our horizon, or in an eclipse, or under a cloud,

[a] De Civitate Dei, l. 4. c. 21.
[b] Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 29. p. 424.
[c] Diodor. Sic. l. 1. p. 10.
[d] Saturnal. l. 1. c. 21.

though not seen by us. Job has here respect to its shining clearly and visibly, and perhaps at noon-day, when it is in its full strength; unless regard is had to its bright and shining appearance at its rising, when the Heathens used to pay their homage and adoration to it [d]: now when Job denies that he beheld it shining, it cannot be understood of the bare sight of it, which he continually had; nor of beholding it with delight and pleasure, which might be very lawfully done, Eccl. xi. 7. nor of considering it as the work of God, being a very glorious and useful creature, in which his glory is displayed, and for which he is to be praised, because of its beneficial influence on the earth; see Psal. viii. 3, 4. and xix. 1. and cxxxvi. 1, 7. Deut. xxxiii. 14. but of his beholding it with admiration, as if it was more than a creature, ascribing deity to it, and worshipping it as God; and the same must be understood of the moon in the next clause: *or the moon walking in brightness;* as at first rising, or rather when in the full, in the middle of the month, as Aben Ezra; when it walks all night, in its brightness, illuminated by the sun: these two luminaries, the one called the king, the other the queen of heaven, were very early worshipped, if not the first instances of idolatry. Diodorus Siculus [e] says, that the first men of old, born in Egypt, beholding and admiring the beauty of the world, thought there were two gods in the nature of the universe, and that they were eternal; namely, the sun and moon, the one they called Osiris, and the other Isis; hence the Israelites, having dwelt long in Egypt, were in danger of being drawn into this idolatry, against which they are cautioned, Deut. iv. 19. and where was a city called Heliopolis, or the city of the sun, as in the Greek version of Isa. xix. 18. where was a temple dedicated to the worship of it; and so the Arabians, the neighbours of Job, according to Herodotus [f], worshipped the sun and moon; for he says the Persians were taught by them and the Assyrians to sacrifice to the sun and moon; and so did the old Canaanites and the Phœnicians; hence one of their cities is called Beth-shemesh, the house or temple of the sun, Josh. xix. 22, yea, we are told [g], that to this day there are some traces of this ancient idolatry in Arabia, the neighbourhood of Job; as in a large city in Arabia, upon the Euphrates, called Anna, where they worship the sun only; this being common in those parts in Job's time, he purges himself from it.

Ver. 27. *And mine heart hath been secretly enticed,* &c.] Drawn away by beholding the magnitude of these bodies, the swiftness of their motion, their glorious appearance, and great usefulness to mankind, to entertain a thought of their being deities; and privately to worship them, in secret acts of devotion, as by an honourable esteem of them as such, reverence and affection for them, trust and confidence in them; for, as there is a secret worshipping of the true God, so there is a secret idolatry, idolatry in the heart, and setting up of idols there, as well as worshipping them in dark places, in chambers of imagery, as the Jews did, Ezek. viii. 12. *or my mouth hath kissed my hand;* idols used to be kissed by their votaries, in token of their veneration of them, and as expressive of their worship of them; so Baal and Jeroboam's calves were kissed by the worshippers of them, 1 Kings xix. 18. Hos. xiii. 2. Kissing is used to signify the religious veneration, homage, and worship of a divine Person, the Son of God, Psal. ii. 12. and such deities especially that were out of the reach of their worshippers, as the sun, moon, and stars were, they used to put their hands to their mouths, and kiss them, in token of their worship; just as persons now, at a distance from each other, pay their civil respects to one another: instances of religious adoration of idols performed in this manner, see in the note on Hos. xiii. 2. Job denies that he had been guilty of such idolatry, either secretly or openly.

Ver. 28. *This also were an iniquity* to be punished by the *judge,* &c.] As well as adultery, ver. 11. by the civil magistrates and judges of the earth, who are God's vicegerents, and therefore it behoves them to take cognizance of such an iniquity, and to punish for it, which affects in so peculiar a manner the honour and worship of the true God; this by the law of Moses was punished by stoning to death, Deut. xiii. 9. however this will be taken notice of and punished by God the Judge of all, whose law is broken hereby, and who will visit this iniquity more especially on those who commit it, and their posterity after them. Idolaters of every sort shall have their part and portion in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, Exod. xx. 3, 4, 5. Rev. xxi. 8. the consideration of its being such a heinous sin, and so deserving of punishment, deterred Job from it; the Targum paraphrases it, a most amazing iniquity, it being, as follows, a denial of the true God: *for I should have denied the God* that is *above;* that is, had he worshipped the sun and moon secretly or openly; for, as the athiest denies him in words, the idolater denies him in facts, worshipping the creature besides the Creator, and giving his glory to another, and his praise to idols; which is a virtual denial of him, even of him who is above the sun and moon in place, being higher than the heavens; and in nature, excellency, and glory, being the Creator of them, and they his creatures; and in power and authority, who commands the sun, and it rises not, and has appointed the moon for seasons, Job ix. 7. Psal. civ. 19.

Ver. 29. *If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me,* &c.] Job, though a good man, had his enemies, as all good men have, and that because of their goodness, and who hated him with an implacable hatred, without a cause, there being a rooted bitter enmity in the seed of the serpent against the godly in all generations; on whom sooner or later, at one time or another, destruction comes, one calamity or another on their families, diseases on their bodies, loss of substance, death of themselves or relatives; now it is a common thing with wicked men to rejoice in the adversity of their enemies, but good men should not do so; yet it is a difficult thing, and requires a large measure of grace,

[d] Illi ad surgentem conversi lumina solem. Virgil. Æneid. 12.
[e] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 10.
[f] Clio, sive, l. 1. c. 131.
[g] De la Valle Itinerar. par. 2. c. 9. apud Spanheim. Hist. Job. c. 6. sect. 14. No. 6. p. 108, 109.

and that in exercise, not to feel any pleasing emotion, a secret joy and inward pleasure, at the hearing of any thing of this sort befalling an enemy; which is a new crime Job purges himself from: *or lifted up myself when evil found him*: either the evil of sin, which sooner or later finds out the sinner, charges him with guilt, and requires punishment, or the evil of punishment for sin; which, though it may seem to move slowly, pursues the sinner, and will overtake him, and light upon him. Mr. Broughton renders the words, *and bestirred me when he found loss*: loss in his family, in his cattle, and in his substance; now, when this was the case, Job did not raise up himself in a haughty manner, and insult and triumph over him, or stir up himself to joy and rejoicing, or to make joyful motions, as Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom interpret it; and by his gestures shew that he was elated with the evil that had befallen his enemy; indeed so far as the fall and destruction of the wicked make for the public good, for the interest of religion, for the glory of God, and the honour of his justice, it is lawful for good men to rejoice thereat; but not from a private affection, or from a private spirit of revenge, see Psal. lviii. 10, 11. Prov. xi. 10. Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2.

Ver. 30. *Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin*, &c.] Which, as it is the instrument of speech, is often the means of much sin, particularly of cursing men, and expressing much bitterness against enemies; but Job laid an embargo upon it, kept it as with a bridle, restrained it from uttering any evil, or wishing any to his worst adversaries; which is difficult to do, when provocations are given, as follows: *by wishing a curse to his soul*; not to his soul as distinct from his body, being the super-excellent and immortal part; that it be everlastingly damned, as wicked men wish to their own souls, and the souls of others, but to his person, wishing some calamity might befall him, some disease seize upon him, or that God would take him away by death: Job would never suffer himself to wish any thing of this kind unto his enemy.

Ver. 31. *If the men of my tabernacle*, &c.] Either his friends, that came to visit him, and take a meal with him, and would sometimes tarry awhile with him in his house, being very free and familiar with him; and who were, as it were, at home in his tabernacle; or rather his domestic servants, that were under his roof, and dwelt in his house, see ch. xix. 15. if these *said not, oh that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied*: of the flesh of Job's enemy; and the sense is, that his servants used to say, we cannot bear to see our master so ill used and insulted by his enemy; we wish he would only allow us to avenge him on him, we would eat him up alive; we would devour him, and destroy him at once; nor can we be satisfied unless we have leave to do it: and so this is a further proof of Job's patience with his enemies, that though he had fetters on in his family, his servants solicited him to revenge, yet he abstained from it; which may be exemplified in the cases of David and of Christ, 1 Sam. xxvi. 8. 2 Sam. xvi. 9. Luke ix. 54. though some think these words express Job's patience towards his servants, who were so angry with him for the strict discipline he observed in his house, that they wished they had his flesh to eat, and could not be satisfied without it; and yet, so far was he from taking pleasure in the calamities of his enemies, and wishing ill to them, that he did not resent the ill-natured speeches of his servants, and avenge himself on them for their wicked insults upon him: but it can hardly be thought that Job would keep such wicked servants in his house; but perhaps Job here enters upon a new crime, which he clears himself of, and is opened more fully in the next verse, namely, inhospitality to strangers; since the particle *if* commonly begins a new article in this chapter, and being taken in this sense, various interpretations are given; some, as if Job's servants were displeased with him for his hospitality, that his house was always so full of guests, that they were continually employed in dressing food for them, that they had not time, or that there was not enough left for them to eat of his flesh, his food, and be satisfied with it; or else, as pleased with the plentiful table he kept, and therefore desired to continue always in his service, and eat of his food; nor could they be satisfied with the food of others, or live elsewhere; though perhaps it is best of all to render the words, as by some, *who will give*, or shew the man *that is not satisfied of his flesh*[s]? point out the man in all the neighbourhood that has not been liberally entertained at Job's table to his full satisfaction and content; and his liberality did not extend only to his neighbours, but to strangers also; as follows.

Ver. 32. *The stranger did not lodge in the street*, &c.] By a stranger is not meant an unconverted man, that is a stranger to God and godliness, to Christ, and the way of salvation by him, to the Spirit of God and spiritual things; nor a good man, who is a stranger and pilgrim on earth; but one that is out of his nation and country, and at a distance from it, whether a good man or a bad man; these Job would not suffer to lie in the streets in the night-season, exposed to the air and the inclemencies of it; see Judg. xix. 15—21. but *I opened my doors to the traveller*: even all the doors of his house, to denote his great liberality, that as many as would might enter it; and this was done by himself, or, however, by his order; and some think that it signifies that he was at his door, waiting and watching for travellers to invite them in, as Abraham and Lot, Gen. xviii. 1, 2. and xix. 1, 2. or his doors were opened *to the way*[t], as it may be rendered, to the roadside; his house was built by the way-side; or, however, the doors which lay towards that side were thrown open for travellers to come in at as they pleased, and when they would; so very hospitable and kind to strangers and travellers was Job, and so welcome were they to his house and the entertainment of it, see Heb. xiii. 2.

Ver. 33. *If I covered my transgressions as Adam*, &c.] Job could not be understood, by this account he had given of the holiness of his life, that he thought himself quite free from sin; he had owned himself to be a sinner in several places before, and disclaimed perfec-

[s] So Schultens, quis; and Ikenius, apud ib.

[t] לארח ad semitam seu viam, Mercerus; versus viam, Piscator, Michaelis; לדרך Ben Gersom.

tion; and here he acknowledges he was guilty of transgressing the law of God, and that in many instances; for he speaks of his *transgressions* in the plural number; but then he did not seek to cover them from the sight of God or men, but frankly and ingenuously confessed them to both; he did not cover them, palliate, excuse, and extenuate them, as Adam did his, by laying the blame to his wife; and as she by charging it on the serpent; and those excuses they made are the inventions they found out, Eccl. vii. 29. or the meaning is, Job did not do *as men*[k] in common do; who, when they have sinned, either through fear or shame, endeavour to conceal it, and keep it out of the sight of others, unless they are very hardened and audacious sinners, such as the men of Sodom were, see Hos. vi. 7. *by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom;* meaning perhaps some particular iniquity which his nature was most inclined to; this he did not attempt to hide in secret, as what is put into the bosom is; or that he did not spare it and cherish it, and, from an affection to it, keep it as persons and things beloved are, laid in the bosom; and so Mr. Broughton reads the words, *hiding my sin of a self-love;* either having a self-love to it, or hiding it of self-love, that is, from a principle of self-love, to preserve his honour, credit, and reputation among men.

Ver. 34. *Did I fear a great multitude?* &c.] No, they did not deter him from confessing his sin in the most public manner, when sensible or convicted of it, and when such a public acknowledgment was necessary: *or did the contempt of families terrify me?* no, the contempt he might suppose he should be had in by some families that knew him, and he was well acquainted with, did not terrify him from making a free and ingenuous confession of his sins: *that I kept silence; or did I keep silence, and went not out of the door?* so as not to open his mouth by confession in public; but kept within doors through fear and shame; or else the sense is, that he was not intimidated from doing his duty as a civil magistrate, administering justice to the poor and oppressed; neither the dread of a clamorous mob, nor the contempt of families of note, or great personages, could deter him from the execution of his office with uprightness, so as to cause him to be silent, and keep at home; but without any regard to the fear of the one, or the contempt of the other, he went out from his house through the street to the court of judicature, took his place on the bench, and gave judgment in favour of those that were oppressed, though the multitude was against them, and even persons and families of note: or thus, though I could have put a great multitude to fear, yet the most contemptible persons in any family, so Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom interpret that phrase, the meanest person, or but a beggar, if his cause was just, terrified him; or such was the fear of God upon him, that he durst do no other than to do him justice; so that he could not open his mouth against him, or stir out of doors to do him the least injury; though perhaps it may be best of all, with Schultens, to consider these words as an imprecation, that if what he had said before from ver. 24 was not true; if he was not clear from idolatry figurative and literal, from a malicious and revengeful spirit, from inhospitality and unkindness to strangers, from palliating, excusing, and extenuating his sins; then as if he should say, may I be frighted with a tumult, or a multitude of people, and terrified with the public contempt of families; may I be as silent as a mope in my own house, and never dare to stir out of doors, or shew my face, or see the face of any man any more: and then, before he had quite finished his account of himself, breaks out in the following manner.

Ver. 35. *Oh, that one would hear me!* &c.] Or, *who will give me a hearer*[l]? Oh, that I had one! not a hearer of him as a teacher and instructor of many, as he had been, ch. iv. 3. or only to hear what he had delivered in this chapter; but to hear his cause, and hear him plead his own cause in a judiciary way; he does not mean an ordinary hearer, one that comes out of curiosity into courts of judicature to hear causes tried, what is said on both sides, and how they will issue; but, as Bar Tzemach paraphrases it, "who "shall give me a judge that shall hear me," that would hear his cause patiently, examine it thoroughly, and judge impartially, which is the business of judges to do, Deut. i. 16, 17. he did not care who it was, if he had but such an one; though he seems to have respect to God himself, from what he says in the next clause, and wishes that he would but hear, try, and judge his cause: *behold, my desire* is that *the Almighty would answer me;* answer to what he had said, or had further to say in his own defence; this is a request he had made before, and now repeats it, see ch. xiii. 22. and xxiii. 3, 4, 5. some render it, *behold my mark,* or *scope*[m]; so Mr. Broughton, *behold my scope in this;* this is what I aim at, what I design and mean by wishing for an hearer, that the Almighty himself would take the cause in hand, and give me an answer: or, *behold my sign*[n]; the sign of my innocence, appealing to God, leaving my cause to be heard, tried, and judged by him, who is my witness, and will answer for me; see ch. xvi. 19. as well as desiring mine adversary to put down in writing what he has against me; or, *behold my signature*[o]; the plea I have given is signed by my own hand: now *let the Almighty answer me;* a bold expression indeed, and a making too free with the Almighty, and was one of those speeches Job was to be blamed for, and for which he was after humbled and repented of: *and that mine adversary had written a book;* or *the man of my contention*[p]: either that contended for him, as Aben Ezra, that pleaded for him, was his advocate in court, whom he would have take a brief of him, and so distinctly plead his cause; or rather that contended against him, a court-adversary, by whom he means either his three friends, or some one of

[k] כאדם ut homo, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Bolducius, Mercerus, Drusius, Schmidt; more hominum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Aben Ezra.

[l] מי יתן לי שמע לי quis dabit mihi audientem me? Montanus; utinam sit mihi auditor, Tigurine version.

[m] הן תוי en scopum meum, Junius & Tremellius.

[n] Ecce signum meum, Pagninus, Montanus, Beza, Bolducius; so Ben Gersom.

[o] En signaturam meam, Schultens.

[p] איש ריבי vir litis meæ, Montanus, Beza, Bolducius, Drusius, Michaelis; so Vatablus, Mercerus.

them, whom he more especially took for his enemy; see ch. xvi. 9, 10, 11. and who he wishes had brought a bill of indictment, and put down in a book, on a paper in writing, the charge he had against him; that so it might be clearly known what could be alleged against him; and that it might be particularly and distinctly examined; when he doubted not but he should be able to give a full answer to every article in it; and that the very bill itself would carry in it a justification of him: or it may be, rather he means God himself, who carried it towards him as an adversary, at least in a providential way; he had before requested that he would shew him wherefore he contended with him, ch. x. 2. and now he desires he would give in writing his charge against him, being fully confident, that if he had but the opportunity of answering to it before him, he should be able sufficiently to vindicate himself; and that he should come off with honour, as follows.

Ver. 36. *Surely I would take it upon my shoulder, &c.*] The bill of indictment, the charge in writing; this he would take up and carry on his shoulder as a very light thing, having nothing weighty in it, no charge of sin and guilt to bear him down; nothing but what he could easily stand up under, only some trifling matter, which could not be interpreted sin; for any thing of that kind would have been a burden too heavy for him to have borne: or else his sense is, that should he be convicted of any sin, he would openly confess the charge, acknowledge the sin in the most public manner, that being visible which is borne upon the shoulder; and would also patiently bear the afflictions and chastisements that were laid upon him for it: though rather the meaning is, that he should take up and carry such a bill, not as a burden, but as an honour, as one bears a sword of state, or carries a sceptre as an ensign of royalty on his shoulder; to which the allusion may be in Isa. ix. 6. not at all doubting but it would turn out to his glory; which is confirmed by what follows; *and bind it as a crown to me*, or *crowns*[t], having various circles of gold hung with jewels; signifying that he would not only take his bill or charge, and carry it on his shoulder, but put it on his head, and wear it there, as a king does his crown; which is an ornament and honour to him, as he should reckon this bill, seeing it would give him an opportunity of clearing himself effectually.

Ver. 37. *I would declare to him the number of my steps, &c.*] To his judge, or to him that contended with him, and drew up the bill against him; he would forward it, assist in it, furnish materials for it, give an account of all the transactions of his life that he could remember; this he says not as though he thought that God stood in need of any such declaration, since he better knows the actions of men than they themselves, compasses their paths, and is acquainted with all their ways; but to shew how confident he was of his innocence, and how little he feared the strictest and closest examination of his ways and works, knowing that he had lived with all good conscience unto that day: *and as a prince would I go near unto him*: either he should consider such an hearer and judge of his cause he desired as a prince, and reverence and respect him as such; he should be as dear unto him, though his adversary that contended with him, as a prince; and he should be as ambitious of an acquaintance with him as with a prince: or rather he means that he himself as a prince, in a princely manner, and with a princely spirit, should draw nigh to his judge, to answer to the bill in writing against him; that he should not come up to the bar like a malefactor, that shews guilt in his countenance, and by his trembling limbs, and shrinking back, not caring to come nigh, but choosing rather to stand at a distance, or get off and escape if he could; but on the other hand, Job would go up to his judge, and to the judgment-seat, with all the stateliness of a prince, with an heroic, intrepid, and undaunted spirit; like a *bold prince*, as Mr. Broughton renders the word; see ch. xxiii. 3.

Ver. 38. *If my land cry against me, &c.*] Some think that this and the two following verses stand out of their place, and should rather follow after ver. 34. and some place them after ver. 25. and others after ver. 8. but this is the order of them in all copies and versions, as they stand in our Bibles; and here, after Job had expressed his desire to have a hearer and judge of his cause, and his charge exhibited in writing, and his confidence of the issue of it, should it be granted, returns to his former subject, to clear himself from any notorious vice he was suspected of or charged with; and as he had gone through what might respect him in private life, here he gives another instance in public life, with which he concludes; namely, purging himself from tyranny and oppression, with which his friends had charged him without any proof; and he denies that the land he lived on, was possessed of, and of which he was the proprietor, cried against him, as being unjustly gotten, either by fraud or by force, from others; or as being ill used by him, either as being too much cultivated, having never any rest, or lying fallow; and so much weakened and drained of its strength, or neglected and overrun with weeds, thorns, and thistles; or on account of the dressers and tillers of it being badly dealt with, either over-worked, or not having sufficiency of food, or their wages detained from them: all which are crying sins, and by reason of which the land by a figure may be said to cry out as the stone out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber, because of the sins of spoil, violence, oppression, and covetousness, Hab. ii. 11. or *that the furrows likewise thereof complain*; or *weep*[u], on account of the like ill usage. Jarchi, and so the Midrash, interpret this of not allowing the forgotten sheaf and corner of the field to the poor, and detaining the tithes; and of ploughing and making furrows with an ox and an ass together; but the laws respecting these things were not yet in being; and if they had been, were only binding on Israelites, and not on Job, and the men of his country.

Ver. 39. *If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, &c.*] Or, *the strength thereof without silver*[w]; see

[t] עטרות diademata, Montanus; corollas, Tigurine version; coronas, Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[u] יבכיון defleant, Pagninus, Montanus; fleat, Beza, Piscator, Cocceius, &c.

[w] כחה robur ejus, Montanus, Bolducius, Mercerus, Drusius; vim ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens; בלי כסף sine, vel absque argento, Mercer. Drusius, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens.

Gen. iv. 12, silver being the money chiefly in use in those times. Job's meaning is, that he ate not any thing of the fruits and increase of his own land, without having paid for the same, which he would have done, if he had got his land out of the hands of the right owners of it, by deceit or violence; or if he had not paid his workmen for ploughing, sowing, reaping, *&c.* or if he had demanded the fruits of the earth of his tenants, to whom he had let out his farms, without giving them a proper price for them: *or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life*: as Jezebel caused Naboth to lose his, who was the original proprietor, that Ahab might possess it; or it may signify tenants, to whom Job let out fields, but did not starve them by letting them hard leases, or lands on hard terms, so that they could not live upon them; or it may design the tillers of the land, as Jarchi and Bar Tzemach; those that wrought in it, the servants that were employed in ploughing, *&c.* to whom wages were due, and who had not too hard labour imposed upon them, to the endangering of their lives; or he did not *afflict* and *grieve*[e] them, as some versions; or make their lives bitter, through hard bondage and service, as the Israelites in Egypt.

Ver. 40. *Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley*, &c.] This is an imprecation of Job's, in which he wishes that if what he had said was not true, or if he was guilty of the crimes he denied, that when and where he sowed wheat, thorns or thistles might come up instead of it, or tares, as some Jewish writers[f] interpret it; and that when and where he should sow barley, cockle, or darnel, or any *stinking or hurtful* weed[g], as the word signifies, might spring up in room of it; respect seems to be had to the original curse upon the earth, and by the judgment of God is sometimes the case, that a fruitful land is turned into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell in it, Gen. iii. 18. Psal. cvii. 34. *the words of Job are ended*; which is either said by himself, at the close of his speech; thus far says Job, and no farther, having said enough in his own defence, and for the confutation of his antagonists, and so closes in a way of triumph: or else this was added by Moses, supposed to have written this book; or by some other hand, as Ezra, upon the revise of it, and other books of the Old Testament, when put in order by him: and these were the last words of Job to his friends, and in vindication of himself; for though there is somewhat more said afterwards by him, and but little, yet to God, and by way of humiliation, acknowledging his sin, and repentance for it with shame and abhorrence; see ch. xl. 3, 4, 5. and xlii. 1—6. Jarchi, and so the Midrash, understand this concluding clause as an imprecation of Job's; that if he had done otherwise than he had declared, he wishes that these might be his last words, and he become dumb, and never open his mouth more; but, as Bar Tzemach observes, the simple sense is, that his words were now completed and finished, just as the prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are said to be, Psal. lxxii. 20.

CHAP. XXXII.

JOB's three friends being silenced, and having no more to say in reply to him, Elihu, of whose descent some account is given, a by-stander and hearer of the whole dispute between them, rises up as a moderator, and expresses some warmth both against them and Job, ver. 1—5. he makes an apology for engaging in this controversy, by reason of his youth, and they being advanced in years, ver. 6, 7. but since there is a spirit in man, that gives understanding to men of every age, and old men are not always wise, he desires they would hearken to him whilst he delivered his sentiments on the subject in debate, ver. 8, 9, 10. and hopes to be heard patiently, since he had waited until they had said all they had to say, and had closely attended to it, and which fell short of convincing Job; and this he was obliged to say, lest they should be wise in their own conceit, and attribute that to men which belongs to God, ver. 11, 12, 13. he proposes to take a new method with Job, different from theirs; and now they hearing all this from a young man, they were filled with amazement, and struck with silence; and after he had waited a while to observe whether they would say any thing or no, he determined to take his turn, and shew his opinion also, ver. 14—17. and the rather because he was full of arguments, he was desirous to propose them, and was uneasy until he had brought them out; and which he was resolved to do with all impartiality and integrity, ver. 18—22.

Ver. 1. *So these three men ceased to answer Job*, &c.] His three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, who came to visit and comfort him under his afflictions; but unawares were led into a controversy with him, occasioned by some rash and impatient expressions of his; which controversy had been carried on between them a considerable time, but now dropped; they grew weary of it, and now rested themselves as men do on a sabbath, as the word signifies; they set themselves down, and made no reply to Job's vindication of himself, not caring to give themselves any further trouble, or labour the point any more and longer, perceiving it was all to no purpose: or *and these three men ceased*, &c. the last words of the preceding chapter are, *the words of Job are ended*; and the copulative *and* connects these with them, and shews that these men also had done speaking; so that the dispute was closed between Job and them, and the way was clear for another disputant that might think fit to enter, as Elihu did, after mentioned: *because he was righteous in his own eyes*; some take this to express the state of the question between them,

[e] ותעגמני afflixi, V. L. dolore affeci, Pagninus; so Broughton.
[f] Bar Tzemach, & alii.
[g] באשה herba fœtens, Montanus, Bolducius; spina fœtida, Drusius; vitium frugum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; labrusca, Cocceius, Schultens.

rendering the words, *that he was righteous*, &c.[f]. The notion his friends had of him was, that he was righteous in his own account, and as he professed to be, and might so seem to others; but was a wicked man, and an hypocrite, as his afflictions shewed; this point they had been labouring to prove, but, upon Job's long and clear vindication of his integrity, they ceased to defend it: others suppose the words to be an inference of Job's from their silence: *therefore he was righteous*, &c. they making no reply to him, he concluded himself to be quit and clear of the charge they had brought against him; but they rather, according to our version, contain a reason why they ceased to answer him; because they thought him self-conceited, self-willed, obstinate, and incorrigible; not open to conviction, stiffly insisting on his own innocence, not allowing that he was guilty of any sin or sins, which were the cause of his afflictions; otherwise, in the article of justification before God, Job was no self-righteous man, nor was he so charged by his friends; to say he was is to abuse his character, and is contrary to that which God himself has given of him; nor would he have so highly commended him as to suggest there was none like him on earth, when of all men in the world there are none more abominable to God than a self-righteous man; see Isa. lxv. 4. Luke xvi. 15. and xviii. 14. It is contrary to Job's knowledge of and faith in Christ, as his living Redeemer, Job. xix. 25. and to many clear and strong expressions, confessing his sin, disclaiming perfection, and declaring himself no self-justiciary, ch. vii. 20. and ix. 2, 20, 31, 32, 33.

Ver. 2. *Then was kindled the wrath of* Elihu *the son of* Barachel *the* Buzite, *&c.*] Both against Job and his three friends, for reasons after given; who this person was is not easy to say; they debase him too much, who make him to be Balaam the soothsayer, according to the tradition of the Jews[g]; for neither the time he lived in, nor his character, will agree with him; this man living before the times of Balaam; and being also a holy good man, which all his discourses shew: and they too much exalt him who make him to be Christ; for though some phrases, being strained, may seem to agree with him, and some things in the signification of his name, and the names of his ancestors, may be thought to answer to him; Elihu signifying, *my God is he*; the son of Barachel, *the son of the blessed God*; of the kindred of Ram, of the high and holy line; the Buzite, one *despised* and reproached: yet there are other things that cannot be said of him, as particularly in ver. 22. and besides, the Messiah seems to be spoken of by him as another person, ch. xxxiii. 23, 24. it is very probable that he was one of Job's relations that was come to visit him in his melancholy circumstances, had been a by-stander, and an hearer of the whole dispute between Job and his friends, with the management of which he was not a little displeased; he is described by his descent, when Job's other three friends are not, because he was a young man, and not known as they were: and this serves to shew the truth of this history, that it is not a mere apologue, or fable, but a real fact; though who his father Barachel the Buzite was cannot easily be determined; it is probable he was a descendant of Buz, the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, Gen. xxii. 20, 21. of this opinion are Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom; unless it can be thought he was so called from the city Buz, of which he might be an inhabitant, mentioned along with Dedan and Tema, places in Edom or Idumea, where or near to which Job lived: *of the kindred of* Ram; according to the Targum, of the kindred of Abraham, in which it is followed by other Jewish writers[h]; and some even take him to be Isaac, the son of Abraham[i]; Aben Ezra thinks he is the same with Ram the father of Amminadab, Ruth iv. 19. but he is abundantly too late for this man to be of his kindred; others take him to be the same with Aram, the son of Kemuel, a brother of Buz, Gen. xxii. 21. these names being used for one another, either by adding or removing a letter; see Matt. i. 3. compared with Ruth iv. 19. *against* Job *was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God;* not that he made himself more just than God, he could never think or say so, see ch. iv. 17. nor that he was just before him or by him; for he was so in an evangelic, though not in a legal sense; and Elihu would not have been displeased with him for asserting that; he did not deny that Job was a righteous man in the sight of God; nor that he was righteous, and in the right in the sight of God, with respect to the controversy between him and his friends; nor did he blame him for justifying himself from their charges; but that he justified himself *more* than God; so the Jewish writers[k] generally render it: he spent more time, and insisted longer on his own justification than upon the justification of God in the dealings of his providence with him; he was more careful of his own character and reputation than he was of the honour of God, and the glory of his justice; he said more for himself than he did for God; and this displeased Elihu; it gave this good man some concern, that, though Job did not directly charge God with unrighteousness in his dealings with him, yet by consequence; and he expressed himself in such language that would bear such a construction, whether it was his real sense or no; and to hear him complain so heavily of God, and at the same time enlarge so much on his own innocence, and to importune in so bold and daring a manner to have a hearing of his cause; these things being observed by Elihu, raised his choler and indignation.

Ver. 3. *Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled*, &c.] He did not take part with either side, but blamed both, and took upon him to be a moderator between them, and deal impartially with them: what highly displeased him, and raised his spirit against the three friends of Job, was, *because they had found no answer;* they were at a loss for one, for a sufficient one; they had all of them been answering him in their turns again and again, but with nothing to the purpose, not with any thing conclusive and convincing; and particularly they could find and give

[f] כי הוא צדיק quod ille (tantum) justus in oculis suis, Schmidt.
[g] T. Hieros. Sotah, fol. 20. 2. Hieron. Quæst. seu Traditiones in Gen. fol. 69. D. So Bolducius.

[h] Jarchi, Bar Tzemach, &c.
[i] T Hieros. Sotah, fol. 20. 4.
[k] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom.

no answer to Job's last vindication of himself: *and yet had condemned Job*: as a very wicked man, and an hypocrite, for no other reason but because he was afflicted; and they still persisted in their sentiment, though Job had so fully cleared himself, and put them to entire silence; this exasperated Elihu, to observe these men to retain so unreasonable a sentiment, to pronounce such a rash sentence, and yet could make no reply to Job's defence of himself. Jarchi says, this place is one of the corrections of the Scribes, it having been formerly written God instead of Job; as if the sense was, that Elihu was provoked with them, because by their silence they had condemned the Lord, not vindicating his honour and glory as became them; but Aben Ezra declares his ignorance of that correction, and observes, that they that say so knew what was hid from him.

Ver. 4. *Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken*, &c.] Made an end of speaking, until he had thus expressed himself, *the words of Job are ended*; and waited likewise until his three friends had said all they had to say, and which is here supposed and implied, as appears by what follows: *because they were elder than he*: it may be added, from the original text, *in*, or *as to days*[l]; they had lived longer in the world than he, and therefore did not take upon him to speak till they had done; he, as became a young man, was swift to hear, and slow to speak; that they were old men, appears from what Eliphaz says, ch. xv. 10.

Ver. 5. *When* Elihu *saw that* there was *no answer in the mouth of these three men*, &c.] That could be called an answer; nay, when he perceived they were quite nonplussed and silenced, though men of years and experience, and reputed wise and knowing: *then his wrath was kindled*; his spirit was stirred up; his heart was hot within him; he burned with anger against those men; he was all on fire, as it were, and wanted to vent his resentment.

Ver. 6. *And* Elihu *the son of* Barachel *the* Buzite *answered and said*, &c.] Since there was no answer in them, he takes upon him to give one himself; but first makes an apology on account of his youth: *I am young, and ye are very old*: or *few of days*: a few days, comparatively speaking, had he lived in the world; or *small*, or *little as to days*[m]; he had been but a little time in it, and so could be thought to have but little knowledge and experience; whereas they were old, even very old; with them were the aged and the gray-headed, ch. xv. 10. in whom it might have been expected was much wisdom and knowledge: *wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew mine opinion*; declare what knowledge he had of the things in dispute, lest it should appear mean, small, and contemptible; or give his sentiments concerning them, lest he should speak wrong, and not only give offence, but do more hurt than good: the first of these words, in the Arabic language[n], as Aben Ezra observes, signifies to go back; it is used of worms, which, through fear, withdraw themselves from men; so mean an opinion had he of himself, and such a sense of his own weakness, that it not only kept him back, but even caused him to draw back, and keep out of the dispute, and at a distance from it, instead of being forward to engage in it: one Jewish commentator[o] paraphrases it "I humbled myself as one that "goes on his belly;" referring to worms that go low and creep upon their belly, or to the prostrate posture of men that humble themselves to their superiors.

Ver. 7. *I said, days should speak*, &c.] That is, men of days, of many days, who have lived many days and years in the world: man in common is but of few days, even the most that men arrive to are but few; and some indeed are very few, in comparison of whom others may be said to be men of days, or to have lived many days; and to such it belongs to speak, it is their place, nor should they be prevented or interrupted; it should be allowed them to speak, nor should they be hindered; and it is their duty to speak and instruct juniors, and all that are under them; and it might be reasonably expected, that when they speak it will be to the purpose, and to profit and edification: *and multitude of years should teach wisdom*: that is, such over whom many years have passed; these it may be thought, having had an opportunity of making their observation on things, and of increasing experience, and of treasuring up a stock of knowledge, they should be very capable of, and indeed the only fit persons to teach others wisdom; either natural wisdom, or the knowledge of natural things; or divine wisdom, the knowledge of God, of his perfections and providences; and inward, spiritual, and evangelical wisdom, which lies in the knowledge of a man's self; in the knowledge of God in Christ; in the knowledge of Christ and of the Gospel of Christ, and the truths of it: this was a sentiment Elihu had entertained of ancient men, and this had restrained him from entering sooner into this debate between Job and his friends; they all being his superiors in age, and, as from thence he judged, in wisdom and knowledge also.

Ver. 8. *But* there is *a spirit in man*, &c.] This seems to be a correction of his former sentiment; the consideration of which gave him encouragement, though young, to declare his opinion, since there is a spirit in men, both young and old; and wherever that be, there is an ability to speak and a capacity of teaching wisdom; which is not tied to age, but may be found in young men as well as in old men: some by this understand the rational soul, or spirit, which is immaterial, immortal, is of God, and is in man; and the rather it is thought this is meant, because it is in every man, whereby he has knowledge of many things, natural and divine, and particularly is capable of trying and judging things, of discerning the difference between one thing and another, and of reasoning and discoursing upon them; and this being observed by Elihu, and he being conscious to himself of having such a spirit in him, was emboldened to engage in the debate, though a young man; but if such a spirit is meant, the words may be rendered to such a sense, verily, truly, *indeed there is* such a rational *spirit in*

[l] לימים diebus, Beza, Montanus, Mercerus; quod ad dies, Schultens.
[m] צעיר אני לימים minimus ego diebus, Montanus; parvus diebus sum, Mercerus.

[n] زحل, recessit suo loco, Castel. col. 1036.
[o] Sephorno.

man, which makes him capable of knowing many things, *but the inspiration of the Almighty*, &c.[s]; it is not owing to the rational powers and faculties of the soul of man, and the use of them, that a man becomes capable of teaching others wisdom; but to his soul or spirit being inspired by the Almighty; and such an one, be he young or old, that God breathes into, and he is under his inspiration, he is the man fit to engage in such work: though I rather think, that in this first clause the spirit of God is meant, and so Jarchi; who is an increated, infinite, and eternal Spirit; is of God, and is put into men; for he is not in men naturally, nor in every one; and where he is, he is given, and there he abides; and it is from him men have their wisdom and knowledge; it is he that makes men know themselves, that searches the deep things of God, and reveals them to men, and that is the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and leads into all truth, as it is in him; though rather the spirit in his gifts, than in his spiritual saving grace, is here meant; and so does not point to every good man in common, but to such who are favoured with the gifts of the spirit superior to others; and so the Targum interprets it of the spirit of prophecy; and on whomsoever this rests, whether on young or old, he is fit to teach men wisdom: *and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding*; not the soul of man, or breath of God inspired by him, which is the candle of the Lord, searching the inward parts of men; for that leaves him without understanding of things of the greatest importance: rather, as the Targum, the Word of God, the essential Word, the Son of God, who gives an understanding of the best things, 1 John v. 20. but, better, the spirit of God, by whom the Scriptures were inspired, and who is breathed into men, John xx. 21. and is a spirit of understanding to them; for though a man has an understanding of natural things, yet not of things spiritual; to have an understanding of them is the special gift of God, and is in particular the work of the spirit of God: Elihu now having some reason to believe that he had the spirit of God, and was under his inspiration, and was favoured with knowledge and understanding by him, is encouraged, though young, to interpose in this dispute between Job and his friends, and declare his opinion on the matter in debate; and which leads him to make an observation somewhat different from his former sentiment, as follows.

Ver. 9. *Great men are not always wise*, &c.] Men of grandeur and dignity, as Job's friends might be, the rich, the honourable, and noble; the apostle is thought to refer to this, at least to express the sentiment contained in it, 1 Cor. i. 26. or the great in quantity, the many, the multitude; and therefore are not to be followed in principle or practice; or that are great in years, well stricken in age, have lived long in the world, so some versions[t]; or are doctors, teachers of others, masters in Israel, as Nicodemus, and yet ignorant; all these may be wise in natural, civil, and worldly things, though this is not always the case; but not wise and knowing in divine and spiritual things, particularly in those respecting the causes and reasons of God's providential dealings with men, afflicting the righteous, and suffering the wicked to prosper, which is more fully explained in the next clause: *neither do the aged understand judgment*; what is right and wrong, the difference between truth and error, and particularly the judgments of God, which are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out; even so to understand them as to observe and acknowledge his sovereignty, wisdom, truth, and faithfulness in them.

Ver. 10. *Therefore I said, hearken to me*, &c.] Thou O Job, and every one of you his friends, for the word is singular; though I am but a young man, yet if I have the spirit of God, and am under the inspiration of the Almighty, I may be able to say something to you worth your hearing: *I also will shew mine opinion*; for though for a while he was timorous and fearful of doing it, lest he should mistake and expose himself, yet having duly weighed and considered the above things, he was determined to do it.

Ver. 11. *Behold, I waited for your words*, &c.] With great desire, with great eagerness and earnestness, in hope of meeting with arguments fully satisfying and convincing; he waited for them, as for the rain, and the latter rain, to be revived, refreshed, and edified therewith; and he patiently waited until they had done speaking: *I gave ear to your reasons*, or *understandings*[u]; endeavoured to get into the sense and meaning of their words; not only attended to what they did say, but to what he thought they meant to say: some are not so happy in their expressions; and yet, by what they *do* say, with close attention it may be understood what they aim at, what is their drift and design; this Elihu was careful to attain unto, not barely to hear their words, but penetrate, if possible, into their meaning: *whilst ye searched out what to say*; for they did not make their replies to Job immediately, and say what came uppermost at once, but they took time to think of things, and to search out for the most forcible arguments to refute Job, and strengthen their cause; it is very probable they made a pause at the end of every speech of Job's, and considered what was proper to be said in reply, and, perhaps, consulted each other.

Ver. 12. *Yea, I attended unto you*, &c.] Very closely, with great application and diligence, endeavouring to get, as it were, within them, and thoroughly understand the meaning of what they said: *and, behold, there was none of you that convinced Job*; which was not owing to his obstinacy, but to want of proof in them, their words and arguments; they had charged Job highly, as particularly Eliphaz, ch. xxii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. but then they failed in their proof; they produced nothing to support their allegations: or *that answered his words*; the arguments and reasons he gave in proof of his own innocence and uprightness, or the instances he produced, shewing that God often afflicted good men, and suffered the wicked to prosper; and therefore no argument could be drawn from God's

[s] So Vatablus, Beza.

[t] רבים πολυχρονιοι, Sept. longævi, V. L. Mr. Broughton renders it, "as men of not great time may be wise, as the old understand the right."

[u] עד תבונותיכם usque ad intelligentias vestras, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schultens; usque ad sensa vestra, Beza, Junius & Tremellius.

dealings with men, proving they were either of this or the other character, good or bad men.

Ver. 13. *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom, &c.*] They were left to themselves, and not directed to take the proper methods of convincing Job, and answering his arguments; lest they should be wise in their own conceits, and attribute too much to themselves; or Elihu told them this, that they had not convicted Job, though they had condemned him, nor answered his arguments, though they had left off speaking; and this he was obliged to say, and that for the reason before observed: for all wisdom is of God, and not to be found out or acquired by men; not natural wisdom, that is not of men, but of God, and especially supernatural wisdom, or the knowledge of divine and spiritual things, and the reason of God's dealings with the sons of men in the different manner he does, see ch. xxviii. 12, 13, 20, 28. *God thrusteth him down, not man*: some think Elihu says this in reference to himself, whom God would make use of as an instrument to convince Job and answer his arguments; and that he would ascribe this not to himself, but to God; they took a natural way to convince Job, which failed, that they might not be proud of their own wisdom; he should take a more divine and spiritual method, and, if he succeeded, he should give all the glory to God, and ascribe nothing to himself: as in the conviction and conversion of a sinner, though ministers are instruments, it is not by might or power of men, but by the spirit of the Lord of hosts; it is God that thrusts down man from a vain opinion he has of himself; that convinces him of sin, that takes him off of his own righteousness, and humbles him, and lays him low at his feet: but they rather seem to be the words of Job's friends, as related by Elihu; and the sense is in connexion with the former, either that they found it was the wisest method they could take with Job to be silent, and leave him to himself, lest they should add to his affliction; to which Jarchi inclines, who paraphrases it, "we found wisdom by our silence, that we "may'nt provoke him any more;" which, if their sense, shews more tenderness and compassion than they had hitherto expressed, and answers pretty much to the advice given 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7. or else their meaning is, that they found it the best and wisest way to leave him with God, he being so obstinate and incorrigible that none but God could move him; it was not in the power of men, or of words used by men, to make him sensible of things; or rather the meaning is, Elihu was obliged to tell them, that none of them had convinced Job, or answered his arguments, lest they should say, we have found out a wise and strong argument, proving the charge brought against him, that he must be a wicked man and an hypocrite, since God has so sorely afflicted him, and thrust him down from all his grandeur and dignity; which no man could ever have done, and God would not, if he had not been the man we suppose him to be; now Elihu's view is to observe to them, that there was nothing in this argument convincing, in which they imagined so much wisdom lay. Job's afflictions, indeed, were of God, and not men; and which he often owns himself; but this was no proof or argument of his being a wicked man: Mr. Broughton renders the words, "the Omnipotent doth toss him, not man."

Ver. 14. *Now he hath not directed his words against me, &c.*] That is, Job had not directed his speech to him, or levelled his arguments against him; he had not set himself and his words in battle-array against him, as the word signifies; he had not lashed and irritated him as he had them; and therefore he came into the dispute calm and unprovoked, having nothing in view but truth, the glory of God, and the good of Job; and therefore hoped for better success than they had had: *neither will I answer him with your speeches*: he proposed to take a new and different method from them, as he did; for he never charges Job with any sin or sins, or a course of living in a sinful manner, before those afflictions came upon him, and as the cause of them; he only takes notice of what was amiss in him since his afflictions, and what dropped from him in the heat of this controversy, rash and unbecoming speeches, which reflected upon the honour and justice of God; and if he made use of any words and arguments similar to theirs, yet to another purpose, and in a milder and gentler manner.

Ver. 15. *They were amazed, &c.*] They were like persons thunderstruck, quite surprised and astonished to hear a young man talk after this manner: *they answered no more*; as they had ceased to answer Job, they did not undertake to answer Elihu, who had plainly told them their arguments were not convincing, their answers were no answers, and that they had done a wrong thing in condemning Job without proof; and that which they thought their greatest wisdom, and strongest argument, had no wisdom nor strength in it; namely, which was taken from his sore afflictions by the hand of God: *they left off speaking*; or words departed from them, as Jarchi; their speech left them, they seemed deprived of it: Mr. Broughton renders the whole, "they shrink "away, do speak no more, speeches be departed from "them."

Ver. 16. *When I had waited, &c.*] To observe whether they would make any reply to what he had said, or any objection to his engaging in the controversy: *for they spake not*; were as mute as fishes: *but stood still*; like statues, had no power to move, neither to sit down nor to depart, but were as if all life, sense, and motion, were gone from them: and *answered no more*; or not at all; for it does not appear that they had given him any answer before, as well as not now.

Ver. 17. I said, *I will answer also my part, &c.*] Or take his turn in giving an answer to Job; what they had given being quite insufficient and unsuitable: *I also will shew mine opinion*; knowledge, or sentiment; this for a while he was fearful of doing, but, upon a thorough and serious consideration of things, he determined upon it, and now repeats it, to assure he would do it; the reasons of which follow.

Ver. 18. *For I am full of matter, &c.*] Or *full of words*[r]; not of mere words, such that have nothing solid and substantial in them; this is the character of

[r] מלתי מלים plenus sum sermonibus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

a fool, Eccl. x. 14. nor was Elihu a loquacious talkative man, as Job is charged to be, a man full of talk, ch. xi. 2. but he was full of words, which had fulness of matter in them, which were to the purpose, and contained strong reasonings and solid arguments; his mind was full of them, and he could easily fill his mouth with them, and was not easy until he had uttered them: so an able minister of the word may be said to be full of words, of the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus, of useful doctrines, when the word of Christ dwells richly in him, and he has a rich treasure in an earthen vessel, is full of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ; has a large knowledge of Gospel truths, a real experience of them in the heart, great gifts to express them to others, and is full of power and of the spirit of God to declare them, as this good man was: *the spirit within me constraineth me*, or *the spirit of my belly*[z]; alluding to wind pent up therein, which, unless expelled, gives great uneasiness and pain: he either means the spirit of God within him, as in ver. 8. by whom the prophets were inspired and spoke, by whom ordinary ministers of the word are qualified for their work, and by whom they are led into all truth, and who presses and obliges them to speak what they know; there is a necessity upon them to preach the Gospel wholly and faithfully, and a woe unto them if they do not: or else his own spirit, influenced and actuated by the spirit of God; as the spirit of the Apostle Paul was stirred up in him to speak, when he saw the idolatry and superstition of the people of Athens, Acts xvii. 16. so love to God and Christ, and the souls of men, the honour of God, and interest of religion, constrain the ministers of Christ to speak in his name, notwithstanding all the opposition made unto them, and reproach cast upon them.

Ver. 19. *Behold, my belly is as wine, which hath no vent, &c.*] Or, *is not opened*[a], like a bottle of wine, as Ben Gersom, which is stopped close, and the wine in it new; which is most apt to ferment, and should have vent given it; so the Targum, "as new wine, which is "not opened:" in the same manner Jarchi and Bar Tzemach interpret it; in these words Elihu illustrates, by a metaphor taken from new wine put into bottles and close stopped, what he had before more literally and properly expressed, and so in the following clause: *it is ready to burst like new bottles*; or perhaps it may be better rendered, *like bottles of new wine*[b]; for new bottles are not so apt to burst as old ones, and especially when they have new wine in them; the bottles of the ancients, and in the eastern countries, being made of skin, which better agrees with what our Lord says, Matt. ix. 17. by his belly he means his mind, which was full of matter, and that matter he compares to new wine in bottles, closely stopped, which need vent, and are in danger of bursting: the doctrine of the Gospel is like to wine, Cant. vii. 9. to wine neat and clean, being free from all human mixtures; to wine of a good flavour and pleasant taste, as the Gospel is to those whose taste is changed; to generous wine, which revives, and refreshes, and comforts; all which effects the doctrines of the Gospel have, when attended with a divine influence: and it may be compared to new wine; not that it is a new and upstart doctrine, it is the everlasting Gospel, made known immediately on the fall of Adam, and was ordained before the world for our glory; but because it is newly, or of late, under the Gospel dispensation, more clearly revealed: ministers of the word are like vessels, into which it is put; they are but vessels, even earthly vessels, and have nothing but what is put into them; and they are like vessels stopped up, when they are straitened in themselves, or shut up by the Lord, that they cannot come forth freely in their ministry, and when any outward restraint is laid upon them by persecuting magistrates, and when there is no open door for them in Providence; which gives them great pain and uneasiness, and, let the consequence be what it will, they are weary of forbearing, and cannot stay, but must speak the things they see and know; see Jer. xx. 9. Acts iv. 18, 20.

Ver. 20. *I will speak, that I may be refreshed, &c.*] That his mind might be made easy; the matter it was full of lay with much weight upon it, pressed him hard, and gave him pain; and therefore he determines to speak his mind, and disburden himself: so a minister of the word speaks sometimes to the refreshment of others, the Gospel being a word in season to weary souls, bread to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, even wine to them that are of an heavy heart; and especially it is refreshing when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart through it, and the presence of God is enjoyed under it; and sometimes he speaks to the refreshment of himself with others, Rom. xv. 32. and whether it be so, one or the other, yet a faithful minister eases his mind, discharges his conscience, and is clear from the blood of all, when he truly and fully declares the whole counsel of God, so far as he is acquainted with it: *I will open my lips and answer*; speak freely and boldly what was upon his mind, and he had to say, and which he judged would be a sufficient answer to Job; the opening of his lips is a phrase used by him in allusion to the opening of a bottle, full of new wine, the metaphor before expressed by him.

Ver. 21. *Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, &c.*] Neither the person of Job, because of his poverty and affliction, indulging too much to pity and commiseration, and affecting to get a good name from others for it; nor the persons of his three friends, on account of their wealth and grandeur; for neither the persons of the poor, nor of the rich, are to be regarded in judgment, or in the decision of any matter between them, but truth and justice are to be attended to; see Exod. xxiii. 3. Lev. xix. 15. Elihu was determined with himself not to respect the person of any, and he hopes that Job and his friends would bear with him, and excuse him on that account: *neither let me give flattering titles unto men*; he does not mean titles of civil honour and respect, which belong to men, and are in common use among men, according to the different stations of life men are in; for honour is to be given to whom it is due; and it is no piece of flattery to give men their proper and usual titles, as it was

[z] רוח בטני spiritus ventris mei, Beza, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Schultens.

[a] לא יפתח quod non est apertum, Pagninus, Michaelis, Schultens.
[b] כאבות חדשים sicut utres vino novo repleti, Piscator.

not in the Evangelist Luke, and in the Apostle Paul, Luke i. 3. Acts xxvi. 25. but he means such titles that don't belong to men, and are unsuitable unto them, and only given them by way of flattery; as to call a man wise and prudent when he is the reverse; or a holy, just, and good man, when he is a very wicked one. Elihu was resolved not to act such a part, and he hopes the persons he had to deal with would not take it amiss that he spake his mind plainly and freely, and called a spade a spade; nor must they or any other expect to be complimented by him with the characters of wise and prudent, just and good, if they did not appear to him to be so. According to Ben Gersom the sense is, that he would not hide a man's name under epithets, but call him by his proper name; he would not do as they had done by Job, who, under covert names, meant him; as when they described a wicked man, and an hypocrite, designed him, but did not say so in express words; now Elihu suggests, that, should Job or they appear to him to have acted a wrong part, he should tell them plainly of it, and say, thou art the man.

Ver. 22. *For I know not to give flattering titles*, &c.] He had not been brought up in such a manner, nor taught to use them; he had not been inured to them, nor did he know or approve of them; nor could he in conscience give them. In so doing, *my Maker would soon take me away*; it being such a piece of wickedness, so abominable to him, and so highly resented by him, that I might justly expect he would, as he could, strike me dead at once; just as Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead for lying: or he knew that it would be but a short time at most, and he should be taken out of the world by death, when he must appear before his Maker, his Judge, to whom he must give an account of his words, as well as actions; the awe of this being continually on his mind would not admit him to flatter any man. Some render it, *will burn me**, as in 2 Sam. v. 21. so Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom, that is, in hell-fire; see Psal. xii. 2, 3.

CHAP. XXXIII.

In this chapter Elihu addresses Job himself, and entreats his attention to what he had to say to him, and offers several things to induce him to it; and recommends himself as one that was according to his wish, in the stead of God, a man like himself, and of whom he had no reason to be afraid, ver. 1—7. and then he brings a charge against him of things which he himself had heard, of words that had dropped from him in the course of his controversy with his friends; in which he too much and too strongly insisted on his own innocence and purity, and let fall very undue and unbecoming reflections on the dealings of God with him, ver. 8—11. to which he gives an answer by observing the superior greatness of God to man, and his sovereignty over him, not being accountable to him for any thing done by him; and therefore man should be silent and submissive to him, ver. 12, 13. and yet, though he is so great and so absolute, and uncontrollable, and is not obliged to give an account of his affairs to man, and the reasons of them; yet he condescends by various ways and means to instruct him in his mind and will, and even by those very things complained of; and therefore should not be treated as if unkind and unfriendly to men; sometimes he does it by dreams and visions, when he opens the ears of men, and seals instruction to them, and with this view, to restrain them from their evil purposes and doings, and to weaken their pride and humble them, and preserve them from ruin, ver. 14—18. and sometimes by chastening and afflictive providences, which are described, ver. 19—22. and which become teaching ones; through the interposition of a divine messenger, and upon the afflicted man's prayer to God, and humiliation before him, God is gracious and favourable to him, and delivers him; which is frequently the design and the use that he makes of chastening dispensations, ver. 23—30. and the chapter is concluded with beseeching Job to mark and consider well what had been said unto him, and to answer it if he could or thought fit; if not, silently to attend to what he had further to say to him for his instruction, ver. 31, 32, 33.

Ver. 1. *Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, hear my speeches*, &c.] In the preceding chapter, Elihu directed his discourse to the three friends of Job chiefly, here to Job himself, and that by name; which none of his friends in all their discourses ever used; and in an humble suppliant manner entreats his attention to what he was about to deliver, and that for reasons which his address to his friends could furnish him with; and hence begins his speech with *wherefore*, seeing he took not the part of his three friends, but blamed them; and because he had the spirit of God in him, and was full of matter, and uneasy until he had vented it; and which he proposed to deliver in a plain and faithful manner, with sincerity and without flattery; on all which accounts he beseeches him to give him a diligent and attentive hearing: *and hearken to all my words*; not to some of them only, but to all; he bespeaks his candid and constant attention, that he would hear him out, all that he had to say, with patience, and without interruption; and then judge of the truth, force, and pertinency of them; which he would not so well be able to do, unless he heard them all; for sometimes the proof, the evidence, and demonstration of a thing depends not on a single argument, but upon many put together; each of them alone being insufficient, at least may appear so, when all considered together give full satisfaction.

Ver. 2. *Behold, now I have opened my mouth*, &c.] Begun to speak in order to give vent to the fulness of matter within him, which made him, like bottles of new wine, ready to burst; and since he had opened his lips, that he might speak and be refreshed, he de-

* ישאני comburet me, Pagninus.

sires Job to listen to him, and offers some things to his consideration to induce him to it: *my tongue hath spoken in my mouth*; but does not every man's tongue speak in his mouth when he speaks? is there any thing singular and peculiar in this, that can excite attention? it may be rendered, *in my palate*[d]; which, as it is an instrument of speech, so of tasting and trying food, see ch. vi. 30. and xii. 11. and Elihu's sense is, that he had thoroughly considered what he should say, he had well weighed what he should speak, and should not deliver any thing raw, crude, and indigested; he had palated his words, in order to discern whether there was any thing in them perverse or no.

Ver. 3. *My words* shall be *of the uprightness of my heart*, &c.] Not that the uprightness of his heart, or his own personal integrity, should be the subject of his discourse; but what he should say would be in or out of the uprightness of his heart, with all sincerity and faithfulness; what would be the real sentiments of his mind, and not proceed from a double or insincere heart: *and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly*: what knowledge he had of God, and of the perfections of his nature, and of his works in nature and grace, and of his dealings in a providential way with the sons of men; and what knowledge he had of Christ, his person, office, and grace, somewhat of which he speaks in this chapter: and such sort of knowledge is to be uttered, to be published, and made known to the good of others; and not to be concealed, and hid, or held, as in a prison, in unrighteousness; and to be uttered clearly, plainly, and distinctly, in words intelligible, and easy to be understood; and not in ambiguous terms, or in words of a double meaning; or which are abstruse and intricate, and serve rather to make the mysteries of Providence and grace more dark and obscure than to explain them; integrity of heart, and perspicuity of language, serve much to recommend a speaker, and both are expressed in this verse.

Ver. 4. *The spirit of God hath made me*, &c.] As a man; so every man is made by God, and not by himself; Father, Son, and Spirit, are his Makers or Creators, as we read of them in the plural number, Psal. cxlix. 2. Eccl. xii. 1. and this is a proof of the deity of the spirit, who was not only concerned in the creation of all things, garnishing the heavens, and moving upon the face of the waters on the earth; but in the formation of man: *and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*: the same with the spirit of God, the allusion is to the creation of man at first, when God breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living soul: life natural is from God, he is the God of our life, he gives all the mercies of life, and by him is this life preserved; and the whole is the effect of almighty power; now this is observed by Elihu to Job, to encourage him to attend to him without fear, since he was a man, a creature of God, as he was: it may be understood of his spiritual formation, the spirit of God re-makes men, or makes them new men, new creatures; this is done in regeneration, which is the work of the Holy Spirit; hence regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, are put together; and being a work of almighty power, is a proof of the deity of the spirit of God; it is he that quickens men when dead in trespasses and sins, and makes them alive to God; which appears by their spiritual breathings after divine things, and by the exercise of their spiritual senses, and by their performance of spiritual actions; and now Elihu, being a man regenerated and quickened by the spirit, might more justly claim the attention of Job, since what he should say was what he had heard, felt, and seen, as a good man, one that had an experience of divine and spiritual things.

Ver. 5. *If thou canst answer me*, &c.] That is, when he had done speaking, after he had heard him out; if he thought he could make a reply to him, he gave him full liberty so to do, and tacitly suggests that he should give him an attentive and candid hearing, as he had requested of him: *set thy words in order before me*: put them into the best form and order thou canst for thy self-defence, and level them at me; set them, as it were, in battle-array against me; give them all the poignancy, strength, and force thou art capable of: *stand up*: not out of veneration to him, but to denote freedom and boldness in himself; a presentation of himself with boldness, and standing and keeping his ground: the expressions are military; Mr. Broughton renders it, *stand to it*.

Ver. 6. *Behold, I* am *according to thy wish in God's stead*, &c.] So some persons are, as civil magistrates, the ministers of the word, the prophets of the Old Testament, and the apostles of the New; see 2 Cor. v. 20. and so in some sense was Elihu; he undertakes to be an advocate for God, to vindicate his justice in his dealings with the children of men, and clear him from the charge of severity towards them, and hard usage of them, and particularly Job; and whom he besought, as in God's stead, to be reconciled to his providential dealings with him; to bear his afflictions patiently, and wait the issue of them: or *I am as thou art*: so the Targum and Ben Gersom interpret it; one that belongs to God, a creature of God's, a sinful frail mortal creature, as Job was, and accountable to God; one that belonged to him both as the God of nature and providence, and of grace; and such an one Job seemed to have wished for, to dispute the point in question with; see ch. ix. 32, 33. *I also am formed out of the clay*: or *cut out*[e] of it; alluding to the potter, who, out of a mass or lump of clay before him, cuts a piece out of it to make a vessel of. God is the potter, men are as clay in his hands, their bodies are bodies of clay, houses of clay, which have their foundation in the dust; reference may be had to the original formation of man, and may denote not so much the pollution of his nature, clay being defiling, but the frailty of man, a vessel made of clay being brittle, and easily broken; see ch. iv. 19. and x. 9. and xiii. 12. Isa. lxiv. 8.

Ver. 7. *Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid*, &c.] To come near, join issue in a debate, and speak freely; this Job had wished for, and desired of God that his fear might not terrify him, and his dread not

[d] בחכי in palato meo, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Beza, Schultens; so Mr. Broughton.

[e] קרצתי excisus, Montanus, Munster, Mercerus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

make him afraid, and then he could talk and reason freely with him, ch. ix. 34, 35. and xiii. 21, 22. now Job had nothing to fear from Elihu, he was a man and not God, with whom there was no terrible majesty, as with God; he was but a clod of clay, and had nothing in him or about him to strike terror into him; he was no great personage, as a king or prince, nor in any civil authority, nor had so much as age to command an awe, much less could inject dread and terror: *neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee:* which is not to be literally understood; Job could be in no fear of that, nor Elihu guilty of such rudeness; but figuratively, that he should not seek to afflict and distress him, or add to his affliction, and make it heavier, by hard words, severe reflections, and cruel reproaches; he seems to refer to ch. xiii. 21. the Targum is, " my burden upon thee shall not be heavy;" he promises not to aggravate things, but make them as easy as they would admit of.

Ver. 8. *Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing*, &c.] After the above preface, Elihu proceeds to the point in hand, and enters a charge against Job; which he took up, not upon suspicion and surmisings, nor upon report, nor upon accusations received from others, but what he had heard with his own ears, unless he was greatly mistaken indeed, which he thought he was not: *and I have heard the voice of* thy *words;* the sound of them, clearly and distinctly, and took in the sense of them, as he really believed: saying; as follows.

Ver. 9. *I am clean without transgression*, &c.] This with what follows is supposed to be gathered from ch. x. 6, 7. and xiii. 23. and xxvii. 5, 6. for this is nowhere said by Job in express words; though I rather think, since Elihu so peremptorily affirms that they were spoken in his hearing, that these words and the following did drop from Job's lips, in the controversy with his friends, though not recorded; for we are not to suppose that every thing that was said on both sides is preserved, only so much as the Holy Ghost thought fit should be: no man is naturally clean, or free from sin; man came clean out of the hands of God, by sin is become unclean. This impurity is propagated by natural generation, and is in all without exception. Job expresses himself clearly on this point, and agreeably to it, ch. xiv. 4. nor is any man clean by and of himself, or through any thing he is capable of doing, in a moral, ceremonial, or evangelic sense, to make himself clean; as by moral actions, by ceremonial ablutions and sacrifices, or by submission to evangelic ordinances, or even by his own tears, repentance, and humiliation. Job seemed clearly and fully sensible of this, ch. ix. 30, 31. see Prov. xx. 9. Jer. ii. 22. yet there are some persons that are clean through the blood of Christ, in which they are washed, and which cleanses from all sin; and through the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, in which they appear without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; and through the sentence of justification pronounced on them, by which word spoken they are all clean; and through the grace of God bestowed on them, the clean water that is sprinkled upon them, by which they are cleansed from all filthiness, and hence said to have clean hearts and clean hands; and if Job meant it in this sense, as he had knowledge of his living Redeemer, he no doubt was such an one: but not *without transgression:* without transgression imputed he was, and such are all they whose persons are justified, and their sins pardoned; to those God does not impute sin, Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. but they are not without the being nor commission of sin; for no man, even the best of men, are clear of it in this sense. Job might be free from the grosser sins of life, but not from in-dwelling sin, and the actings of it; we find him confessing sin, and disclaiming perfection, ch. vii. 20. and ix. 20. *I am innocent;* so he was, as to the charges brought against him by his friends, or the things it was insinuated he was guilty of, as hypocrisy, *&c.* or as to doing any injury to the persons and properties of men, or with respect to gross enormities, from which he had sufficiently cleared himself in ch. xxxi. but not so innocent as to be free from all sin, as Adam was in his state of innocence, which is contrary to his own declarations in the passages before referred to; some, as Aben Ezra observes, interpret the word *covered*[f], and as having the same sense with Psal. xxxii. 1. and in which sense it was true of Job, that his iniquities were covered; and others of his being covered with righteousness, with civil righteousness, as in ch. xxix. 14. which was true of the exercise of it; and in an evangelic sense he was covered with the justifying righteousness of Christ; the Targum renders the word *washed*, as he was in a spiritual sense. Jarchi interprets it *wiped* or *rubbed*, and others combed and brushed, and so *neat* and *clean*, which is the sense of several versions[g]: *neither* is there *iniquity in me;* in a Gospel sense there is none in believers in Christ; their iniquities being removed from them to him, and are done away and made an end of by him; nor are they to be seen with the eye of vindictive justice; God has cast them behind his back, and into the depths of the sea, never to be seen more; but then there is iniquity in them, as considered in themselves; for men to say they have none shews pride and ignorance, and is inconsistent with the truth of grace. If Job is to understood in these expressions in an evangelical sense, or with respect to the grosser sins of life, or a vicious course of life (and indeed in no other sense can he well be understood, consistent with himself), he is not to be blamed for what he said, and I apprehend that Elihu does not blame him for saying these things in his own defence; but for insisting so much and so long upon his innocence and purity, and unspotted life; and especially for joining with it undue and unbecoming reflections on the Lord, for afflicting a person so holy and righteous, as follows.

Ver. 10. *Behold, he findeth occasions against me*, &c.] That is, sought in order to find them; so Job in some places suggests, that God inquired after his sins, and sought diligently after them, that he might have something to bring against him; and because he could not find great sins, gross enormities, he sought after lesser sins; so some render the word, *staggerings, totterings*[h]; frailties, failings, and infirmities; and because he could

[f] חפף tectus, Montanus, Bolducius.
[g] Mundus, Beza; nitidus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; tersus, Codurcus, Cocceius.

[h] תנואות vacillationes, Cocceius; aut mutationes, Michaelis.

find none of late of a very heinous nature, he went back as far as the sins of his youth; see ch. x. 6. and xiii. 26. and this in order to pick a quarrel with him; and so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *lo, he picketh quarrels against me*; or that he might have just reason to depart from him, or to break from him, or to break off friendship with him, or to break him to pieces in his estate, family, and health; all which senses some observe the words will bear: but it would be needless for God to seek in order to find occasions against men; there is enough ready at hand, the sins that are about them: and to represent the Lord as dealing thus with good men is to represent him as acting contrary to the declarations and methods of his grace; yea, as doing what wicked men do to good men, as the enemies of David, Daniel, and Jeremiah, did to them; nay, even as Satan himself does, who goes about and seeks for, and picks up accusations against the saints; this must be owned to be a very irreverent and unbecoming expression of Job's, and for which he deserved to be sharply rebuked, as well as for some following ones, and for which he afterwards was thoroughly humbled: *he counteth me for his enemy*; this he had often said, but very wrongly; see ch. xiii. 24. and xvi. 9. and xix. 11. and the notes there.

Ver. 11. *He putteth my feet in the stocks*, &c.] This also he had said, ch. xiii. 27. by which he would suggest not only that his afflictions were painful and disgraceful, and from which he could not extricate himself, being close fettered by them; but that they were inflicted on him as punishments, and he was treated as a criminal, as a malefactor, who had been guilty of some notorious breach of the law: *he marketh all my paths*; looked narrowly at them, numbered and counted them; this also he had said, ch. xiii. 27. and xiv. 16. and xxxi. 4. meaning not only his natural and civil paths and steps, but his moral ones, that he could not step the least awry, but presently it was marked and observed, ch. x. 14. but though God does take notice of the sins of his people, and chastises them for them, yet he does not mark them in strict justice, for, should he, they could not stand before him, Psal. cxxx. 3.

Ver. 12. *Behold, in this thou art not just*, &c.] Here begins Elihu's answer, who does not deny that Job was a just man, both before God in an evangelic sense, and before men in a moral sense; he did not go about to detract from Job's general character, as a man that lived soberly, righteously, and godly in the world; but in this he was not just, nor is it to be justified, with respect to this thing, he could not acquit him of doing what was wrong; namely, insisting so much on his own innocence, and tacking therewith such unbecoming and undue reflections on the dealings of God with him; he did not give to God his due, he did not do him justice in representing him in this light; he did not say nor do the right thing, so Mr. Broughton translates the words, " lo, here thou art not in the right;" see ch. xxxii. 2. *I will answer thee*: or *I must tell thee*: as the same writer renders the words, being able to make it clear and plain: *that God is greater than man*: than any man, than the greatest of men, most famous for power, wisdom, or justice; he is not only greater in his power, faithfulness, goodness, grace, and mercy, but in his holiness and righteousness, wisdom and knowledge; and therefore can never do either an unjust thing, or an unwise one; and for man, who is both sinful and ignorant, even the best in comparison of him, to arraign him at his bar, is very arrogant and presumptuous; since he knows best what to do, and what are his reasons for so doing, and is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Ver. 13. *Why dost thou strive against him?* &c.] A creature against the Creator, a man against his Maker, the clay against the potter; how absurd and stupid is this! and a piece of weakness and folly it was in him to desire to litigate the point with God, and dispute with him, as he often did, when men cannot answer him one of a thousand, as he himself owned, ch. ix. 3, 4. and very sinful and criminal it is to chide with God, or complain of him, on account of any of his dealings with the sons of men, as well as it is vain and fruitless: *for he giveth not account of any of his matters*; he is a sovereign Being, and does what he pleases in nature, providence, and grace, and is not accountable to any for what he does; in things temporal, he does all after the counsel of his will; he bestows riches and honours, wealth and health, gifts of natural wisdom and knowledge on some, and withholds them from others; and each of these are his own, and he may do with them as he pleases: so likewise in things spiritual, he loves, chooses, redeems, regenerates, calls by his grace, and brings to glory whom he thinks fit; the blessings of grace and glory are his own, and he disposes of them as seems good in his sight; and in all respects he acts according to his will in heaven and in earth; none can stay his hand, or hinder him from doing his pleasure; and none ought to say to him, what dost thou? or why dost thou thus? or, if they do, he is not obliged to give any reasons for his so doing. Some take this to be the thing Job strove and contended with God about, that he did not, and because he did not, give an account of all his matters, or answer all his words; and particularly he did not shew to him wherefore he contended with him; and others think the meaning is, that God does not reveal all his secrets to men, but only as much as he thinks fit to acquaint them with; secret things belong to him, and things revealed to men; the secrets of his own nature, and the modes of subsistence of the divine Persons in the Godhead, the secret reasons of divine predestination of men to life or death, and of his dealings with men in a providential way, afflicting the righteous, and suffering the wicked to prosper.

Ver. 14. *For God speaketh once, yea, twice*, &c.] Or, *but God speaketh*[1]; though he is not bound to give an account of his matters, and the reasons of his proceedings in a way of providence or grace; yet such is his condescension and goodness, that he makes use of various ways and means to make known his mind and will in his dispensations, if men were but attentive to them: he speaks once, in dreams and visions, as in the following verse; and twice, or a second time, by chastisements, as in ver. 18. or he speaks frequently, again and again, see Psal. lxii. 11. gives line upon line, and

[1] כי sed, Beza, Piscator.

precept upon precept; if one way is without effect, he'll take another; and if one warning and admonition is not sufficient, he'll give another; so that though he is a sovereign Being, and not accountable to any, yet he does not act the unkind and unfriendly part Job had suggested: yet man *perceiveth it not*: the voice of God speaking in one way or another; hearkens not to the admonition given in a dream or vision, nor hears the chastising rod, and him that has appointed it; he is deaf to all instructions; he understands not the mind and meaning of God in his dispensations; which is not owing to want of means of knowledge, but to the blindness and ignorance of his mind, to dulness of hearing, to negligence and inattention, and to the prevalence of sin and corruption: the words, *yet man*, are a supplement to the text, and not in it, and some versions are without it, and understand the whole of God, rendering the words thus, *God speaketh once, and a second time he does not repeat it*; so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions: or *does not revise it*, or *will not see it*[k]; to which agrees the Targum, "and a second time "he needs not to look upon it;" and which rendering, as it suits with the context, so is more agreeable to the accents; but is differently applied, by some to the sufficiency of the word of God, that God has at once made known all truth, and there is no need to do it a second time; but certain it is, that God did at sundry times, and in divers manners, speak unto the fathers by the prophets; though indeed in these last days he hath spoken at once all his mind and will by his son, so that no future revelation is to be expected; but though this is true now, it was not in the times of Elihu: by others it is referred to God's dealings with a proud man, that calls him to an account for his actions, to whom he speaks once, and reproves him for his boldness; but a second time he'll not look at him, nor bear his pride and insolence: and by others to the unalterable decrees and purposes of God; what he has said or determined in his eternal mind is done at once, and remains invariably fixed; he has no need to look over a second time, or revise his first thoughts and designs, or reconsider them, whether it is proper to make any alteration in them or no, they are at once so wisely formed; and he has all things before him in one view in his all-comprehending mind, so that there cannot possibly any thing turn up unforeseen by him, to hinder the execution of his purposes, or cause him to make any change in them; no new thoughts, resolutions, or purposes, can arise in his mind, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. This agrees well with his sovereignty, expressed in the preceding verse, and carries in it a strong reason enforcing what is there said. Though some take the meaning to be this, that God speaks once to a man, and admonishes and reproves him as he used to do, in the way expressed in the following verse; and if he regards it not, he don't speak to him a second time in that way, or no more by words, but now by blows or chastisements.

Ver. 15. *In a dream, in a vision of the night*, &c.] That is, God speaks to men in this way, and which in those times was his most usual way; see ch. iv. 12, 13. sometimes he spake to a prophet, a person in public office, and made known his mind and will in this manner to him, that he might deliver it to others, Numb. xii. 6. and sometimes directly and immediately to persons themselves, as he did to Abimelech and Laban, Gen. xx. 3. and xxxi. 24. *when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed*; the former denotes a fast, heavy, and sound sleep, when the senses are all locked up, and there is not the least attention to any outward object; the latter a slight sleep, when a man is between sleeping and waking; and now at such a time, when he was laid on his bed in the night-season, it was usual for God to come to him in a visionary way, and impress things on his mind; when it was called off from worldly and earthly thoughts and cares, and was calm and serene, and so fit to receive what intimations and instructions might be given this way; see Psal. iv. 4. Job had his dreams and night-visions, though he seems not to have had any benefit by them, or to have understood them, but was scared and terrified with them, ch. vii. 14. to which Elihu may have some respect.

Ver. 16. *Then he openeth the ears of men*, &c.] Not the ears of his body, which remaining shut whilst things are presented to his mind in a dream or vision, but his internal ears; it is the same with opening the heart or understanding to attend to and receive the things delivered in this visionary way: *and sealeth their instruction*; sets home the instruction given in this manner, and imprints it upon the mind, so that it is well remembered when awake, not only the dreams themselves, but the lessons taught and learnt there, as may be observed in the cases of Abimelech and Laban; the word signifies *chastisement*[l] as well as instruction, that being one way in which God teaches and instructs men, Psal. xciv. 12. and so the sense may be, that God in a dream or vision makes it known to men, that if they regard not what he says to them, and repent not of their evils, and turn from them, he will correct and chastise them, and this he assures them of; and they may look for the certain performance of it, that he will visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes; things that are sealed being sure and firm. Mr. Broughton renders the words, *and imprinteth why they are chastised*.

Ver. 17. *That he may withdraw a man from his purpose*, &c.] Or *work*[m], his wicked work, as the Targum; either which he has begun upon, or which he designed to do. Thus Abimelech and Laban were restrained from their intentions by a divine admonition in a dream, the one from taking Abraham's wife, as he intended, and the other from doing hurt to Jacob, which he designed: *and hide pride from man*; by pardoning his sins, in which there is always pride, so some; pardon of sin being expressed by covering it, Psal. xxxii. 1. or rather by repressing, weakening, and preventing it; and that by not suffering vain and proud men to perform their enterprises, but obliging them to submit to the will of God, and humble themselves

[k] ובשתים לא ישורנה secundo non revidet, Schmidt & Maius apud Michaelis; & secunda vice non videbit illud, Schultens.

[l] במסרם disciplinam eorum, Tigurine version; castigationem eorum, Beza, Vatablus, Drusius, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis, Schultens.

[m] מעשה opere, Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, &c.

under his mighty hand. These are the ends proposed, and which are effected through the Lord speaking to men in dreams, opening their ears, and sealing instructions to them; and others also for their good follow.

Ver. 18. *He keepeth back his soul from the pit*, &c.] Or, *that he may keep back**; for this is another end and use of God's speaking unto men; it is to preserve them for the present from going down to the grave, the pit of corruption and destruction; so called because the bodies of men, being there laid, corrupt, and are entirely destroyed by worms, and turn to rottenness and dust; and to preserve them from the bottomless pit of everlasting ruin and destruction; for the Lord's people are reproved by him, that they may not be condemned with the world, 1 Cor. xi. 32. *and his life from perishing by the sword*: by the sword of men, which is one of God's sore judgments; or by the sword of the civil magistrate, the man spoken to being warned of God of committing these sins, which would bring him into the hands of such; or by the sword of divine justice; Jarchi interprets it of the sword of the angel of death; the word signifies a missive weapon, as a dart; so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *and his life from going on the dart*; or, as another version has it, *lest it should go on under the cast of darts**; the darts of an enemy in war, or the fiery darts of Satan, Eph. vi. 16.

Ver. 19. *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed*, &c.] This seems to be another way, in which God, according to his eternal purposes, speaks unto men, as the word *also* intimates; namely, by afflictions, and sometimes painful ones; which have a voice in them, and men of wisdom will hearken to it, Mic. vi. 9. Pain here signifies not pain of the mind, or a wounded spirit, which is very afflicting, distressing, and intolerable; but pain of the body, as the next clause shews; and this endured on the bed, it being so great as to confine a man to his bed, or is what he felt there, where he might hope for ease and rest; see ch. vii. 13. *and the multitude of his bones with strong pain*: not with a slight one, but a very strong one, such as those felt who gnawed their tongues for pain, Rev. xvi. 10. Jarchi interprets it, the multitude of his bones, which are strong; though they are hardy and strong, yet filled with exquisite pain; and not one, or a few of them, but a multitude of them, as there are a multitude of them in a man's body; even all of them, as Hezekiah complains, which must be very excruciating indeed, Isa. xxxviii. 13. and which was Job's case; not only his flesh was in pain, through the sores and ulcers upon him, but his bones were pierced in him, and his sinews had no rest, and he was full of tossings to and fro, ch. vii. 3, 4. and xxx. 17. and in this way he was, as other good men are, reproved and chastened by the Lord; and in which way he had spoke to him, as he does to others, and which should be attended to; and since such painful afflictions are but fatherly chastisements, they should be patiently endured, and the voice of God in them listened to, and ere long there will be no more pain: the Cetib, or textual writing, is, *the contention of his bones is strong*: through pain, or with which God contends with men; we follow the marginal reading.

Ver. 20. *So that his life abhorreth bread*, &c.] Through the force of pain he loses his appetite for food, and even a nausea of it takes place; he loathes it as the most abominable and filthy thing that can be thought of; even bread, so necessary to the support of human life, so strengthening to the heart of man, and what he every day stands in need of, and should pray for, and in health is never weary of; it may be put for all common and useful food: *and his soul dainty meat*; the most rich and delicious; such as the tables of the great and rich are furnished with: *food of desire*†; or desirable food, as it may be rendered; see Dan. x. 3. such as in the time of health the appetite craves and desires, and is fed on with delight and pleasure, but now had in the utmost aversion. Pains and diseases of body often produce such a nausea in men, Psal. cvii. 17, 18. and was Job's case, ch. iii. 24. and vi. 7.

Ver. 21. *His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen*, &c.] All being gone, none left to be seen, nothing but skin and bones; and this partly through the vehemence of strong pain, and partly through the nausea of food; not being able to take any thing for nourishment and the support of the fluids, and so quite emaciated: *and his bones that were not seen stick out*; which before were covered with flesh and fat, so that they could not be seen; but now the flesh and fat being wasted, they seem as if they rose up in an eminence, and stood out to be beheld; this was also Job's case, being reduced to a mere skeleton, ch. xix. 20. and Elihu, in this description of an afflicted man, seems to have Job chiefly in view, and by this would intimate to him that God had been, and was speaking to him by those afflictions, which he would do well to advert unto.

Ver. 22. *His soul draweth near unto the grave*, &c.] Not the soul, strictly and properly speaking, for that does not, nor is it laid in the grave at death, but returns to God that gave it; rather the body, for which it is sometimes put, and of which what is here said is true, see Psal. xvi. 10. or the person of the sick man, whose disease being so threatening, all hope is gone, and he is given up by his physicians and friends, and seemingly is at the grave's mouth, and that is ready for him, and he on the brink of that; which were the apprehensions Job had of himself, ch. xvii. 1. see Psal. lxxxviii. 3. and cvii. 17. *and his life to the destroyers*; the destroying angels, as Aben Ezra, and so the Septuagint version: or destroying diseases, and so Mr. Broughton renders it, *to killing maladies*; or it may be to worms, which destroy the body in the grave, and which Job was sensible of would quickly be his case, ch. xix. 26. though some interpret it of those that kill, or of those that are dead, with whom they are laid that die; or of deaths corporeal and eternal, and the horrors and terrors of both, with which persons in such circumstances are sometimes distressed.

Ver. 23. *If there be a messenger with him*, &c.] Or

* יחשך ut prohibeat, Mercerus, Piscator.
* Tigurine version.

† מאכל תאוה cibum desiderii, Vatablus, Drusius, Michaelis; cibum appetentiæ, Mercerus.

angel, either with God, as some think; or rather with the sick man; by which messenger is meant not an angel by nature, a created angel, though sometimes such are God's messengers, sent by him on errands to men, are interpreters of things to them, as Gabriel was to Daniel; of whom there are thousands, and who may be of service to sick men for their comfort and instruction, since it is certain they attend saints in their dying moments; yet this proves not that they are to be invoked as mediators between God and men: but rather a minister of the word is designed, who is by office an angel, a *messenger* of Christ, and of the churches; an *interpreter* of the Scriptures, and of the mind of God in them; and a spiritual, evangelical, faithful minister, is scarce and rare, *one among a thousand*: and his business is to visit sick persons, and to observe the *uprightness* and faithfulness of God in afflicting them, that they may quietly submit to and patiently bear the affliction; and to direct them for their peace and comfort to the uprightness or righteousness of Christ, for their justification before God; and to shew them what is right for them to do in their present circumstances; whether the sick man be stupid and insensible of his case, and his need of righteousness, or whether he be a truly gracious man, yet labouring under doubts and fears about the truth of grace in him, the uprightness of his heart, and his interest in the righteousness of Christ: but it seems best to understand this of Christ himself, the angel of God's presence, the messenger of the covenant, who is with the sick man, and favours him with his spiritual presence; or is *for him* [q], as it may be rendered, is on his side, an advocate and intercessor for him with God; *an interpreter* of his father's mind, and with which he is long acquainted, he lying in his bosom; and of the sacred Scriptures, as he was to his disciples concerning himself; or an *orator* [r], an eloquent one, never man spake like him, having the tongue of the learned given him as man; and who as a divine Person is the eternal and essential Word of God; who spake for his people in the council of peace and covenant of grace; and also as Mediator is the antitypical Aaron, can speak well for them on all occasions: *one among a thousand*: the chiefest among ten thousand, angels or men; see Cant. v. 10. Eccl. vii. 28. *to shew unto man his uprightness*: which to do is his office as Mediator, and especially as a prophet, even to shew the uprightness of God, the rectitude of his nature, the righteousness required in his holy law; and this Christ has shewn forth and declared in his being the propitiation for the sins of his people, Rom. iii. 25, 26. and by his spirit he shews to man, and so to a sick man, his want of uprightness in himself, his need of righteousness from another; and brings it near him, and shews it to be perfect, complete, and suitable; as well as teaches to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

Ver. 24. *Then he is gracious to him, &c.*] To the sick man; either the messenger or the minister that is with him, who pities his case and prays for him; and by some the following words are supposed to be a prayer of his, *deliver me*, &c. since I find in the Gospel there is a ransom for such persons. Rather Christ, who is gracious to man, as appears by his assumption of their nature and becoming a ransom for them, and who upon the foot of redemption which he has *found* or obtained, see Heb. ix. 12. pleads for the present comfort and future happiness of his people, in such language as after expressed, *deliver him*, &c. Or rather God the Father is gracious to the sick man for his Son's sake, *and saith, deliver him from going down to the pit*: addressing either the disease, so Mr. Broughton renders the word, *spare him (O killing malady) from descending into the pit*, the grave, for the present his disease threatened him with. Or the minister of the word attending the sick man, who is bid to declare to him, as Nathan to David, and Isaiah to Hezekiah, that he should live longer, and not die for the present: or rather the address is to law and justice, to let the redeemed of the Lord go free, and particularly the sick man being one of them; and not thrust him down into the bottomless pit of everlasting ruin and destruction, for the reason following: *I have found a ransom*: which is no other than Christ the Son of God; whom Jehovah, in his infinite wisdom, found out and pitched upon to be the ransomer of his people; to which he agreed, and in the fulness of time came to give his life a ransom for many, and for whom he has given himself as a ransom-price, which has been testified in due time: and this ransom is for all the elect of God, and is of them from sin, Satan, law, hell, and death; and the finding of it is not of man, nor is the scheme of propitiation, peace and reconciliation by Christ, or of atonement and satisfaction [s] by the sacrifice of Christ, as the word here used signifies, an invention of men; but is the effect of infinite wisdom, and a scheme drawn in the eternal mind, and formed in Christ from everlasting; see 2 Cor. v. 18. Some take these words to be spoken by the Father to the Son, upon his appointment and agreement to be the ransomer and Redeemer, saying, *go, redeem him*, &c. for so the words [t] may be rendered; and others think they are the words of the Son the messenger to his Father, the advocate with him for his people, as before observed.

Ver. 25. *His flesh shall be fresher than a child's, &c.*] Being recovered from illness and restored to health, through the gracious dealings of God with him. This is to be understood not simply and absolutely, but comparatively, or with respect to his former condition; that he, who before was reduced to skin and bone, is now become fat and plump; and whose flesh was dry and withered, now moist, succulent, and juicy; and whose skin was wrinkled, now soft and smooth, and sleek; and whose face was pale, now bloody and ruddy. The Targum is, "his flesh is weakened more "than a child," and the Vulgate Latin, "is consumed," referring to his former state: *he shall return to the days of his youth*. His youth renewed, and he seem young again; become hale and robust as in his youthful days; see Psal. ciii. 5.

[q] עליו *pro eo*, V. L. Pagninus, Mercerus.
[r] מליץ *eloquens*, Pagninus, Montanus; *orator*, Tigurine version, Boldacius.
[s] כפר *propitiationem*, Beza, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Boldacius, Vatablus; *expiationem*, Tigurine version; *lytrum*, Cocceius; *satisfactionem*, Schmidt.
[t] פדעהו *redime eum*, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

Ver. 26. *He shall pray unto God, &c.*] As the former verse expresses the condition of the body of the man recovered from sickness, this the frame of his soul, and the spiritual blessings enjoyed by him: some understand this of his praying in the time of his affliction, and consider it as one means of his recovery; and indeed a time of affliction is a time for prayer; and which brings a good man to it, who in health and prosperity has been negligent of it; such an one will make his application to God for deliverance, and not to the creature; and it is his mercy and privilege he has a God to pray unto, who can and will help him. But according to the course and connexion of the words, it seems rather to respect what the good man would do, and the frame he would be in upon his recovery; who would entreat the Lord to make him thankful for the mercy received, and accept of his thanksgiving for the same; that his affliction might appear to be sanctified unto him, and that he is much the better for it, more holy and more humble; and that he would manifest his pardoning grace to him for all the sins and transgressions he had been guilty of, his murmurings and repinings, and every thing else during his affliction; and that he may make use of his health and strength given him in the service of God, and for the glory of his name. *And he will be favourable to him*: which, if understood of the time of affliction, it may be interpreted of his laying no more on him than he will enable him to bear, and supporting him under it; of granting his gracious presence in it, and of his taking notice of him, visiting him, knowing, owning, and choosing him in the furnace of affliction, and manifesting his care unto him; and of the deliverance of him out of it. But if it respects the man as recovered out of affliction, it denotes further discoveries of the special care and favour of God to him, which are very enlivening and refreshing, strengthening and supporting; and of his gracious acceptance of his person, and of his sacrifices of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, through Christ the Mediator and messenger of the covenant. *And he shall see his face with joy*: that is, either God who is favourable to him, he looks with a smiling countenance upon the man now recovered, who before seemed to look upon him with frowns in his countenance, there being a change in the outward dispensations of his providence towards him, though none in his heart: his countenance beholds the upright with pleasure, whether they see it or no; he looks upon his people in Christ with the utmost complacency and delight, and particularly when they come to him in the exercise of grace, with their prayers, praises, and thanksgivings. Or the man recovered from illness, God being favourable to him, he beholds the face of God with joy, who perhaps had hid it from him in his affliction, which caused trouble; but now shewing his face and favour, it causes joy and exultation, even a jubilee in his soul. He beholds him in Christ as the God of grace and peace; and through him can come to him, and look him in the face with comfort and pleasure, as nothing is more delightful to him than the light of his countenance. *For he will render unto man his righteousness*: not the sick man recovered render to another man what is his right and due, or what he may have wronged him of; for which being reproved by the affliction, and convicted of, is desirous of making restitution: but God, who will render, return, or restore to the man recovered his righteousness, which is the foundation of his joy; not render to him according to his own righteousness, as the Targum, which would be but a poor recompense if strictly given; nor restore to him the righteousness he lost in Adam, which is but a creature-righteousness; but the righteousness of Christ, as Mr. Broughton, which is the good man's or the believer's in Christ, because wrought out for him, imputed to him, and bestowed as a free gift on him. Now though this righteousness can never be lost, being an everlasting one, yet a sense of interest in it may, which is returned, restored, and rendered to a man, when that righteousness is afresh revealed to him from faith to faith; the consequence of which is peace and comfort, joy and triumph.

Ver. 27. *He looketh upon men, &c.*] According to our version, and other interpreters, the sense is, God looks upon men as he does on all men in general, their ways and their works; and particularly he takes notice of men under affliction, and observes how they behave; if they are penitent and confess their sins, he restores them to health, and does them good both in body and soul. But most carry the sense another way, and interpret it of the sick man recovered, who looks upon his friends and relations about him, and any others that come within his reach; or he goes about them, as Aben Ezra explains the word; or will accompany with men, as Mr. Broughton; or sets them in rows, as Gersom, in order, as at a levee, that he may the better address them; or he shall direct himself to them, as the Targum; or shall sing over them or before them, so Schultens[r]; in a joyful manner, in an exulting strain, express himself, as follows; for the phrase, *and if any say*[s], should be rendered, *and he shall say*; make the following confession of his acknowledgment of the goodness of God unto him. *I have sinned*; against God and man, and that has been the cause of all my afflictions; I am now sensible of it, and ingenuously own it: *and perverted that which was right*; have not done that which is right in the sight of God, nor what is just and right between man and man; have perverted the right ways of God, swerved from his commandments, and gone into crooked paths, with the workers of iniquity; and declined from, or perverted, justice and judgment among men. *And it profiteth me not*; as sin does not in the issue; though it promises profit and advantage, it does not yield it; but, on the contrary, much hurt and mischief come by it.

Ver. 28. *He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, &c.*] Into the pit of the grave; and then the soul is put for the man or for the body; or into the pit of hell or perdition: *and his life shall see the light*; or he shall live and enjoy outward prosperity here, and the light of eternal happiness hereafter; and so the Targum interprets it of superior light, or the light above, even the inheritance of the saints in light. These words have a double reading; the Keri, or marginal

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[r] ישר על *cantabit super vel coram*, Schultens.

[s] ויאמר *et dicat*, V. L. Beza, Montanus, Mercerus, Michaelis, Schultens.

reading, is what we follow; but the Cetib, or textual reading, is, *he hath delivered my soul from going into the pit, and my life sees the light*: and which seems to be the better reading; and so the words are a continuation of the address of the man recovered from illness to his friends; setting forth and acknowledging, with joy and thankfulness, the great goodness of God unto him, that he had delivered him from the grave, and spared his life, and given him to enjoy great prosperity, both temporal and spiritual.

Ver. 29. *Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.*] This is a summary or recapitulation of what goes before, from ver. 15. God is an operating Being, he is always at work in a providential way: *my father worketh hitherto*, John v. 17. sometimes on the minds of men in dreams and visions; and sometimes by affliction; and sometimes by his prophets, messengers and ministers of the word; he works with and by these, and all according to the internal workings and actings of his mind, his eternal purposes and decrees, which are hereby brought about: and these he works *oftentimes*, or, as in the original, *twice**; therefore when once is not sufficient, he repeats it in dreams and visions; when men are not admonished by one, he comes to them in another: and afflictions, when one does not bring men to repentance, or answer a good purpose, he sends another; and continues the ministry of the word, in which he waits to be gracious, till all his people are brought to repentance, and all his ends answered by it: and all this he works *with man*, his darling object, the special care of his providence; and for whom his great concern is in redemption and salvation. He works with men distributively considered, with various men, in the several ways before expressed; and with men personally and individually; to one and the same man he has often appeared in dreams and visions, and on the same person has laid his afflicting hand again and again; and to the same individual has given line upon line, and precept upon precept. And because this is certain and to be depended upon as truth, and is worthy of notice and consideration, as well as is very wonderful and astonishing, that God should thus be mindful of man, and work with him and for him, *lo*, or *behold*, is prefixed unto it: the ends for which all this is done follow.

Ver. 30. *To bring back his soul from the pit*, &c.] From the pit of the grave; at the mouth or on the brink of which he seemed to be in the apprehension of his friends, and having the sentence of death in himself; see Psal. xc. 3. Or *to turn away**, *or stay his soul from the pit*, as Mr. Broughton; prevent his going into it by removing his disorder, and restoring him to health, as in the case of Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 17. Or figuratively, from the pit of an unregenerate state, which may be compared to a pit or grave, because in it lie such who are dead in trespasses and sins; and which is a pit of corruption, or a corrupt state: men in it are corrupt and corrupters, corrupt both in principles and practices; and is an impure one, like to mire and clay; and a very uncomfortable one, a pit wherein is no water, no refreshment, no solid peace and comfort. In conversion, which sometimes is brought about by the above means, afflictive providences, as well as by the ministry of the word, souls are brought back from hence; are regenerated, quickened, and raised from the graves of sin, and live spiritually, as they are also secured from going down into the pit of hell and everlasting destruction: *to be enlightened with the light of the living*; in a natural sense, to enjoy the light of living men, the light of the sun, and to live in health and prosperity, which is called light in opposition to affliction and adversity, expressed by darkness; see Esth. viii. 16. Psal. cxii. 4. Isa. viii. 22. And in a spiritual sense, to live a spiritual life, who before were dead in sin, to live a life of faith on Christ as their righteousness, and to live a life of holiness from him, and in newness of life to his honour and glory; and to have spiritual light into their state by nature, and their recovery and salvation by Christ; to see their need of him, his suitableness, worth, and excellency, and to have a glimpse of eternal glory; as also hereafter to partake both of eternal life and eternal light, called by our Lord *the light of life*, John viii. 12.

Ver. 31. *Mark well, O Job*, &c.] Consider and weigh well what has been said; or rather attend to what is further to be said: *hearken unto me*: to what he was about to say; for he was full of matter, and had not yet vented all he had to utter: *hold thy peace, and I will speak*; be silent and don't interrupt, and I'll go on with my discourse.

Ver. 32. *If thou hast any thing to say, answer me*, &c.] Any thing to object to what he had delivered, or any answer to return to what he had charged him with: *speak, for I desire to justify thee.* Elihu was a fair antagonist, and gave free liberty, time and space, to make whatsoever reply he thought fit, and which he should patiently and attentively hear: his view was not victory, but that truth might come out, and take place and prevail, having nothing more at heart than Job's good; and could wish it would appear that he was in all respects a just man, and even in that in which he thought he was not just; but could he fairly acquit himself it would be a pleasure to him.

Ver. 33. *If not, hearken to me*, &c.] If he had no objection to make, nor answer to return, then he desires he would attend and listen to what he had further to lay before him; *hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.* For though Job was a wise and good man, he might become wiser and more knowing; and indeed when instruction is given to a wise man, he will be yet wiser, Prov. ix. 9. and this may be received sometimes from persons inferior in age and abilities. Elihu proposed to teach him, as he did, natural, moral, and evangelical wisdom, especially the wisdom of God in his providential dealings with men, and what is man's highest wisdom under them: which is to be reconciled unto them, and patiently to submit, and to fear the Lord, and be careful not to offend him, which to do is wisdom and understanding.

* פעמים שלש *bis aut ter*, Tigurine version; *bis & ter*, Beza; *bis, ter*, Mercerus, Cocceius.

* להשיב *ut avertat*, Beza, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis, Schultens.

CHAP. XXXIV.

IN this chapter Elihu reassumes his discourse, and proceeds in his answer to Job, in which are first a preface exciting attention, ver. 1—4. then a charge is brought against Job, expressed in or extracted from some words that dropped from his lips, not so well guarded, ver. 5—9. a refutation of these expressions of his in a variety of arguments, ver. 10—30. and the chapter is closed with some good advice to Job, ver. 31—33. and with an earnest request of Elihu to men of understanding, to join with him in trying him to the uttermost, ver. 34—37.

Ver. 1. *Furthermore Elihu answered and said.*] It is reasonable to suppose that Elihu made a considerable pause, to see whether Job would make any reply to what he had delivered, or object to what he had said; which he gave him free liberty to do, if he had any thing upon his mind: but perceiving he was not inclined to return any answer to him, he went on with his discourse; and which is called a further answer to him: for though Job had made no reply to which this could be called an answer, yet as there were several things remaining for Elihu to answer to, and which he proposed to answer and did, it may with great propriety here be said that he answered him.

Ver. 2. *Hear my words, O ye wise men, &c.*] This is not an address to Job's three friends, as some think; for Elihu had expressed his displeasure at them, in condemning Job without convicting him, and returning solid answers to him; and therefore he should not take their method of dealing with him, but take another; and plainly suggests that wisdom was not with them, nor taught by them; and therefore, as he could not give flattering titles to men, it could not well be thought that he should address them as wise and understanding men, unless indeed in an ironical way, as some choose to interpret it; see ch. xxxii. 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, 21, 22. Rather therefore some by-standers are here spoken to, whom Elihu knew to be men of wisdom and knowledge, *&c.* as it follows, *and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge:* and as they were endued not only with natural and political wisdom and knowledge, but with that which is divine and spiritual, they were proper judges of the affair in controversy, and could best discern whether what Elihu delivered was right or wrong, and to the purpose or not. And besides, though they had a large share of wisdom and knowledge, yet it was but imperfect; and the most wise and knowing may become more so, and that sometimes by means of their inferiors and juniors: and therefore Elihu craves their attention to what he had said or should say, though he was but a young man, and they aged, and men of great geniuses and abilities; and the rather he might be pressing on them to be his hearers and judges, because, generally speaking, such, as they are the most judicious, so the most candid hearers.

Ver. 3. *For the ear trieth words, &c.*] Not only the musical sound of them, the goodness of the language and diction, and the grammatical construction of them, but the sense of them, and whether the matter of them is good or not; that they are sound speech, which cannot be condemned, or unsound; whether they are right or wrong, agreeably to right reason, sound doctrine, and the word of God; for there are words and words, some the words of men, others the words of God. A sanctified ear tries these; but then men must have such ears to hear, and be attentive to what they hear, and retain it; hear internally as well as externally; and which a man does when his ears are opened by the Lord, from whom are the hearing ear and seeing eye; and such try what they hear, distinguish between good and bad, approve truth and receive it, and retain and hold it fast: *as the mouth tasteth meat:* words and doctrines are like meat, some good and some bad; and such that have a good taste try them, either a rational or rather a spiritual discernment: some have no spiritual taste, their taste is not changed, and therefore cannot distinguish, nor make any good judgment of things; but others have, and these discern the difference, relish truth, savour the things that be of God, taste the good word of God, and esteem it more than their necessary food; and it is sweeter to them than the honey or the honeycomb. Such Elihu judged these men to be he addressed, and therefore desired their attention to what he had to say.

Ver. 4. *Let us choose to us judgments, &c.*] Take the part of the question or controversy in which truth and justice lie, and he doubtless has respect to the present controversy with Job. *Let us know among ourselves what is good:* agree upon that which is best to be done in the present case, what judgment to be made of the dealings of God with Job, and his behaviour under them, and what the best advice to give to him.

Ver. 5. *For Job hath said, I am righteous, &c.*] Not in express words, but what amounted to it: no doubt he was a righteous man in an evangelic sense, being justified by the righteousness of Christ, as all the Old-Testament saints were, who looked to him and believed in him as the Lord their righteousness, and said, as the church in those times did, *surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength:* Isa. xlv. 24, 25. And moreover he was an upright man, to which the Lord himself bore testimony, ch. i. 8. and had the truth of grace in him, that *new man which is created in righteousness and true holiness;* and also lived an holy life and conversation; but then he did not say or think that he was righteous in or of himself, or so as to be free from sin: Job could not judge or speak thus of himself, which would be contrary to what he expressly declares, ch. vii. 20. and ix. 20, 30, 31. though it must be owned, that he thought himself so righteous, holy, and good, that he ought not to have been afflicted in the manner he was; in which sense it is probable Elihu understood him: and besides, these words are not to be taken separately, but in connexion with what follows, which shews Job's sense, and how Elihu understood him, that though he was a righteous person, he had not justice done him: *and God hath taken away my judgment;* which words he

did say, ch. xxvii. 2. see the note there; or, as Mr. Broughton renders the words, *the Omnipotent keeps back my right*: does not vindicate my cause, nor so much as give it a hearing, nor lets me know why he contends with me; and, though I call for justice to be done, cannot be heard, ch. xix. 7. a like complaint of the church in Isa. xl. 27.

Ver. 6. *Should I lie against my right?* &c.] No; I ought not: this though Job had not said in so many words, yet this seems to be his sense in ch. xxvii. 4, 5, 6. that should he own and say that he was a wicked man, a hypocrite, and destitute of the grace of God, he should not only speak against himself, but, contrary to his conscience, say an untruth, and not do justice to his character. Some read the words without an interrogation, as Mr. Broughton, "for my right I must "be a liar;" that is, for vindicating my right, seeking and endeavouring to do myself justice, and clear myself from false imputations, I am reckoned a liar. And to this purpose is the paraphrase of Aben Ezra, "because I seek judgment, they say that I lie." Others render them, *there is a lie in judging me*, so the Vulgate Latin version; that is, "I am falsely accused, "I am judged wrongfully:" things I know not are laid to my charge, which has often been the case of good men: or, *I have lied in judgment*: that is, *failed*, as the word is sometimes used, Isa. lviii. 11. Hab. iii. 17. failed in his expectation of judgment or of justice being done him; he looked for it, but was disappointed; but the first sense seems best. *My wound is incurable without transgression*: not that he thought himself without transgression, but that his wound or stroke inflicted on him, or the afflictions he was exercised with, were without cause; were not for any injustice in his hands, or wickedness that he had committed; and that he utterly despaired of being rid of them, or restored to his former health and prosperity; and to this sense he had expressed himself, ch. ix. 17. and xvi. 17, 18, 19, 20. In the Hebrew text it is, *my arrow* [y], that is, the arrow that was in him, the arrows of the Lord that stuck fast in him; these were thrown at him and fastened in him without cause; and there was no hope of their being drawn out, or of the wounds made by them being healed; see ch. vi. 4. Now what Elihu was offended at in these expressions was, that Job should so rigidly insist on his innocence, and not own himself faulty in any respect; nor allow there was any cause for his afflictions, nor entertain any hope of the removal of them: whereas it became him to acknowledge his sins, which no man is free from, and that he was dealt with less than his iniquities deserved; and that, instead of indulging despair, he should rather say, *I will return* to the Lord; he hath *torn* and he will *heal*, he hath *smitten* and he will *bind up*, Hos. vi. 1.

Ver. 7. *What man is like Job*, &c.] This is said as wondering at the part he acted, that a man so wise and good as Job was esteemed to be should behave in such a manner as he did; who *drinketh up scorning like water?* For a foolish and wicked man to do so is not strange nor uncommon; but for a man of such sense and grace as Job was to do this was astonishing; to have no more regard to his character than to expose himself to the scorn and ridicule of men: for a man to become a laughing-stock to profane and wicked men for his religion and piety, it is no disgrace, but an honour to him; but by unbecoming words and gestures to make himself justly jeered and scoffed at is great indiscretion. Or it may be understood actively of his dealing very freely and frequently in scoffs and jeers, which he poured out very liberally and plentifully, and seemingly with as much delight as a man drinks water when thirsty; see ch. xi. 3.

Ver. 8. *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity*, &c.] The worst of men, who make it their constant business and employment to commit sin: *and walketh with wicked men*; the most abandoned of mankind. Not that Job kept company with such, and walked with them in all excess of riot; nor did Elihu think so; Job was *a man that feared God, and eschewed evil*, and evil men; he was *a companion of them that feared the Lord*; his delight was *with the excellent of the earth*: nor should a good man keep company and walk with the wicked, nor can he with any pleasure. But the sense is, that by his words, the expressions that dropped from his lips, he seemed to agree with them, and to be of the same sentiments with them; and what he delivered tended to encourage and harden them in their sinful ways; and what those words were follow.

Ver. 9. *For he hath said*, &c.] Not plainly and expressly, but consequentially; what it was thought might be inferred from what he had said, particularly in ch. ix. 22. *it profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God*; in his house and ordinances, ways and worship; he may as well indulge himself in the pleasures of sin, and in the delights of the world, if God destroys the perfect and the wicked, as Job had said in the place referred to; if this be the case, it is in vain to serve God, and pray unto him, or keep his ordinances; which are the language and sentiments of wicked men, and according to which they act, see ch. xxi. 14, 15. Mal. iii. 14. Mr. Broughton renders it, "when he would walk with God;" and so the Targum, "in his walking with God;" and another Targum, "in his running with God:" though he walks and even runs in the way of his commandments, yet it is of no advantage to him; or he does the will of God, as Aben Ezra; or seeks to please him or be acceptable to him, and to find grace in his sight. Whereas though love and hatred are not known by prosperity and adversity, but both come to good and bad men, which seems to be Job's meaning in the above place, from whence this inference is deduced; yet it is certain *that godliness is profitable to all*, 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Ver. 10. *Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding*, &c.] The same persons he addresses as wise men and men of knowledge, ver. 2. and here as men of understanding, or *heart* [z]; the heart being the seat of wisdom and knowledge; and such Elihu desired to be his hearers, to attend to what he was about to say; which was to refute the words of Job, or his sense expressed in the preceding verses. *Far be it from God*

[y] חצי *sagitta mea*, Montanus, Schultens, Michaelis.

[z] אנשי לבב *viri cordis*, Pagninus, Montanus, Michaelis.

that he should do *wickedness; and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity;* do any injustice or injury to any person, there being no unrighteousness in him, nor in any of his ways and works; which Job tacitly seemed to charge God with, at least as Elihu understood him. But sin is contrary to his pure and holy nature; he cannot look upon it with pleasure, much less commit it; it is forbidden by his holy righteous law, and therefore would never be done by him the lawgiver; nor can any one single instance be given of wickedness and unrighteousness committed by him in any of his works of nature, or providence, or grace. He is the author of the evil of afflictions, whether as punishments or fatherly corrections; and in neither case does he commit or do any injustice; not in punishing wicked men less than they deserve, as he does in this life; nor in correcting his own people, which is always for their good: but not of the evil of sin; this may be concluded from the titles here given, of *Almighty and All-sufficient;* for being so he can be under no temptation of doing an unjust thing; and which is expressed with the like abhorrence and indignation by Elihu as the same sentiment is by the Apostle Paul, Rom. ix. 14.

Ver. 11. *For the work of a man will he render unto him, &c.*] The reward of his work, as Ben Gersom interprets it, whether the work of a wicked man or of a good man: *and cause every man to find according to his ways.* Which is a truth frequently inculcated in the Scriptures; and will take place especially at the resurrection of the dead, which is for that purpose, and at the final judgment, by the righteous Judge of all: for, though wicked men may not be punished now according to their deserts, they will hereafter, which is sufficient to vindicate the justice of God: and as for the works and ways of good men, though God does not proceed according to them in the methods of his grace, they are not justified by them, nor called and saved according to them; for, though evil works deserve damnation, good works do not merit salvation; yet they are not neglected by the Lord; he is not unrighteous to forget them, and verily there is a reward for righteous men, though it is not of debt, but grace; and not for, but in keeping the commands of God, is this reward; even communion with him and peace in their souls, which they enjoy in, though not as arising from, their keeping them; and at the last day, when their justification will be pronounced before men and angels, it will be according to their works of righteousness, not done by themselves, but done by Christ, in their room and stead, and reckoned to them; for the obedience of Christ, by which they are made righteous, though imputed to them without works, is nothing else but a series of good works most perfectly done by Christ for them; and according to which the crown of righteousness in a righteous way will be given them by the righteous Judge. All which therefore is a full proof that no iniquity is, will, or can be committed by the Lord.

Ver. 12. *Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, &c.*] This truth is repeated and affirmed in the strongest manner; or *will not condemn,* as the Vulgate Latin version, and so the Targum, that is, he will not condemn the righteous; for, though he may afflict them, which is done that they may not be condemned with the world, he will not condemn them; for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ; his righteousness, by which they are justified, secures them from all condemnation. *Neither will the Almighty pervert judgment;* pronounce a wrong sentence, decline the execution of justice, swerve from the rule of it, or do a wrong thing; for he punishes wherever he finds it, either in the sinner or his surety; and his punishing it in his son, as the surety of his people, is the strongest proof of his punitive justice that can be given: nor does he neglect to chastise his people for sin, though satisfied for; so far is he from conniving at sin, and still further from committing it; see ch. viii. 2. and the note there.

Ver. 13. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth? &c.*] Or who hath committed the earth unto him, and made it his care and charge? Is there any above him that has put him into this post and office? Under whose direction and command is he, and to whom is he accountable? None at all; he is no deputy or sub-governor: the kings of the earth are under him, and they have others subordinate to them; but he is above all, higher than the highest: he is sole Governor of the world in his own right, by right of creation, and which he has from himself and not another; he has no rival, nor partner with him, none to whom he is accountable, or can control him; and since he is the Judge of all the earth, he will do right. Subordinate governors sometimes do unjust things in obedience to their superiors, or to please them, or through fear of them; but nothing of this kind is or can be the case with God; as he cannot do any injustice through inclination of nature, nor through ignorance, as men may; so neither through fear of any, there being none above him from whom he has received a charge, or that rules over him; and, as Jarchi expresses it, can say to him, what dost thou? as, I did not command thee so and so. And though he is sovereign and independent, and his power uncontrollable, it is contrary to his nature to make an ill use of it; and was justice perverted by him, the world would soon be in the utmost confusion: but it is a plain case there is a God that judgeth in the earth, and cannot commit iniquity. Or this may be said with respect to man; who has committed the earth to man, to be his charge, to be governed by him? if so, it would soon come to nothing; all creatures in it would be destroyed, as in the following verses; but this is not the case. Or who has given it to man to possess it, and to enjoy all things in it, and has put all things into his hands, and in subjection to him, to make use thereof, and for his good, delight, and pleasure, and visits him in it in a providential way, in great kindness and goodness? It is the Lord; and can it be thought that he that is so good and beneficent to men will do them any injustice? no, surely! Yea, should he take away all these good things he has given them, and even life itself, it could be no injustice, since he would only take away what he had given and had a right unto. *Or who hath disposed the whole world?* or created it, as Aben Ezra; that stored it with all the good things in it for the use of men? or put it in the beautiful order it is, so suitable and convenient for the good of his creatures? or made it the

habitable earth it is for man and beast? so Mr. Broughton renders the whole, "who before him looked to "the earth, or who settled all the dwelt land?" Or who made it the fruitful earth it is, abounding with plenty of food for man and beast? or who disposes of all things in it by his wise providence, so that every thing is beautiful in its season? None but the Lord has done all this; how then can it be thought that he who has filled the earth with his goodness should do wickedly or pervert judgment?

Ver. 14. *If he set his heart upon man*, &c.] Not his love and affections; though there are some he does in this sense set his heart on, and whose souls at death he gathers to himself, but with this sense the next verse will not agree; but to destroy him, as Jarchi adds by way of explanation; if he gives his mind to it, is set upon it and resolved to do it, none can hinder him; or sets himself against him in an hostile way, the issue must be entire ruin and destruction to the race of men; but it is plain this is not the case, or otherwise all must have perished long ago: or if he severely marks the ways and works of men, and deals with them according to the strictness of his justice, which yet he might do without any charge of injustice, none could stand before him; but this he does not, so far is he from any injustice, or any appearance of it. If *he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath*; not his own spirit and breath, drawing in and retaining that within himself, and withholding the influence of it from his creatures, which the Septuagint version seems to favour; but the spirit and breath of man, which are of God, and which, as he gives, he can gather when he pleases. The spirit or rational soul of man is put in him by the Lord; this at death is separated from the body, yet dies not with it, but is gathered to the Lord: and the breath which he breathes into man, and is in his nostrils, and which, as he gives, he can take away, and then man dies. But in doing this he does no injustice; indeed, should he in anger and resentment rise up and deal thus with men in general, the consequence must be as follows.

Ver. 15. *All flesh shall perish together*, &c.] Not one by one, or one after another, as they generally do, but all together; as when the flood swept away the world of the ungodly. *All flesh* signifies all men, and their bodies of flesh particularly, which are weak, frail, and mortal; and if God gathers or takes out the spirit from them, they die immediately, which is meant by perishing, as in Eccl. vii. 15. Isa. lvii. 1. *And man shall turn again unto dust*; from whence he came, as the body does at death; when those earthly tabernacles of the bodies of men, which have their foundation in the dust, are dissolved and sink into it. Now though this is the case of particular persons, one after another, yet it is not a general case, as it would be if God was to exert his power, as he might without any charge of injustice: and this shews the merciful kindness of God to man, so far is he from doing any thing injurious or unjust.

Ver. 16. *If now* thou hast *understanding, hear this*, &c.] Not as calling his understanding in question, as if he had none; for Job was a very understanding man; he had not lost his natural understanding by his afflictions, see ch. vi. 13. nor was he without an understanding of divine things, as his speeches and answers shew; but rather it is taken for granted that he was a man of understanding: *if* or *seeing* thou hast understanding, art a man of knowledge and intelligence, therefore hearken and attend to what has been said or about to be said; though, as some Jewish interpreters[a] observe, the word is not a noun, but a verb, and is imperative, *understand thou now, hear this*; and then the sense is, *if* things are so as before related, ver. 13, 14, 15. then now understand this, take it into thy heart and mind, and well weigh and consider it; *hearken to the voice of my words*; either the preceding or following ones.

Ver. 17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* &c.] That hates moral and civil justice; is such an one fit to rule among men or over them? No, surely; for to love righteousness and do it is a qualification of a civil governor; it is his business to administer justice; and if an hater of it, he can never be a proper person to rule: and if God was an hater of that which is right, as he would seem to be if he did not do it, he would not be fit to govern the world as he does. To this absurdity is Job reduced, by suggesting that right was not done him, or that God had removed his judgment from him; see 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. Gen. xviii. 25. Rom. iii. 5, 6. Mr. Broughton translates the words, *can a foe to judgment rule well?* And yet it cannot be denied, but must be owned, that God does judge in the earth, and judges righteously. Or shall such an one *bind*[b]? the allusion may be to a chirurgeon that binds up wounds. Sin makes wounds, and such as cannot be healed by men; but God can bind them up and cure them, and does: but would he do this if he hated that which is right, if he was not kind and merciful, just and good? see Hos. vi. 1. Or, as others render it, which comes pretty near to the same sense, *shall a hater of judgment refrain wrath*[c]? Such are tyrants, cruel and unmerciful, full of wrath and vengeance, and which they execute in a barbarous manner: but such is not God; he stirs not up all his wrath, which he in justice might; he retains it not for ever, but delights in mercy. *And wilt thou condemn him that is most just?* It is not right to condemn any just man, to charge him wrongfully, and then pass an unrighteous sentence on him; and much less to charge the righteous God with injustice, and condemn him that is most just, superlatively just; in whom there is not the least shadow of unrighteousness; who is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; who is naturally, essentially, and infinitely righteous.

Ver. 18. Is it fit *to say to a king*, thou art *wicked?* &c.] Not even to a bad king; for though he may be reproved for his sins, yet not by any or every one, but by a fit and proper person: and generally speaking, if not always, the Scriptural instances of reproving such kings are of men that were prophets, and sent in the name of the Lord to do it; and when done by them, was done with decency: and much less should

[a] Jarchi, Bar Tzemach, in loc. so Coccelus, Schmidt, and Schultens.
[b] יחבש obligabit, Montanus; so Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Coccelus, Michaelis.
[c] An nasum osor judicii frænabit? Schultens.

this be said to a good king; as to say to him, Belial, the word here used; or thou art Belial; or a son of Belial, as Shimei said to David, 2 Sam. xvi. 7. a name given to the worst of men, and is the devil himself; and signifies either one without a yoke, or lawless, which a king is not; or unprofitable, whereas a king is a minister of God for good; is for the punishment of evil-doers, and for a praise to them that do well. And *to princes*, ye are *ungodly?* Who have their name from being generous, munificent, and liberal, and therefore should not be treated in such a manner; who are the sons of kings, or subordinate magistrates to them, and execute their will and pleasure, laws and precepts. And if now such language is not to be used to earthly kings and princes, then surely not to the King of kings and Lord of lords; so Jarchi interprets it of God the King of the world; and some Christian interpreters, as Schmidt, understand by *princes* the three Persons in the Godhead; which can hardly be made to bear: though, could the whole be understood of God in the three Persons of the Deity, the connexion with the following verse would run more smoothly without the supplement that is made; so Broughton, "to the King, the King of nobles, that "accepteth not," *&c.*

Ver. 19. How much less to him *that accepteth not the persons of princes*, &c.] And indeed God is not the respecter of the persons of any, no, not of the greatest men on earth, kings and princes; these are alike dealt with by him as others in the dispensations of his providence; nor do they escape the marks of his displeasure, wrath and vengeance, when they sin against him: *nor regardeth the rich more than the poor?* by shewing favour to them, or conniving at them, *For they are all the work of his hands*; both the rich and the poor; not only as creatures made by him, but as rich men and poor men; it is God that makes men rich or poor, 1 Sam. ii. 7. Prov. xxii. 2. instances follow proving this, that God is no respecter of persons on account of outward circumstances.

Ver. 20. *In a moment shall they die*, &c.] Princes as well as the common people, rich men as well as poor; all must and do die, great and small, high and low, kings and peasants, rich and poor men, and sometimes suddenly; are struck dead at once, and without any previous notice, that night, that hour, that moment their souls are required of them. The Targum interprets this of the men of Sodom. And Mr. Broughton, in his margin, refers to the history of them in Gen. xix. *and the people shall be troubled at midnight*: either the common people, when their kings and governors die; or the relations and friends of persons deceased; and this circumstance *at midnight* is added, which makes the scene more melancholy, awful, and shocking, when it happens at such a time. The above Targum understands it of the Egyptians, when their first-born were slain, which was in the middle of the night; and Mr. Broughton refers in his margin to the same instance: but it is a question whether this affair ever came to the knowledge of Job and his friends, at least not so early as this controversy. *And pass away*: not into another country, being taken and carried away captive; but pass away by death into their graves, and into another world. Sephorno interprets it of the destroying angel's passing over the tents of the Israelites, and not entering into them to smite them when they smote the first-born of Egypt. But the former sense is best, see Psal. xxxvii. 36. *And the mighty shall be taken away without hand*: without the hand of men, but by the immediate hand of God; not falling in battle, or in a common natural way by diseases, but by some judgment of God upon them: and the whole verse seems to be understood not of a natural death, or in the common way, but of sudden death in a way of judgment, from the immediate hand of God, and that upon the mighty and great men of the earth; which shews that he is no respecter of princes, see Dan. viii. 25. and xi. 20.

Ver. 21. *For his eyes* are *upon the ways of man*, &c.] Which denotes the omniscience of God, which reaches to every man, to every individual, and to all men in general; and to their ways, to every step taken by them, to the whole of their lives and conversations, and every action of them; to all their internal and external ways and goings; perhaps the former may be meant in this, and the latter in the following clause. This may denote all their inward thoughts, the workings of their mind, the imaginations of their heart; all their secret purposes, designs, and schemes; and all the desires and affections of their soul; and all these, whether good or bad: *and he seeth all his goings*; the whole of his walk and conversation, conduct and behaviour; all his external ways, works, and actions; and these whether of good or bad men, see Psal. cxxxix. 1—6.

Ver. 22. There is *no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.*] By whom may be meant chiefly profane sinners that are abandoned to a vicious course of life, and make a trade of sin, or that the common course of their lives; though secret sinners, and even professors of religion, hypocrites, who in a more private manner live in sin, come under this name, Matt. vii. 23. such may endeavour to hide themselves through shame and fear, but all in vain and to no purpose; there is no screening themselves and their actions from the all-seeing eye of God, and from his wrath and vengeance. *No darkness* of any sort can hide them, not the thick clouds of the heavens, nor the darkness of the night; nor is there any darkness in God that can obstruct his sight of them; nor are they able to cast any mist before his eyes, or use any colourings, pretences, and excuses he cannot see through. *Nor shadow of death*: the grossest and thickest darkness; nor is even the grave itself an hiding-place for sinners, from whence they will be raised to receive the just deserts of their sins. See ch. x. 21, 22. and xiv. 13. Now from the omniscience of God, and his clear uninterrupted sight of all persons and their actions, inward and outward, Elihu argues to the justice of God, who therefore cannot do any thing amiss through ignorance, error, or mistake.

Ver. 23. *For he will not lay upon man more* than right, *&c.*] Neither in a way of duty, his law being holy, just, and good, not any of his commandments grievous, but all his precepts concerning all things right, his yoke easy and his burden light; nor in a way of punishment, always punishing men less than their

iniquities deserve; nor in a way of chastisement, suffering nothing to befall his people but what is common to men; and he is faithful to bear them up under it and through it, and to make a way to escape out of it: or the phrase, *than right*, being a supplement, may be left out, and the words be connected with what follows, *that he should enter into judgment with God;* and the sense is, either that God does not put it on man to go again into judgment with him; he does not suffer him to have a cause heard over again, to appeal from God or to him to have a second hearing; nor is any thing to be got by it, he is in one mind, and none can turn him, or reverse or get reversed any sentence of his; and therefore it was a piece of weakness in Job to insist so much as he did to have a hearing of his cause before him, since he could not expect there would be any alteration made in his favour: or, as Mr. Broughton reads it, *it is not for men to purpose to enter into judgment before the Omnipotent;* such a purpose is vain, he can never carry his cause against him; it is a piece of weakness to pretend to litigate a point with him: or the sense is, he puts no more on man than to come to him in judgment, so Schultens; he has appointed a person and time to judge the world in righteousness, and all must appear before his tribunal; and every thing, thought, word, and action, will then and there be brought into an account, and righteous judgment will pass; and therefore, since he has fixed such a method of proceeding, and requires no other, he can never be charged with injustice.

Ver. 24. *He shall break in pieces mighty men without number*, &c.] Such as are mighty in bodily strength, as the giants of the old world, and such as were inhabitants of some parts of the land of Canaan; or mighty in power and authority, being kings, princes, rulers, and governors, over nations and cities; or mighty in wealth and riches, which give men power and strength; these God can and sometimes does break in pieces like potters' vessels, and even mighty kingdoms and nations themselves he will make like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor: and even *without number;* or there have been and will be numberless instances of this kind; who can tell how many of these mighty men, men of gigantic stature, were drowned in the flood, or cut off by the sword of the Israelites in the land of Canaan? or *without search*[d], as it may be rendered; either on the part of God, who needs not any, with whom are unnecessary any formal inquiries into a cause, or examination of witnesses, in order to a judicial process against delinquents, all being naked and open before him at once; or on the part of man, with whom the ways and judgments of God are unsearchable, and who ought not closely and curiously to inquire into any of his proceedings, and the causes and reasons of them, who does all things after the counsel of his own will. Mr. Broughton renders it *without end*, for ever; with an everlasting destruction, an utter and irretrievable one; he so breaks them as that they never can be made whole again, like an earthen vessel that is broke to pieces and cannot be put together again. *And set others in their stead;* God always provides for a succession in the world, that as when one generation goes off, another comes on; when he destroyed the world with a flood, he preserved a family to replenish the earth; when the fathers of the Jewish nation, their carcasses fell in the wilderness, their children were raised up in their room to enter the good land and possess it; and particularly he provides for the civil government of the world, and when he pulls down or removes one king he sets up another, and will not suffer kingdoms and states to fall into anarchy and confusion: and sometimes, when he casts down the mighty from their seats, he exalts men of low degree, as when he rejected Saul he took David from the sheepfold; and makes such kings and kingdoms to *stand*[e] stable and firm, as the kingdom of David, and as the word here used signifies.

Ver. 25. *Therefore he knoweth their works*, &c.] Being God omniscient, or rather takes notice of them, weighs and considers them, and gives to man according to them; or rather makes them known, for of his omniscience Elihu had spoken before; he makes them known to themselves, fastens convictions of their evil ways and works on their consciences, and obliges them to confess them, as the instances of Cain, Pharaoh, and others, shew; and he makes them known to others by the judgment he executes, as on the old world, Sodom and Gomorrah; and the works of all will be made manifest at the day of judgment. *And he overturneth them in the night;* literally taken, as the first-born of the Egyptians were slain in the night; and Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red sea in the night; and the Assyrian army were destroyed by an angel in one night; and Belshazzar was killed in the night, and the Babylonian empire translated to the Medes and Persians at the same time: or figuratively, that is, suddenly, at unawares, and by surprise, and as quickly and easily as the night is turned into day; and such a revolution is made, as when he turns the night into day, and discovers and makes known all their secret actions committed in the dark; or he turns the night of calamity upon them, and puts an end to their light of temporal happiness and prosperity; or turns the night of death and everlasting wrath and justice on them, the blackness of darkness upon them: *so that they are destroyed;* both in a temporal sense, on every side, with an utter destruction; and in a spiritual sense, with an everlasting one.

Ver. 26. *He striketh them as wicked men*, &c.] Such is the strict justice of God, that he never strikes men, or inflicts punishment on them, or brings down his judgments upon them, but as wicked men, and because of their wickedness; the casting of man out of Eden was for his sin, as well as the casting down the angels from heaven that sinned; the drowning of the old world, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the ruin of Pharaoh and his host, the driving the Canaanites out of their land, the various captivities of the Israelites, with other instances of God's displeasure with men in this world, and the everlasting punishment of them in another, are only of them as wicked

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[d] לא חקר absque inquisitione, Beza, Mercerus; sine investigatione, Michaelis; so Cocceius, Schultens.

[e] ויעמד & stare facit. Pagninus, Montanus, V. L. so Mercerus, Drusius, Cocceius, Schultens.

men, and for sin; and therefore he is not chargeable with any unrighteousness. Sephorno interprets it, *instead of wicked men*, and illustrates it by the shaking out of Pharaoh and his host into the sea in the room and stead of the wicked Israelites, that came up from thence, *in the open sight of others*: which the same interpreter refers to the Israelites seeing the Egyptians dead on the sea-shore; or *in the place of them that see*[1], that is, in a public manner, as generally malefactors are executed, to which the allusion may be; it denotes the publickness of God's righteous judgments on wicked men, for the greater declaration of his power and justice, and for the greater shame and disgrace of such wicked men, and for the joy and comfort of the righteous delivered from them.

Ver. 27. *Because they turned back from him*, &c.] Became apostates from the ways and worship of God, as the posterity of Cain before the flood, and the posterity of Ham after it; who had been educated and trained up therein, and turned from the law of God, as the Septuagint version, from the light and law of nature: *and would not consider any of his ways*; either of providence, whether in a way of mercy which might lead to repentance, or in a way of judgment which might be a caution and instruction to them: or of his precepts, the way of his commandments, not any of these would they consider; so as to express a value for them, shew any regard to them, and walk in them; and which was owing to the stubbornness of their wills; they would not advert to them.

Ver. 28. *So that they cause the cry of the poor to come to him*, &c.] To God; through their oppressions of the poor they are made to cry by reason of them, and who come to God with their cries, and tears, and supplications, and which enter into the ears of the Lord of hosts. *And he heareth the cry of the afflicted*: as he did the cry of the Israelites under Egyptian bondage; he is a God hearing and answering prayer, and he particularly attends to the cry of the humble and of the afflicted, and arises for their help and deliverance.

Ver. 29. *When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?* &c.] Quietness or peace is of God; external peace to bodies of men, to communities, civil and religious, and to particular persons; quietness and contentment in outward enjoyments, peace and safety at home, and from enemies abroad; inward spiritual peace, this is of God, is in Christ, and from him; is the fruit of his righteousness, spoke by his blood, comes through faith in Christ, and is enjoyed in his ordinances, and continues as long as it is the pleasure of God to give it, and cannot be disturbed by men or devils; a national peace, when God gives it, cannot be broke in upon; nor the peace of churches, though there are always some inclined to be troublers of the Israel of God; nor the peace of particular persons, not their outward peace and quietness, when God sets an hedge of providence about them; nor their inward peace, not by all the afflictions and persecutions they meet with in the world; nor by all the temptations of Satan, and the corruptions of their own hearts. The Targum is, *who shall condemn?* and so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; when God acquits, absolves, and justifies men, who can condemn them? see Rom. viii. 33. Isa. l. 8, 9. When God pronounces the sentence of justification by the righteousness of Christ in the conscience of a sinner, it produces peace solid and substantial, and this being done, who shall condemn? or of what avail will their condemnation be? whether of the law, or of Satan, or of the world, or of themselves, of their own hearts. *And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether* it be done *against a nation, or against a man only*. Whether God hides his face from a nation, as he sometimes did from the nation of Israel, because of their sins; when he would not hear their prayers, nor assist them against their enemies, nor arise for their help and deliverance out of their hands; or from his church and people, his spiritual Jacob and Israel, as when they complain, their way is hid from the Lord, and the Lord has forgotten and forsaken them; or from particular persons, as from David, Heman, and others; and who, of the Lord's people, but at one time or another are under the hidings of his face? and then there is no finding him, no looking to him with comfort and confidence; no looking into and beholding the works and ways of God, and the causes of his dealings with them; these are out of sight, his ways are in the deep, and his footsteps are not known. Some refer this to men; who will shew favour to him whom God frowns upon? who will look at him in a pleasant manner, when God hides his face from him?

Ver. 30. *That the hypocrite reign not*, &c.] These words seem to be connected with ver. 24. *he breaketh in pieces mighty men*, &c. to the end of ver. 28, the whole twenty-ninth verse being read in a parenthesis; or with the phrase *he hideth his face*; as God is said to be in the destruction of mighty wicked men, who oppress the poor, and cause their cry to come to God, to prevent the reign of an hypocrite, or however to shorten it. By *an hypocrite* is not meant a common hypocrite in religion, but an hypocrite in politics; who pretends to great humanity and goodness, to a tender care of the people, and a preservation of them in their rights and liberties, and promises to support and establish the constitution, and observe the laws of the nation, with a shew of zeal for the religion professed in it. But when he has ascended the throne, and got the power into his hands, he throws off the mask and becomes a tyrant; and men of such a temper, either God does not suffer to ascend the throne, but if they do get on it through artifice and deceit, he suffers them not to continue, but deposes them, and cuts their reign short: and this he does *lest the people be insnared*; be brought into bondage, and lose their rights, privileges, and liberties; or lest they be drawn into sin by their precepts or examples. Some take the sense of the words to be, that God suffers not such to reign, but when he does it is because of the offences or sins of the people; he gives them such kings in his wrath, to punish them for their iniquities.

Ver. 31. *Surely it is meet to be said unto God*, &c.] By any afflicted person under his chastising hand, and particularly by Job, for whom the advice and instruc-

[1] במקום ראים in loco videntium, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Mercerus, Piscator, Michaelis; in loco spectantium, Beza, Cocceius, Schultens.

tions in this and the following verse are designed: *I have borne* chastisement; the word *chastisement* is not in the text, but is very properly supplied, as it is by Jarchi and others; the affliction of God's people is a fatherly chastisement, and should be considered and borne as such; and it becomes an afflicted good man to say, "I have borne and still do bear, and I am con- "tent yet to bear, the chastisement of the Lord; I "am desirous to bear it willingly, cheerfully, and "patiently, until he is pleased to remove it from me." See Mic. vii. 9. *I will not offend* any more: that is, sin any more; sin is an offence to God, being contrary to his nature, and a breach of his law; Job had sinned as every good man does, no man is without sin, in many things we all offend; and on account of sin God chastens his people, and the design of it is to bring them to a sense and acknowledgment of it; and it becomes them under chastening providences to confess it, and humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, and in the strength of divine grace determine to be careful not to offend more. Some render the words *I will not corrupt*[g]; that is, myself or others, my ways and works, by sinning; and others, *I will not break*, or *break through*[h]; the commands of God; and so the sense of this and the former version is much the same with ours; or I will not endeavour to break through the afflictive providence in which I am shut up, or break off the fetters and cords of affliction, but bear all patiently, until it is the Lord's time and will to set me at liberty. Some, as Ben Gersom, interpret this and the preceding clause, *I pardon, I will not destroy*; or *will not retain a pledge*, as others[i]; and so take them to be the words of God himself; and thus Mr. Broughton renders the whole verse, "now unto "the Omnipotent, which saith, I pardon, I will not "destroy, *this should* be said," namely, what follows in the next verse[k]: it is the prerogative of God, and it is his grace to pardon, and such whom he pardons he never destroys, but accepts, discharges, and remits the surety's bond or pledge; and nothing more effectually engages to a careful abstinence from sin for the future, than a sense of pardoning grace; and it highly becomes such persons to say what they are next directed to.

Ver. 32. That which *I see not teach thou me*, &c.] Which may be understood either of the chastisements of God, and his dealings with his people in a providential way, and of the design and use of them, which are sometimes unsearchable, and at most but a part of them only seen and known; it is meet to say to God, it is but a small part and portion of thy ways that is known by me; I can see but little into them: teach me more of thy mind and will in them, or else of sins and transgressions, the cause of chastisement; it is proper for an afflicted man to say unto God, I am conscious to myself of many sinful failings and infirmities, but there may be secret sins committed by me which have escaped my notice and observation; point them out to me, that I may be humbled for them, and make a free confession of them. *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more*: that is, if I have committed any capital crime, any foul offence or gross enormity, for otherwise no man lives without sin, I sincerely repent of it, and will take care for the future, through divine grace, to do so no more.

Ver. 33. Should it be *according to thy mind?* &c.] O Job, for the words seem to be directed to him; and may respect either the government of the world in general, and the disposal of all things in it, treated of in this chapter, though more remotely, ver. 13. Is it not proper that God should govern it, who has made it, and do all things in it as he pleases? is it fit he should consult with men what to do, or be instructed and taught by them in the path of judgment? is it meet that every man should have his mind and will, and have every thing go in the form and course most eligible to him? Or else they may respect chastisement, with which the words are more nearly connected; and so the sense be, should man be consulted, as Job or any other, and his mind known first, whether he should be chastened or no? should a son or a servant be asked first by a parent or master, whether it is fitting to give correction or not? or is man to be advised with in what way and manner he should be chastened of God, whether in his person, or family, or estate? or how long the chastening should endure upon him, and when it should be removed? no, surely; all should be left with God, the wise and sovereign Disposer of all things. *He will recompence it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose, and not I*; that is, God will recompence chastisement; he will chastise whom he pleases, and in what manner he pleases, and as long as he pleases, whether man consents or submits to it or no; he will not ask his leave; he will do according to the counsel of his own will; and thou Job mayest choose or refuse to submit to him as thou likest best; for my part, was it my case, I would not refuse submission to his will; I would say, *it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth good in his sight.* Some make this last clause the words of God, put by way of question, *shouldest thou choose or refuse, and not I?* shouldest thou have thine option and refusal, and not I? should man be his own chooser, or choose for himself what he likes best? should he not say, the Lord shall choose mine inheritance for me, though that inheritance is affliction? The words are rendered by others to different senses, all which to observe would be too tedious: some[l] to this sense, "what is of thy- "self God recompences;" sin is of a man's self, it flows from his corrupt heart and will, he is not tempted to it of God; nor is it to be ascribed to the temptations of Satan, which, though they may have their influence, sin is a man's own act and deed; and God will recompence it in one way or another, whether man will or no; either in a way of punishment on the sinner himself, or on his surety for him; or in a way of fatherly correction and chastisement; and this is the Lord's doing and not mine, and he is just in so doing. *Therefore speak what thou knowest*: if thou knowest any thing better than this, or canst contradict

[g] לא אחבל non corrumpam, Montanus, Mercerus, Piscator.
[h] Non disrumpam, Beza.
[i] Non pignerabo, Cocceius; non pigneratus eram, Schultens. Vid. Gusset. Ebr. Comment. p. 228.

[k] Tigurine version, Vatablus, Junius and Tremellius.
[l] המעמך ישלמנה ecce de tuo rependit illud, Schultens.

what is said: or as others[m] to this purpose, "did ever "such a speech come from thee, as expressed in the "preceding verses? God will recompence it, if thou "refusest to speak in such a submissive manner; "thou mayest refuse to do it, I would not; I should "choose to submit and bear the affliction patiently; "if thou thinkest otherwise, speak out thy mind."

Ver. 34. *Let men of understanding tell me*, &c.] Whether I am right or wrong:—*and let a wise man hearken unto me;* to what I have said or shall say. Elihu here addresses the company around him, the wise and intelligent part of them; the words may be rendered in the future tense, men of understanding *will* tell me[n], and a wise man *will* hearken to me and assent, not only to what I have said, but to what I am about to say, namely, what follows.

Ver. 35. *Job hath spoken without knowledge*, &c.] Not that Job was an ignorant man, either in things natural or divine; but in this point, about the chastening hand of God upon him, he had said some things which betrayed lack of knowledge, as in ver. 5. *And his words* were *without wisdom;* Job was not destitute of human wisdom, nor of spiritual wisdom, but no man is wise at all times; some things had dropped from him which savoured of folly and ignorance, and which he afterwards was convinced of, and confessed with shame, ch. xl. 4, 5. and xlii. 3. being charged by the Lord himself with what he is here by Elihu, ch. xxxviii. 2. and it may be observed, that Elihu does not charge Job with being a wicked man, as his three friends did, but as having spoken unadvisedly with his lips, under his chastening circumstances, and which he labours to convince him of.

Ver. 36. *My desire* is that *Job may be tried unto the end*, &c.] This is my opinion, or what *I bring in*[o], adduce, and lay before you, men of understanding and wisdom, and leave it with you to consider of. Some render it, *O my Father, let Job be tried*, &c. as if it was an apostrophe to God, and a request to him; so Mr. Broughton, who adds, "which art in heaven," and the same is added by some Jewish interpreters[p], as there are others[q] of them which go this way, and also several Christian commentators[r]; and of late[s] it has been urged, from this and other passages, that Elihu was Christ, who here addresses God as his father: but this is his New-Testament title; and though God is the father of all men by creation, and of saints by adoption, yet this relation and title are not so frequently claimed under the former dispensation, or however not so early as the times of Job, but are more peculiar to the Gospel dispensation, under which saints receive *not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father;* wherefore, admitting this version, rather some grave venerable person, as Eliphaz[t], senior to Elihu, who was a young man, is addressed under this title; or the whole circle of Job's friends now about him, all elder than Elihu, may be intended; *father* for *fathers*, the singular for the plural, see Acts vii. 1. and what he proposes is, that they should make it their joint request at the throne of grace, that Job's afflictions be still continued; that he might be thoroughly tried by them, and be purged from all his dross, he not appearing yet to be thoroughly sensible of his sinful speeches, and humbled for them; and therefore it was proper he should be still corrected and chastened to the end, or unto victory, as Mr. Broughton, or until victory was obtained, and he was obliged to yield, and cry *peccavi:* but since afflictions are things not joyous but grievous, and it does not seem so agreeable to a good man, kind and humane, to desire the continuance of the afflictions of another, though palliated with a plausible pretence for his good; it seems better to understand this as a motion made to the understanding part of the company by Elihu, that the words of Job, which he had spoken without knowledge and wisdom, might be taken under strict examination by them, and thoroughly scanned, that it might be better known what was proper to be said more to him for his conviction. *Because of* his *answers for wicked men;* or concerning or relative to such answers which he had made, which were like to those which wicked men make; who charge the ways of God with inequality and want of equity, and ask where is the God of judgment? or which serve the cause of the wicked, and which furnish them with arguments, prepare them for them, and put them into their mouths, to argue against God and his providential dealings with men, and against all religion. See ver. 8.

Ver. 37. *For he addeth rebellion unto his sin*, &c.] Or he *may* or *will* add[u], if he is suffered to go on at this rate, and is not stopped; as yet he has only committed, it may be charitably hoped, some sins through ignorance, error, and mistake, but if he is let alone he will proceed from evil to evil, to more ungodliness; to be guilty of presumptuous sins, of open treason and rebellion against God. *He clappeth* his hands *amongst us*, or *he will clap;* he will either clap his hands together as expressive of extreme grief and sorrow, of the agonies of his mind; shewing extravagant impatience, and pouring out his complaints in the most bitter manner, see Ezek. xxi. 14. or rather by way of joy and triumph, as having got the victory over us, see Psal. xlvii. 1. *And multiplieth his words against God*, or *will multiply;* he has said too many things already against God, his justice in his dealings with him, ver. 5. he will say more if he is not restrained. These are the reasons Elihu gives for a thorough trial and strict examination of Job; and they are taken partly from a concern for the good of Job, and partly on their account, that they might not be triumphed over, and chiefly for the glory of God.

[m] Junius and Tremellius, Grotius.
[n] יאמרו dicent; Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Mercerus, Drusius, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens: so Broughton.
[o] אבי pro אביא adducam, so some in Codurcus: hæc autem in medio affero, Tigurine version; adduco, Schultens.
[p] P. Abraham Peritsol, Simeon Bar Tzemach, Sephorno.
[q] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom.
[r] Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Drusius, Cocceius; so V. L.
[s] Hedges's Elihu.
[t] So Hieron. Trad. Heb. fol. 77. 1.
[u] יסף addet; Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius, Cocceius; as in the next clauses.

CHAP. XXXV.

In this chapter Elihu goes on to charge Job with other unbecoming speeches, which he undertakes to refute; as that he had represented his cause more just than God's, and religion and righteousness as things unprofitable to men, only to God; to which Elihu takes upon him to make answer, ver. 1—8. and that the cries of the oppressed were not heard by the Lord, so as to give occasion to songs of praise and thankfulness, to which he replies, ver. 9—13. and that Job had expressed diffidence and despair of ever seeing and enjoying the favour of God, which he endeavours to remove, ver. 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 1. *Elihu spake moreover, and said.*] Elihu very probably paused awhile, and waited to observe whether any of the company would rise up, and either contradict and refute what he had said, or declare their assent unto it and approbation of it; or rather to see whether Job would make any reply or no; but perceiving no inclination in him to it, he proceeded to take notice of some other undue expressions of Job, and refute them; one of which is observed in the following verse, and the proof of it given in the next.

Ver. 2. *Thinkest thou this to be right,* &c.] Elihu appeals to Job himself, to his conscience and reason; who as a natural man, guided by the light of nature and reason only, and judging according to the dictates of a natural conscience, and especially as a good man, one that feared God, and had so much knowledge of him and his perfections, as his speeches shewed, could never upon reflection think it right what he had said concerning God and his justice, as follows: that *thou saidst, my righteousness is more than God's?* A strange expression this indeed! but what is to be understood not of his personal righteousness; Job in his senses could never say that this was more or greater than God's, or to be above it and preferred to it in any sense; nor even of righteousness imputed. Old-Testament saints had the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and were justified by it; and so Job, who had knowledge of and faith in Christ as his living Redeemer, and the Lord his righteousness; but then though this is the righteousness of God, wrought out by one that is God as well as man, and approved and accepted of by God, and imputed by him to his people, which is revealed in the Gospel, and is unto all, and upon all them that believe, and they are made the righteousness of God in Christ; yet this cannot be more than the righteousness of God: besides it is not the essential righteousness of Christ as God, as Osiander dreamed, by which men are justified, but his obedience, active and passive, as Mediator, otherwise they would be deified who are justified by it; and if even so absurd a notion as this could obtain, it would not be more than the righteousness of God: much less can this be interpreted of Job's inherent righteousness, or the new man which is created in righteousness and true holiness; since all the holiness and righteousness that is in man is from God, and at present imperfect, and therefore cannot be more or greater than his; and still less can this be meant of Job's external righteousness, which, how great soever, was not perfect and without sin; whereas God is just and without iniquity. But there is not a just man that does good and sins not. This therefore must be understood of the righteousness of his cause; and to say that this was more than God's was what he ought not to have said, and was more than became him to say: for though a good man may defend himself against the calumnies of his enemies, by asserting his own righteousness, innocence, and integrity, and may desire the Lord to plead his cause against them, and judge him according to his righteousness and the integrity of his heart; but to attempt to make it out, that his cause is more righteous than the Lord's, is doing an ill thing. Now though Job had not expressed this in so many words, yet he had said that from whence this might by consequence be deduced; he had given great occasion for such an inference to be drawn from his speeches; for since he had spoken so largely of his innocence and integrity, and holy life, and of the hard usage nevertheless he had met with from God; and had represented his own case, as if he had behaved so well as to deserve better treatment at the hand of God than to be afflicted in the manner he was; that he had wrong done him, and complained of it, and could not be heard; his judgment was taken from him by the Lord; which was in effect to say, that his cause was better than the Lord's, and would bear a stricter examination than his; which to say was exceeding bad and unbecoming; see ch. xvi. 17. and xix. 7. and xxvii. 2.

Ver. 3. *For thou saidst, what advantage will it be unto thee?* &c.] Meaning that his righteousness, his holy life and conversation, were of no avail to him: he received no more benefit by being righteous than if he was wicked, since God destroyed one as well as another; and since his righteousness did not secure him from afflictions and calamities, it was of no advantage to him; he had not said so in so many words, but it is inferred from what he had said, ch. ix. 22. and x. 15. Man's own righteousness is of no advantage to him as to justification before God, and acceptance with Him, nor in the business of salvation, or with respect to heaven and happiness, so as to give a right and title to it; but is of great advantage in other respects; is for self-defence against the imputations and calumnies of wicked men; it makes a man honourable and respectable among men, when to live a vicious course of life is scandalous and reproachful; it gives pleasure and satisfaction to the mind, the testimony of a good conscience is matter of rejoicing; and such a man is free from the racks and tortures of an evil conscience others are distressed with; besides, good works are an evidence of the truth and genuineness of faith to others, and ornament the doctrines of the Gospel and a profession of them: and though a righteous man may be afflicted as others, yet in a different manner, in love and not in wrath, and always for his good. And, *what profit shall I have,* if I be cleansed *from my sin?* The

words, *if I be cleansed*, are a supplement, and seem necessary; so Mr. Broughton supplies. Sin is of a defiling nature, yet man may be cleansed from it, not by any thing he can do, but only by the grace of God and blood of Christ; and from such a cleansing profit arises. This fits a man for the service and worship of God, and for communion with him; gives him peace of mind, and makes him meet for heaven. This Job had not expressly said, and not at all in this sense, but it seems to be inferred from ch. ix. 29, 30, 31. where he is speaking of outward purity of life, and yet was plunged into the ditch of afflictions. Some render the words to this sense, as if there was no profit *by expiation or atonement for sin* [y]; the same word signifying both sin and atonement for it: there is none but by the blood and sacrifice of Christ, and much profit arises from that; pardon of sin proceeds upon it, and thus furnishes out much solid peace, joy, and comfort, Rom. v. 10, 11. Others, what profit by punishment for sin [z], unless to God? so sin is sometimes put for punishment; or through leaving sin and repenting of it [a]. Now though these are not the causes of the pardon of sin, yet it is given and applied to such who do repent of it, confess and forsake it, Prov. xxviii. 13. Isa. lv. 7. Or by being *without sin* [b]: no man is without sin; but a man may be without any gross and enormous crime he is chargeable with, or without living a vicious course of life; and this is profitable, as has been before observed. Jarchi's paraphrase is, "what shall I profit more by "my righteousness than by my sin?" which sense is followed by others: I may as well be wicked as righteous; I am not the better for it, since I am afflicted in the manner I am: my righteousness is of no profit to me; if to any, it is to God. To this Elihu returns an answer in the following verses.

Ver. 4. *I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee.*] Meaning not his three friends, as the Septuagint version expresses it; for they were not on the side of Job, and of the same sentiment with him, but rather on the side of Elihu; especially Eliphaz, who expresses much the same sentiment he does, ch. xxii. 2, 3. but all that were of the same mind with Job, whether present or absent, or in whatsoever part of the world; the answer he should return to him would serve for them all, and sufficiently confute such a bad notion of God, let it be embraced by whomsoever.

Ver. 5. *Look unto the heavens, and see*, &c.] The firmament of heaven, in which are the sun and moon and stars: *and behold the clouds which are higher than thou*; the clouds of the air or sky, which are lower than the starry heavens, yet these were higher than Job, and much more the starry heavens: but because the word has the signification of *thinness*, which does not so well agree with the clouds, which are thick substances, condensed air; some take it to be meant of the supreme region of the heavens, which is pure and thin: so Sephorno: and Job is directed to look to these, not as stargazers do, such as are given to judicial astrology, to judge of the fates of men and kingdoms; but rather thereby to be led to the contemplation of God the author of them, and the glorious perfections of his being they display; and chiefly to observe the height of them, that they were out of his reach, and he could neither help them nor hurt them; that he could neither increase nor diminish the light of the celestial bodies, which he could only behold; nor either forward or hinder their course, nor in the least add to or abate their influence and efficacy; and if he could neither be beneficial nor hurtful to them, how was it possible that he could be of any advantage or detriment to God, by any actions of his, good or bad, who is higher and out of sight? This is the answer Elihu in general returned, he more particularly replies as follows.

Ver. 6. *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him?* &c.] Sin is expressly said to be against God, Psal. li. 4. it is contrary to his nature, as any contraries can be to each other: it is against his law, a breach and violation of it; and so against his supreme legislative power and authority, and a contempt of it; it is what he is angry with and is provoked by, being what he hates and abhors, and is abominable in his sight. But then he cannot be supposed to be so affected with it as to be ruffled and discomposed, or his peace be disturbed, and his happiness in the least broke in upon; for affections are only attributed to him after the manner of men; much less is he so affected hereby as to be hurt or in danger of being destroyed, nor even of being dethroned: men can no more reach him by any hostile action of theirs, such as sin is, than they can reach the sun and stop its course, lessen its light or pluck it from its orbit. Or, *what canst thou work for him?* as Mr. Broughton; by way of atonement or satisfaction for sin? Nothing at all; see ch. vii. 20. but the other sense is best. *Or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him?* As he is not hurt by a slight single sin, a failing or infirmity, an error or mistake, common to men, as the preceding word may signify; so not by greater sins, presumptuous ones, gross enormities, rebellions against God, overt acts of treason against the Almighty, and these multiplied and heaped up even unto heaven; for though by these the name of God is profaned and blasphemed, and he is dishonoured and despised, and his manifestative glory is eclipsed, or he has not the honour given him that is due unto him; yet his essential glory is untarnished, unsullied, and unhurt, no more than the sun by an eclipse; he is the same without any variableness or shadow of turning, as well as is over all blessed for ever. And, indeed, his manifestative glory in many instances receives a lustre, through his power, wisdom, and goodness, overruling the sins of men for the display of it; as the fall of the first Adam made way for the sending of Christ the Saviour, in which God has shewn forth the exceeding riches of his grace; and as his mercy and grace are displayed in the pardon of sin, and his power and justice in the punishment of sin

[y] מחטאתי de expiatione mea, Mercerus, &c. in expiando peccatum, Grotius; מחטאתי pro piaculo venit, Cocceius; so Simeon Bar Tzemach in loc.

[z] Supplicio meo, Junius & Tremellius; mucta pro illo aut pœna, Cocceius; ex pœna peccati mei, Drusius; so Ben Gersom.

[a] Subaudi relicto, so Mercerus, Drusius; remisso & per pœnitentiam diluto, Munster.

[b] Absque peccato, i. e. ita vivendo ut non peccem, quæ sententia Michaelis.

and sinners; and his patience and long-suffering in bearing with them.

Ver. 7. *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him?* &c.] All righteousness is of God that any creatures have. What the angels in heaven have, or Adam had in a state of innocence; or what believers in Christ have in and from him; his righteousness imputed to them is of God; the grace of righteousness or holiness, imparted to them and implanted in them, is from him; and it is under the influence of his spirit, and by his grace and strength, they do works of righteousness externally; and therefore can give nothing to him of their own, nor does he need any, being God all-sufficient; even the goodness of his Son does not extend to him, but to the saints, Psal. xvi. 2, 3. much less any goodness of theirs: their best works of righteousness are due to him, and not gifts; and though they may contribute to his manifestative glory, both in them that do them and in others that see them, they can add nothing to the essential glory of God. *Or what receiveth he of thine hand?* He can receive nothing but what he has given, or what he has a prior right to and is his due, and so cannot be laid under any obligation to man by what he does; nor can man merit any thing at his hand, not even the least temporal mercy, and much less spiritual ones and everlasting life: and what notice God is pleased to take of the good works of men, in a way of reward, is not of debt, but of grace, and entirely owing to his goodness; and does not arise from any intrinsic worth in them, or from any advantage to him by them.

Ver. 8. *Thy wickedness* may hurt *a man as thou art,* &c.] But not God: a man may hurt himself by his wickedness; his body, by bringing various diseases upon it, through debauchery and intemperance; his family and estate, by wasting it; his soul, for every sin is a wrong and injury to a man's soul, and exposes it to ruin and destruction: and sin does even a good man hurt, since it breaks in upon his peace, and hinders his communion with God; and the wickedness of men may hurt others like themselves, frail, mortal, sinful creatures, and easily led aside by ill examples; as well as there are many sins which do injury to the persons, families, and estates of others, as murder, adultery, theft, &c. and since sin is hurtful to others, God resents it, and punishes for it, though, strictly speaking, it cannot hurt him in the sense before given. *And thy righteousness* may profit *the son of man;* may profit a man himself, (see the note on ver. 3,) and others, but neither for justification before God; but godliness is profitable to a man's self, both for this life and that to come, and good works are profitable to other men; for what reasons they are to be performed and maintained, see 1 Tim. iv. 8. Tit. iii. 8, 14. Some are of real and direct profit to men, as acts of beneficence to them, and all as being examples to them; but then no works of righteousness can be profitable to God, they adding nothing to him; which is what Elihu undertook to answer to.

Ver. 9. *By reason of the multitude of oppressions, they make* the oppressed *to cry,* &c.] Which is either an illustration by an instance of what is before said, that wickedness hurts men, as particularly oppression does, which makes men cry; or this refers to something new, to another complaint of Job, or an undue expression of his Elihu undertakes to answer; that men cry unto God, as he himself had, but are not heard and answered; the place or places referred to may be ch. xxiv. 12. and xix. 7. and xxx. 20. To which Elihu replies, by granting that men oppressed cry because of their oppression, and are not heard; for which reasons may be given, as in the following verses. The poor are often oppressed by the rich, whose wealth gives them power, and that they abuse; and the weak and feeble by the mighty; and their oppressions are many, there is a multitude of them: men in power and authority have various ways of oppressing others, who like the Israelites cry by reason of them, and are made to cry by their oppressors. *And they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty;* which falls with weight, and lies heavy upon them, and crushes them; meaning the power they have, and which they abuse to the injury of them; nor are they able to help themselves or deliver themselves out of their hands, they being mighty, if not in body, yet through wealth; and by means of that authority over them which gives it them: now on account of the pressure upon them, they cry, not to God, but to men: and if they cry to God, it is in a murmuring and complaining way, through impatience under their burden, through envy at the riches and power of others, in a passionate manner, in a revengeful spirit, calling and seeking for vengeance on their oppressors; not in an humble penitent manner, acknowledging their sins, and owning their unworthiness to be heard and regarded, and submitting all to the will of God: for which reasons they are not heard, their cries and prayers being reckoned no other than howlings, Hos. vii. 14.

Ver. 10. *But none saith, where* is *God my Maker?* &c.] Or *Makers*[y], as in Psal. cxlix. 2. Isa. liv. 5. for there are more concerned in the formation of man, Gen. i. 26. even the Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the one God that has made all men, Mal. ii. 10. Now not one of the oppressed ones that cry by reason of their oppression, or very few of them, inquire after God, seek unto him for help and deliverance from their oppressions, or desire to enjoy him and his gracious presence under their afflictions and distresses; and that is one reason why they are not heard: they do not so much as consider him as the author of their beings, and be thankful to him for them; nor as the preserver of them in their beings; nor as their kind benefactor, who gives them all that they enjoy, and who is the disposer of all their affairs in providence: and if they are new creatures, or are re-made, they are his workmanship; and therefore should upon all accounts seek him and submit to his will, and patiently bear all their afflictions, waiting his time to deliver them out of them: but there are few or none that regard him in this light, or make an inquiry after him, even though he has not only made them, but is he *who giveth songs in the night;* which respects not the praises of the angels in the night, as the Targum; nor the shining of the moon and stars in the night, which cause praise and thank-

[y] עשי factores mei; Drusius, Mercerus, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens; so Broughton.

fulness; nor the singing of birds in the night, as of the nightingale; senses some give into: but matter and cause of rejoicing in the night, either taken literally, as the mercies of the day, which, when reflected upon when men come to lie down on their beds at night, and commune with their hearts there, afford them songs of praise, see Psal. xlii. 8. Or the mercies of the night, as sweet refreshing sleep, and preservation in safety from all dangers by fire, thieves, &c. all which are of God; and, when duly considered, will direct to encompass him with songs of deliverance, see Psal. cxxxvii. 2, 3. and iii. 5. and iv. 8. Or, figuratively, the night sometimes signifying a time of calamity, affliction, and distress, either on temporal or spiritual accounts; and when men seek to him in such a night with their whole hearts, and he is pleased to visit them in a gracious manner, and favour them with his presence and the discoveries of his love, this occasions songs of praise to him, Isa. xxvi. 9. Psal. xvii. 3. But when men are unconcerned about and not thankful for the mercies of the day and of the night, though these administer songs unto them, it is no wonder that, when they cry through oppression, they are not heard.

Ver. 11. *Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth*, &c.] Who are taught and know much, especially some of them; but not so much as man, see Isa. i. 3, 4. *and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven;* who are wise to provide food and nests for themselves and their young; and such as are birds of passage, as the turtle, the crane, the stork, and the swallow, to know the time of their coming and returning, see Jer. viii. 7, 8, 9. But then neither the beasts nor the fowls, though they are endowed with much knowledge and sagacity, according to their natures, yet not with reason and understanding, as men are, so as to make reflections on things they see and hear, and reason and discourse about them; nor are they capable of being taught and attaining to knowledge and wisdom as men are, by the works of God, of creation, and providence; and by the word of God, the Scriptures of truth, which are able to make men wise unto salvation; and by the spirit of God, who teaches all things of a spiritual nature. God not only endows men with reason, but with sentiments of religion, which brutes are incapable of; he gives to men wisdom in the hidden part; he puts in them his fear, which is the beginning of wisdom; he makes them wise to know God in Christ, and to know his son Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal; and he gives them knowledge of a future state, and hope of immortality and eternal life. Wherefore it becomes them to bear afflictions and oppressions with a fortitude of mind, and patiently submit to the will of God, and wait his time for deliverance, having called upon him in faith, and left their case with him; but if they only cry, as the brutes do under their burdens, it need not seem strange they are not heard and answered; since God has given them more wisdom and knowledge than they, and therefore should behave after another manner; though sometimes they act a part inferior to them, Jude, ver. 10.

Ver. 12. *There they cry*, &c.] As brutes do, and as in ver. 9. by reason of their oppressions, but not under a due sense of the hand of God upon them, nor of his being their only helper, and saviour, and deliverer. *But none giveth answer;* to them, either God or men, and they lie groaning and howling under their oppression. *Because of the pride of evil men;* this is either to be connected with *they cry*, and then the sense is, that they cry by reason of the oppressions of wicked men, who, through the pride of their hearts, and to shew their superior power and authority, persecute and distress them, Psal. x. 2. And it is because of this they cry out, being distressed by them, and not through any sense of sin they have committed, as the reason of God's suffering them to be thus oppressed; or *with none give answer;* God gives them no answer to their cry, because pride is not withdrawn from them, which is one end he has in afflicting men; because they are not humbled under the mighty hand of God, and are not brought to a sense of sin and humiliation for it, and acknowledgment of it. And another reason follows:

Ver. 13. *Surely God will not hear vanity*, &c.] Or *a lie*[*], than which nothing is more an abomination to him; if men come to him with a lie in their mouths, they cannot expect to be heard by him; he is only nigh to those who call upon him in truth: or that which is *rash*[†]; which is rashly uttered, and in a passionate wrathful manner, savouring of a revengeful spirit, too often the case of those that cry under oppression; see Eccl. v. 2. 1 Tim. ii. 8. or vain and empty prayers, a speech of vanity, as Aben Ezra; which as to the matter of them are about vain and empty things; only for outward mercies, worldly goods; and not for spiritual mercies, or such things as are according to the will of God; but what are pleasing to the flesh, and sought for to consume on the lusts of it, and therefore such prayers are not heard, Psal. iv. 6. Jam. iv. 3. and as to the manner of them, they are not put up in the name of Christ, nor under the influence of the spirit of Christ, nor in the exercise of any grace, nor with reverence of God, nor with sincerity of soul, not in faith, nor with fervency: or *vanity* is put for vain men, as sin for sinners; such as are proud men, and are vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind. God hears humble penitent sinners, who find mercy with him; and humble saints, to whom he gives more grace; but not proud Pharisees, or men unhumbled by afflictions; see Luke xviii. 11—14. nor light and empty persons, who are without God and Christ, destitute of the spirit, devoid of all grace, and full of all unrighteousness; unstable ones, who are vanity itself, and lighter than vanity, tossed to and fro like a wave of the sea, and double-minded, Jam. i. 6, 7, 8. nor men of vain conversations, that walk in the vanity of their minds, whose words are vain, and especially such as take the name of God in vain; and all whose actions are vain, or such that live a vain and sinful course of life; God hears not sinners, John ix. 31. *Neither will the Almighty regard it;* vanity, vain prayers and vain persons; he regards the prayer of

[*] שוא falsitatem, Beza; mendacium, Pagninus, Montanus.

[†] Quod temerarium est, Cocceius.

the destitute, the lowly, and the humble, but not the prayer of such as before described; he cannot *look* at it[b], nor at them: he looks to the poor and contrite, and desires to see their countenance and hear their voice in prayer; but he is of purer eyes than to look on vain persons and their vain prayers; and a greater contempt cannot be shewn to petitioners and their petitions than when those to whom they apply will not so much as look at them, but turn both a deaf ear to them, and their eyes away from them.

Ver. 14. *Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him,* &c.] Which is another expression of Job's taken notice of by Elihu, and to which he makes answer; he seems to refer to ch. xxiii. 3, 8, 9. God is indeed invisible in his nature and essence, but is to be seen in his works of creation and providence; which Job was acquainted with, and in which he had seen somewhat of the glory of God, and of his divine perfections in them. See ch. ix. 4—10. and xxvi. 14. And he is to be seen in Christ by an eye of faith, and Job had trusted in him as his salvation; and he will be seen with the beatific vision in heaven as he is, in a more glorious and perfect manner, which Job had a full persuasion of, ch. xiii. 15, 16. and xix. 26, 27. and therefore is not to be understood in either of those senses, but of his not seeing him on a throne of judgment, hearing and trying his cause, judging and acquitting him; this he had often desired, but despaired of ever seeing it; see ch. xxiii. 4, 5, 6, 7. and xxxi. 35, 36, 37. and ix. 32—35. to which Elihu replies. Yet *judgment* is *before him;* all things are naked and open to him, and stand clear before him; he has perfect knowledge of what is right and wrong; no cause is unknown to him, and needs not to be searched into by him; nor can he nor will he ever pass a wrong judgment: he is just and true, righteous in all his ways and works, the Judge of the whole earth, who will do right, and will plead and judge the cause of every good man sooner or later; if not now, there is a judgment to come with him, when all must appear before his judgment-seat, and he will render unto every man according to his works. *Therefore trust thou in him,* or *wait for him*[c]; wait for his coming to judgment: wait till that time comes when every thing will be brought to light, and every good man shall have praise of God. Or, as we render it, *trust in him;* God alone is the object of trust and confidence, and happy is the man that trusts in him; he is to be trusted in for all things, both temporal, spiritual, and eternal; and particularly for this of doing justice to his people; if not now, yet hereafter, he will render tribulation to them that trouble them; he will right all their wrongs and avenge their injuries, and remove the rebuke that is upon them, and confess them before men and angels, and declare them righteous, and receive them into his kingdom and glory: and he is to be trusted in at all times, in times of adversity as well as prosperity; and even when he is not to be seen, and the dispensations of his providence are dark and intricate, see Isa. l. 10. The word used signifies such a trust, hope, and waiting, as of a woman in travail, who bears her pains patiently, hoping and trusting for a safe deliverance of a child, to the joy of her and her family.

Ver. 15. *But now, because* it is *not* so, *&c.*] Because there was not such trust, hope, patience, and quiet expectation in Job that God would appear for him, and do him justice openly and publicly; for though he had hope and confidence of an interest in his living Redeemer and Saviour, and of eternal life and happiness through him; yet not of his bringing his judgment to the light, and of his beholding his righteousness, as he ought to have had, see Psal. xxxvii. 5, 6, 7. Mic. vii. 9. *He hath visited in his anger;* corrected and chastised in fatherly anger and displeasure, though not in wrath and vengeance, and in a way of punishment in strict justice; but consistent with his invariable love and free favour in Christ; being displeased at his want of faith and patience, failing in the exercise of which is oftentimes resented by the Lord, see Numb. xx. 12. Zeph. iii. 2. *Yet he knoweth* it *not in great extremity:* so stupid was Job, that though he was in the utmost extremity of affliction, in his body, family, and substance, yet was not sensible it was his duty to trust in God, and patiently wait for him; he knew that the hand of God was upon him, and that he had visited him in anger, and that his arrows stuck fast in him, and his hand pressed him sore; but was insensible of the cause of the continuance of it, his unbelief, impatience, and non-submission to the will of God. The word for *extremity* signifies *abundance*[d], and may be applied to an abundance and plenty of good things; and therefore some understand it of Job's prosperity, and take the sense to be, that God took no notice of this; it did not hinder him from visiting him, but he destroyed it all: though Mr. Broughton, on the other hand, interprets it of the great plenty of sorrows and distresses Job was attended with, the true cause of which he did not advert to: some[e] think the whole refers to the merciful dealings of God with Job, and read the first clause, "know now his anger hath visited "but a little or nothing;" the affliction is but a light one comparatively speaking, scarce any thing at all in comparison of what sin deserves, being abundantly less than that: "neither hath he made great inquisition, "or inquired out the multitude" of sins; not strictly and severely marking them, and dealing with and for them according to their deserts; see Ezra ix. 13. Psal. ciii. 10. with which compare 2 Cor. iv. 17. and therefore Job had no reason to complain of God, or of any hard usage from him.

Ver. 16. *Therefore doth Job open his mouth in vain,* &c.] In uttering such unbecoming expressions, observed, and refuted, in his loud complaints of God, and of his dealings with him, and in defence of himself. *He multiplieth words without knowledge;* both against God and in answer to others; being in a great measure ignorant of the nature and number of his sins, and of

[b] לא ישורנו non intuetur illud, Pagninus, Montanus; non videt illud, Cocceius; so Michaelis and Schultens.
[c] ותחולל לו & expectabis eum, Montanus; expecta eum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Mercerus; so Michaelis, Schultens.

[d] בפש in copia, Montanus; ad auctam valde, Cocceius; prosperitatem, De Dieu; so Patrick.
[e] Tigurine version, Mercerus, Piscator; so Ben Gersom.

his afflictions; and of the end of God in them, and of the right he had to lay them upon him; as well as of his duty patiently to bear them, and trust in God, and wait his own time for deliverance out of them; and of the truth of this he was afterwards convinced, and acknowledged it, ch. xlii. 3.

CHAP. XXXVI.

THIS chapter, with the following, contains Elihu's fourth and last discourse, the principal view of which is to vindicate the righteousness of God; which is done by observing the dealings of God with men in his providence, according to their different characters, and from the wonderful works wrought by him in a sovereign manner, and for the benefit of his creatures. This chapter is introduced with a preface, the design of which is to gain attention, ver. 1—4. the different dealings of God with men are observed, and the different issue of them, and the different ends answered thereby, ver. 5—15. and it is suggested to Job, that had he attended to the design of the providence he was under, and had submitted to it patiently, things would have been otherwise with him; and therefore Elihu proceeds to give him some advice, which, if taken, would be for his own good, and the glory of God, ver. 16—25. and closes the chapter by observing the unsearchable greatness of God, as appears by the works of nature wrought by him, ver. 26—33.

Ver. 1. *Elihu also proceeded, and said.*] Or *added*[f], what follows to his former discourses; pausing a while to see whether Job would make any reply to what he had already said; but perceiving he had no inclination to do it, and having more upon his mind to deliver, went on with his discourse.

Ver. 2. *Suffer me a little, &c.*] Bear with me a little longer, and allow me to say a few words more. I have but little more to say, and it will take but a little time to say it in; thus, proposing brevity, he hoped to be heard with patience, since he should not long trespass upon it. The word used has the signification of a crown; but not to be understood in the sense of surrounding, as a crown surrounds the head, as some, who interpret it, stand about me, surround me, in order to hear; for this cannot with propriety be said to a single person; but rather in the sense of doing honour, as Aben Ezra; and so the meaning may be, do me the honour of giving me thy presence a little longer, and hearing me out patiently. *And I will shew thee:* make things clear, manifest, and plain to thee: clearness of expression, with brevity, recommends a discourse. Something may be here supplied; for a greater stop is here to be made than in our version, as either *my opinion*, as in ch. xxxii. 10, 17. his sentiment concerning God and his righteousness in his dealings with the sons of men; or *truth*, as Ben Gersom; truth in general, plain naked truth, without any colouring, just as it is, cordially, sincerely, in love, and by clear manifestations of it; and particularly the truth of the righteousness of God in all his ways and works. He proposed to make it clear to him that God did all things well and right, and to lay before him in the plainest manner what were the ends God had in view in dealing thus with Job, and what was his duty to do in his present circumstances. *That I have yet to speak in God's behalf:* or *for I have yet to speak*, &c.[g]. Elihu had said much for God already, in vindication of his sovereignty, purity, holiness, and justice, and he had yet more to say; out of the abundance of his heart his mouth spake for God; he set out with this, that he was full of matter, and wanted to vent himself, that he might be eased, ch. xxxii. 18, 19, 20. and he had vented much, but he had yet more to deliver; and since it was not for himself, in his own behalf, nor of any other but God, he hoped he should be heard: it may be rendered, *for yet God has words*[h], to put into my mouth, and speak by me; signifying, that he had spoken by him already, and had still more to say by him; and since it was not so much he that spoke, as God that spoke in him and by him, it might be expected he would be heard.

Ver. 3. *I will fetch my knowledge from afar, &c.*] Not from himself; for it is but a small share of knowledge that a man gets of himself, or attains to by the light of nature, and especially concerning God and divine things; but from others, either from persons that lived in former ages, and in foreign countries; it being usual for men desirous of acquiring knowledge to travel into distant parts for it; and such were generally much esteemed of, and the knowledge they professed to have got and published; as the queen of Sheba came from the further parts of the earth to hear and learn the wisdom of Solomon: or rather the sense is, he would fetch the knowledge he should now communicate concerning God from God himself, from the nature and perfections of God, who, and his knowledge, are high as heaven; and from the works of God, which are far above men; or should treat of things deep and sublime, and not common; though perhaps it is best of all to read the words, *I will bring forth knowledge concerning*, or *with respect to him that is afar off*[i]; that is, God, who is in the highest heavens, and inhabits the high and holy place; a God both at hand and afar off; with which agrees what follows; though some interpret it of lifting it up, and causing it to be heard afar off, so some, as Aben Ezra. *And will ascribe righteousness to my Maker;* God is the Maker of all men; Elihu considered him as his Maker with gratitude, whilst many are regardless of him, ch. xxxv. 10. and therefore thought himself obliged to speak for him, and on his behalf; and particularly in vindication of his righteousness; assert this to be an essential attribute and perfection of his nature; own, acknow-

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[f] ויסף & addidit, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Mercerus, Michaelis.

[g] כי quia, Pagninus, Montanus; nam, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[h] עוד לאלוה מלים adhuc Deo sermones, Montanus; habit enim Deus adhuc quod dicet, Castalio; so some in Michaelis.

[i] למרחוק ei, vel de eo qui est longinquus; so Aben Ezra, Bar Tzemach.

ledge, publish, and declare it; give him the glory of it, and demonstrate that he is righteous in all his ways and works; and clear him from all imputation of unrighteousness.

Ver. 4. *For truly my words* shall *not* be *false*, &c.] But strictly true; he would take the utmost care to say nothing but the truth, with the greatest impartiality and sincerity, so that what was said might be depended upon; truth spoken briefly, clearly, and on so important a subject as the righteousness of God, deserved attention. *He that is perfect in knowledge is with thee*; meaning either God, whose knowledge is perfect, who knows all persons and things; knows himself, his nature, persons, and perfections; his thoughts, counsels, and purposes; all his creatures, angels and men; the hearts of all men, their thoughts, words, and works; he, the omniscient and omnipresent God, was with Job, from whose presence there is no fleeing; and therefore it became him to be careful of his thoughts, words, and actions; that he did not entertain any unbecoming thoughts of God, and say any thing unworthy of him, or do any thing that tended to his dishonour; since he was present with him, and nothing could escape his notice: or else Elihu means himself; suggesting, that he who undertook to speak for God, and plead his cause, and clear him from the charge of unrighteousness, was no novice, but one that thoroughly understood the point in hand; and though no man is perfect in knowledge in an absolute sense, yet may be in comparison of others; or however may be upright and sincere in his knowledge; which sense the word used often has; and so it may signify, that as he was a sincere searcher after knowledge, and had through divine goodness attained to a competent share of it, even of sound and not superficial knowledge, he should be honest and upright in the communication of it; and this he might choose to observe the more, to excite the attention of Job to what he had to say; though it may be the truest reading of the words is, *perfect knowledge*, or *perfection of knowledge is with thee*[k], that is, in his own apprehension, so Jarchi; and may be understood either ironically, or rather really, insinuating that Job was a man of such consummate wisdom and knowledge, that he would easily see the force of his reasonings, and the justness of them, and acquiesce in them; and having thus prefaced his discourse, he next enters upon his subject.

Ver. 5. *Behold, God is mighty*, &c.] This is a clear plain truth, easy to be discerned, and worthy of notice, and therefore introduced with a *behold*; that God is mighty, the most mighty, the Almighty, as appears from his works of nature and providence; making all things out of nothing, upholding them by the word of his power, and governing and overruling all things in the world, and doing in it whatever he pleases: and from the works of redemption and grace; ransoming his people out of the hands of them that are stronger than they; converting them by the power of his grace; assisting them to do all they do in a spiritual way; supporting them under all their troubles; protecting and defending them from all their enemies; supplying all their wants, and preserving them safe to his kingdom and glory. *And despises not* any; not the meanest of his creatures, clothing the grass of the field, feeding the fowls of the air, and preserving man and beast; and particularly he despises not any of the sons of men; not the mighty through fear of them, nor envy at them, whose power and grandeur are from him, which he gives and can take away at his pleasure; nor the mean and miserable, the poor and the afflicted, to whom he has a merciful regard; much less the innocent and harmless, as the Septuagint; or the just and righteous man, as the Targum: he does not despise his own people, whom he has loved and chosen, redeemed and called; nor any, as Aben Ezra observes, without a cause; for though there are some whose image he will despise, it is because of their own sins and transgressions; and since, therefore, though he is mighty, yet despises not any of his creatures, he cannot do any unrighteous thing; he does not and cannot use or abuse his power to the injury of any of his creatures. He is *mighty in strength* and *wisdom*: as there is a pleonasm, a redundancy in the expression, *mighty in strength*, it denotes the abundance of his strength, that he is exceeding strong, superlatively and beyond all expression so; and also strong *in wisdom*, his strength is tempered with wisdom, so that he cannot employ it to any bad purpose, or be guilty of any unrighteousness. Some men have strength, but not wisdom to make a right use of it; but God abounds as much in wisdom as in strength; he is the only wise and the all-wise God, and therefore can do no injustice; and thus Elihu, as he promised, ascribes righteousness to his almighty Maker.

Ver. 6. *He preserveth not the life of the wicked*, &c.] He makes a difference between wicked and righteous men, which shews him to be a holy and righteous God; though he preserves the life of all men so long as they live, yet not in the same way; he preserves the lives of wicked men in the common course of his providence, but not in a special way and manner, as he does the lives of the righteous, which are dear and precious to him; nor does he preserve to any great length such as are notorious sinners, who are guilty of capital crimes, as murder, *&c.* their lives are shortened, and they do not live out half their days: or he does not quicken them, bestow his spiritual favour upon them, in which only is life; and though they will be quickened and raised at the last day, as well as the righteous, yet not to the resurrection of life, but to the resurrection of damnation. *But giveth right to the poor*; pleads their cause and rights their wrongs, administers justice to them, especially to the poor in spirit, who hunger and thirst after righteousness; to these he gives freely the righteousness of his son, which only denominates persons truly righteous: of whom in the next verse.

Ver. 7. *He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous*, &c.] His eyes of providence are upon them to supply their temporal wants, and to protect and defend them from their enemies, and they are never off of them; his eyes of love, grace, and mercy, are upon them; he always viewed them as righteous in his son, and through his righteousness imputed; and looked

[k] תמים דעות עמך scientiæ perfectæ tecum; so some in Bar Tzemach.

upon them with delight and pleasure, and always so views them; they are engraven on his heart and on his hands, and are ever before him, and in his sight: and his eyes are upon them from the beginning of the year to the end of it, yea, from one eternity to another; these were set upon them from everlasting, and are upon them in time; at the time of their conversion to quicken them, and call them by his grace; and afterwards they continue upon them under all their afflictions, temptations, and desertions, and ever will remain on them; they will never be withdrawn, nothing can separate them from the love of God. *But with kings are they on the throne*; that is, either the eyes of the Lord are with them, even with righteous kings, as the Targum; to guide and direct them in the affairs of government, and to protect and preserve them from the designs of evil men: or the righteous are with kings on the throne, or are the favourites of kings that are on thrones; are admitted into their presence, and are highly esteemed by them, and have honour conferred on them, even to be the next to them in the throne and kingdom, as Joseph and Daniel: or rather, the righteous are equal to kings on the throne; they are so accounted of by the Lord as kings; they are made by him kings and priests, and are regarded by him as such; they have the power, and riches, and honour of kings; they have a kingdom of grace bestowed on them now, and a kingdom of glory they are entitled to hereafter; and shall reign with Christ on earth a thousand years, and in the ultimate glory to all eternity. *Yea, he doth establish them for ever*; as righteous persons in their righteousness, which is an everlasting one; so that they shall never come into condemnation: they are established in the love of God, in the covenant of grace, in the hands of Christ, and in a state of grace now, and shall be in a stable permanent state of happiness to all eternity. *And they are exalted*; now, being raised as beggars from the dunghill to sit among princes, even among the princes of God's people; and they will be exalted hereafter, and sit at Christ's right hand, and be introduced into his kingdom, where they will be set down with him in his throne, and reign with him for ever and ever.

Ver. 8. *And if they be bound in fetters*, &c.] Not the wicked, as the Targum, but the righteous spoken of in the preceding verse, with which this is closely connected; and this is not to be understood of righteous kings on the throne in particular, or their special favourites, but of the righteous in general; and not in a literal sense, of their bonds and imprisonment for religion and righteousness sake, which is sometimes their lot; but in a figurative sense, of afflictions, as chastenings and corrections for sin, as appears by the next clause; and the design is to obviate an objection, and to shew that the eye of God is upon them, and his heart towards them; and they are not the less objects of his love and delight, of his value and esteem, care and protection, though they are afflicted by him, and, as it may seem, used with some severity; seeing he has gracious ends and designs in all this, which are suggested in the following verses. And *be holden in cords of affliction*; righteous men are not exempt from afflictions; the afflictions of the righteous are many, according to divine appointment, the covenant of grace, the declaration of God, the constant experience of good men, it being the way in which they are all led, and must enter into the kingdom; and the metaphor here used shews that afflictions are sometimes heavy upon them, like fetters and chains, and those made heavy by the hand of God pressing them sore, Lam. iii. 7. no affliction is joyous, but grievous and heavy in itself; it is indeed comparatively light when viewed with the weight of glory; and God can make a heavy affliction light with his presence, and the discoveries of his love; but they are heavy to the flesh, as Job felt his to be, ch. vi. 2, 3, 12. and xxiii. 2, 3. and, like fetters and cords, they cannot free themselves from them, or loose them, until it is the pleasure of God to take them off; and moreover by these they are sometimes held and restrained from going into more or greater sins, which is one use of them: as they are with afflictions hedged about that they cannot come out, any more than a person bound fast in a prison; so they are hedged up with thorns that they cannot go out after their lovers, Lam. iii. 7. Hos. ii. 6. Some render the phrase, *cords of poverty*[1]; it is oftentimes the case of righteous persons to be poor, and to be sadly hampered with poverty, and out of which, by all that they can do, cannot extricate themselves; and sometimes they fall into it, and are held in it, after they have enjoyed much worldly prosperity, which was the case of Job. Mr. Broughton renders it, *cords of anguish*; and indeed the word for *cords* is used of the pains of a woman in travail, who has then great anguish and trouble; and anguish on various accounts lays hold on the righteous, and they are holden thereby, and cannot relieve themselves, Psal. cxix. 143. and yet this is all in mercy, and to answer some good ends and purposes, as follow.

Ver. 9. *Then he sheweth them their work*, &c.] Either what they ought to do, so the Tigurine version; and which they have not done, their sins of omission; when they have been negligent either of the duty of prayer in private and public, or of attendance on the ordinances of the house of God; then he sends an affliction, and by it, as in a glass, presents to their view the omissions they have been guilty of: or else the work which they have done, and should not have done, their sins of commission: sin is a work at which some toil and labour, and weary themselves to commit; it is a work of the flesh; and so it is in good men; it is a man's own work, and which he can work of himself; to have a will, and to do good works, is owing to God working in his people, and it is through him strengthening them they do them; but sinful works are their own act and deed, though tempted to them by others, and which they are able to do of their own free will and power. Now God, in the glass of affliction, holds forth to view the sinful actions of good men, and brings them to their remembrance which they had forgotten: as the cases of Joseph's brethren, David, and others, prove: the Lord shews them that they have done such actions, and shews them the evil of them, how exceeding sinful they are; and humbles

[1] בחבלי עני funibus paupertatis, Mercerus, Drusius; funibus inopiæ, Cocceius.

them under a sense of them, and brings them to repentance for them, and an acknowledgment of them; which sense is confirmed by the next clause, which explains what this their work is, *and their transgressions that they have exceeded*. Sin is a transgression of the law; every sin, greater or lesser, is, and even righteous persons are guilty of many; for there is not a just man that sinneth not; and these exceed the bounds set by the righteous law of God, and many of them are sadly aggravated by the light and knowledge, grace and mercy, such have been favoured with; and some of them, they are suffered to fall into, are exceeding great and exceeding sinful; such as those of David, Peter, and others; all which they are made to see, bewail, and weep over, when God by afflictions brings them to a sense of them. Or *when* or *because they have prevailed*[m]; or begin to prevail: as soon as ever indwelling sin begins to be prevalent, the Lord is pleased to take measures to nip it in the bud, by sending a sharp and severe affliction; or when it has prevailed greatly, as sometimes it does, so that good is hindered from being done, and much evil is committed, then the soul is so much under the power of it, as to be carried captive with it; see Rom. vii. 23, 24. Or *because they are become proud*, or *behaved themselves proudly*[n]; and therefore he afflicts them to humble them, and hide pride from them.

Ver. 10. *He openeth also their ear to discipline*, &c.] Or *to correction*[o]; to the rod of correction; to hear the voice of it and him that has appointed it; its reproving voice for sin, its directing voice to duty, and its commanding voice to return from iniquity, as in the next clause. Or *to instruction*[p]; God's corrections of his people being instructions to them, whereby they learn more of their duty, and of the rich experiences of grace; their faith, hope, love, and patience, are tried and increased hereby; and more of the love of God, of his care and faithfulness, of his covenant, of his gracious presence, and communion with God, what it is; and even of the doctrines of the everlasting Gospel; sometimes more is learned by an affliction than by a sermon. Now in order to hearken hereunto, to the voice of God in an affliction, the ear must be opened; which is first done in conversion by the mighty power of God: but sometimes good men fall asleep, and are inattentive to divine things; and this is one way God takes to awaken them, to arouse their attention; he speaks to them out of a whirlwind; he sends some terrible startling affliction, which fetches them out of their slumber, and so their ears are opened to hear what he says in it: at the noise of his waterspouts, and his billows one after another rolling over them, they are awakened to a sense of their sin and duty, Psal. xlii. 7. *And commandeth that they return from iniquity*: repent of their sin, turn from it and forsake it: such a strong voice has an affliction in it, when sanctified and attended with the spirit and power of God; then it effectually teaches men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, as the word of God, the Gospel of the grace of God does, when accompanied with the same; as there is a commanding voice in the one, so there is in the other; and happy it is when such ends as these are answered by afflictions.

Ver. 11. *If they obey and serve him*, &c.] That is, God, to whom so many things are ascribed in the preceding verses; and who only is to be obeyed and served in a religious way, with the obedience of faith and love, in all his commands and ordinances. But here not so much obedience to his word, his law or Gospel, as to his rod, is intended: *if they hear*, &c.[q]; hear the rod and him that has appointed it; hearken to his reproving, instructing, and commanding voice, in affliction; to his calls, cautions, and admonitions thereby given, and act according to them; humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, and return from iniquity: *they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures*: which intimates, that those to whom afflictions are sanctified, and they obedient under them, when recovered out of them shall enjoy long life; not only live many days, but years, and those in great prosperity and pleasure; be blessed with much temporal prosperity, which lies in riches and wealth, as this word is rendered in ch. xxi. 13. and in bodily health, which is a considerable part of outward prosperity; but more especially prosperity of soul may be intended, see 3 John 2. which is enjoyed when a man is favoured with the discoveries of the love of God to him; with applications of pardoning grace and mercy; when grace is in lively exercise in him, and he has a spiritual appetite for the good word of God, and is fruitful in every good work: and so pleasures do not so much design corporeal pleasures, though ever so innocent and lawful; for though they may at proper times be indulged unto, yet a man's days and years are not to be spent in them; but rather spiritual pleasures, which are had in views of the wonderful love of God in Christ; in the enjoyment of the gracious presence of God, and communion with him; and which the people of God are favoured with, in his house and ordinances, ways and worship: and when those years are gone, endless pleasures at God's right hand, and in his presence, will follow.

Ver. 12. *But if they obey not*, &c.] Who seem to be righteous and are not; and when afflicted are not submissive to the will of God; attend not to the voice of his providence; receive no instruction thereby; but kick against the pricks, and rebel against God; complain of him, and murmur at his dealings with them: *they shall perish by the sword*; or they shall pass away out of the world by it, or by some missive weapon: they shall die a violent death, by the sword of justice, of the civil magistrate, or by the sword of men; or, as a Jewish commentator[r] paraphrases it, by the dart of death, by the sword of Satan, they shall pass out of this world. *And they shall die without knowledge*: without knowledge of their death being near, it coming upon them suddenly and at unawares; or without knowledge of themselves, and of their miserable and

[m] כי יתגברו quum invalescunt, Mercerus; quum invaluerunt, Munster, Piscator; so Drusius, Pagninus, Bolducius.
[n] Quia superbierunt, Tigurine version; so Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens.

[o] למוסר ad correptionem, Montanus; ad correctionem, Beza, Michaelis, Schultens.
[p] Ad eruditionem, Cocceius.
[q] אם ישמעו ויעבדו si audierint & fecerint, Codurcus.
[r] R. Simeon, Bar Tzemach.

lost estate; and without knowledge of Christ, and of God in Christ, and of the way of salvation by him. Or they shall perish for lack of knowledge; because they have none; through ignorance and that affected; they know not nor will they understand, but despise the means of knowledge, and hate instruction.

Ver. 13. *But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath*, &c.] Or *and the hypocrites* *; for these are the same with the disobedient in the preceding verse; who seem to be righteous, but are not; pretend to what they have not; have a double heart, or say one thing with their mouth, and mean another thing in their hearts; or with their mouths draw nigh to God, but their hearts are far from him; and so hypocrites, at least outwardly righteous before men, but inwardly full of wickedness, as the Pharisees were, whom our Lord often calls hypocrites: these *put* or add wrath, as Aben Ezra interprets it; they increase the wrath of God; or, as we express it, heap up wrath; or, to use the apostle's phrase, treasure up wrath against the day of wrath: though some understand it of the wrath of the hypocrites against God for afflicting them; so Jarchi. When afflictions come upon them, they reproach and blaspheme; they are angry with God and are wrathful, and quarrel at his dealings with them: *they put the nose* †; so it may be literally rendered; they erect that against God, and point it at him in a proud, haughty, wrathful, and contumacious manner. *They cry not when he bindeth them*: in fetters and cords of affliction, ver. 8. or when he corrects them, as Mr. Broughton rightly as to the sense renders it: they pray not, as Ben Gersom interprets it; whereas sanctified afflictions bring good men to the throne of grace, who have been too long absent from it: but these men cry not unto God for grace and mercy, help, assistance, and deliverance; they cry out against God, but not unto him.

Ver. 14. *They die in youth*, &c.] They, *or their soul* *; which, though that dies not, being immaterial and immortal; yet being the principal part of man, is put for the whole person, and which being taken away, the body dies. All men must die, but all do not die at an age; there is a common term of human life, Psal. xc. 10. some few exceed it, multitudes arrive not to it; such who die before it may be said to die in youth: it seems to signify premature and untimely death: the word signifies an excussion, or violent shaking out; and the Vulgate Latin version is, *in a tempest*; in a tempest of divine wrath, and in a storm in their consciences, ch. xxvii. 20. Jarchi interprets it by suffocation or strangling. *And their life is among the unclean*: all men are by nature unclean, and all that is in them; some are more notoriously and openly so than others, who give themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness; such as whoremongers and fornicators, of whom Mr. Broughton understands those unclean persons: or Sodomites, of whom the word is sometimes used, Deut. xxiii. 17. And this may be understood either of the present life of hypocrites before they die; who are unclean persons themselves, whatever shew of purity they make, and love to live and converse, at least privately, if not openly, with unclean persons, and die whilst they live with such and in their sins: or of their life after death: for wicked men live after death; their souls live in hell, and their bodies at the resurrection will be raised to life, and be reunited to their souls, and both together will live in endless punishment: and the life of hypocrites will be among such; as is a man in life, so he is at and after death; if filthy, filthy still; and such will have no admittance into the heavenly state, and with such impure ones hypocrites will live for ever, Rev. xxi. 8, 27. and xxii. 15.

Ver. 15. *He delivereth the poor in his affliction*, &c.] The righteous or godly poor; who are not only poor in worldly things, but poor in spirit; who are humbled, brought low, and made contrite, through the afflicting hand of God: these, though the Lord does sooner or later deliver *out of* their afflictions, yet that is not intended here, but a deliverance *in* them; which is done by supporting them under them, by supplying them with his grace to bear them patiently, by granting them his gracious presence for their comfort in them, by stilling the enemy and the avenger, keeping Satan from disturbing them, and freeing them from doubts and fears and unbelief, and by drawing their hearts and affections off of the world, and the things of it, to himself. *And openeth their ears in oppression*; whilst they are oppressed; not only to discipline, correction, and instruction, ver. 10. but to hear comfortable words spoken to them by the Lord; who, in the midst of their affliction and oppression, whispers in their ears, and tells them how he loves them, though they are rebuked and chastened by him; how he has chosen them to everlasting life and happiness, though now in the furnace of affliction; that he is their covenant God and Father, and knows and owns their souls in adversity; that he has pardoned all their sins, though he takes vengeance on their inventions; and in a little time will free them from all their afflictions and oppressions.

Ver. 16. *Even so*, &c.] Here Elihu accommodates what he had said to the case of Job; that had he hearkened and been obedient to the voice of God in his rod, and had submitted to his chastening hand, and patiently bore his afflictions; *he*, God, *would have removed thee out of the strait* into a *broad place, where there is no straitness*: that is, out of the strait circumstances in which he was, into liberty; would have brought him into a large place, where he might walk at liberty, as David experienced, Psal. iv. 1. and xviii. 19. and cxix. 45. and may be understood both in a temporal and spiritual sense. In a temporal sense; he was now in great straits, in poverty and affliction; these pressed him hard on every side, so that his way, as he says, was *fenced up, that he could not pass*, ch. xix. 8. Now had he been rightly humbled under his affliction, God would have taken him out of the straits of adversity, and set his feet in a large room of prosperity; see Psal. xxxi. 7, 8. In a spiritual sense; persons are as in a strait place and pent up, when they cannot come forth in the free exercise of grace and duty; their souls are as it were in prison, they are shut up, and have not freedom with God nor

* [illegible] & hypocritæ, Montanus; & [illegible], Schultens.
† [illegible] ponent nasum, Montanus; ponunt nasum, Schultens.

* [illegible] anima eorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.

man; their faith is ready to fail, their hope is sunk very low, they are straitened in their own bowels or affections, in their love to God and his people: and then they are removed into a large place, when it is the reverse with them; when they are favoured with the free spirit of the Lord, for where he is there is liberty; and when their hearts are enlarged with the love of God, and in the exercise of grace; and then they can run cheerfully the ways of his commandments. *And that which should be set on thy table* should be *full of fatness;* which in a temporal sense denotes, that he should have had a plentiful table, spread with the best of provisions, the richest dainties, the finest of the wheat, and the fattest of the creatures; and these should rest and remain upon his table, or be constantly renewed there: and in a spiritual sense, that his soul should have been satisfied with the love of God, shed abroad in his heart; with the blessings of the everlasting covenant of grace applied unto him; and with the goodness of the house of God, his word and ordinances, as with marrow and fatness; see Psal. lxiii. 5. and xxxvi. 8.

Ver. 17. *But thou hast fulfilled the judgment of the wicked, &c.*] Some[w] take this to be a continuation of the happiness Job would have enjoyed, had he behaved in his affliction as he ought to have done; then he would have been filled to satisfaction, by seeing the judgments of God exercised on wicked men, as on the Chaldeans and Sabeans, who had injured him: *and judgment and justice would have upheld thee;* when they should be cast down. But these words rather seem to be expressive of his present state, and the reason of it, he not being sufficiently humbled: and the sense is, not that he had lived a vicious course of life, as the wicked do, and filled up the measure of his wickedness as they; and so deserved to be filled with the like judgments as inflicted on them. Mr. Broughton reads the words, "as thou hast fulfilled the sentence of the wicked, sentence and judgment have "laid hold:" but rather the meaning is, that he had *fulfilled the contention of the wicked*[x]; pleaded as they did, argued with God after their manner: and therefore is said to go in company and walk with them, and make answers for them, ch. xxxiv. 8, 36. Wherefore *justice and judgment take hold* on thee; afflictions in righteousness, or the chastening hand of God, in righteous judgment, had taken hold upon him, and would hold him until he was sufficiently humbled under them.

Ver. 18. *Because* there is *wrath, &c.*] Either wrath in Job, so some; indignation and impatience under the afflicting hand of God, expressed by cursing the day of his birth, and by his angry pleadings with God: and therefore Elihu advises him to beware of it, and check this impetuous spirit; cease from his anger and forsake wrath, and fret not himself to do evil, and provoke the Lord to take him away at once, and then his case would be irretrievable. Or rather wrath in God, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. His vindictive and punitive justice, to revenge and punish wickedness, the effects of which are sometimes awful judgments on men in this life; and eternal vengeance hereafter, called wrath to come: this is laid up in store with him, and sealed up in his treasures, prepared in his purposes and decrees, is revealed in his law, and breaks forth in various instances; see Numb. xvi. 46. And there is an appearance of wrath, a little wrath, which is no other than love displeased, in the afflictions and chastisements of God's people, and might be perceived by Job: and this being the case, Elihu advises him to *beware;* which, though not expressed in the original, is well supplied; and his meaning is, that he would be cautious of what he said, and not go on to multiply words against God; speak unbecomingly of him, arraign his justice, and find fault with his dealings with him; as well as beware of his actions, conduct, and behaviour, that his tongue and his doings be not against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory. *Lest he take thee away with* his *stroke;* out of the world by death, which is the stroke of his hand; and is sometimes given suddenly, and in an awful manner, in wrath and vengeance. Some render the last word, *with clapping of hands*[y]; either the hands of men, ch. xxvii. 23. or of God; expressing his exultation and pleasure at the death of such a person, laughing at his calamity, and mocking when fear cometh; which is dreadful and tremendous. *Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee;* there is no ransom on earth equal to the life or soul of man; *what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* Matt. xvi. 26. see Psal. xlix. 6, 7, 8. The great ransom of all is the ransom of Christ, which Elihu had made mention of before, ch. xxxiii. 24. and what else could he have in his mind now? This is the ransom found by infinite wisdom, which Christ came to give, and has given; and by which he has ransomed his people from him that is stronger than they; from the bondage of sin, of Satan, of the world, of law, hell and death, and everlasting destruction: and this is a great one, plenteous redemption, a great salvation; the ransomer is the great God and our Saviour; the ransom-price is not corruptible things, as silver and gold, but the precious blood of Christ, his life, yea, he himself. How great must this ransom be! and it is given for great sinners, the chief of them; and is sufficient for all the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles: and yet, as great as it is, it is of no avail to one that God has taken away by a stroke out of this world, and sent to everlasting destruction; not through want of sufficiency in this ransom, but by reason of the final and unalterable state of such persons; as, even in the present life, it is of no avail to the deniers and despisers of it, Heb. x. 26—29.

Ver. 19. *Will he esteem thy riches? no, not gold, nor all the forces of strength.*] Riches can be of no account, nor bear any weight with God; for they are of him and come from him, and what he has a right to take away and dispose of as he pleases. These cannot ward off the stroke of death, or secure from it; nor can a man possessed of them carry them with him into the other world; nor will they profit in the day of wrath. Mr. Broughton renders it, *will he esteem*

[w] Schmidt, Michaelis.
[x] ירין רשע מלאת & tu litem improbi implevisti, Schultens.

[y] בשפק complosione manuum, Tigurine version; so some in Munster.

thy nobleness? so Junius and Tremellius; thy noble birth, rank and station, thou hast had among men? Not at all. God is no respecter of persons; he regards not the noble and the rich more than the poor: and as for gold, the same may be said of that, which, though the most valuable among men, is of no esteem with God; and besides it is his: *the gold is mine*, says he, and *the silver is mine*, Hag. ii. 8. Nor is death to be bribed with it, or put off by it; nor is a *munition*[z], fortress or castle, as some render the word, any defence against it: *nor all the forces of strength*. Had a man at his command ever such numerous and powerful armies, they could not protect him from the stroke of death, or deliver him from eternal punishment, the demerit of sin. Though as Job had no riches, no gold, nor troops of soldiers about him; nor was there any great likelihood that this would be his case at death; I should think the words might be better rendered, *will he regard thy cry? no, not in distress; not even the most strong and forcible* cries or entreaties: when the stroke of death is given, the sentence of wrath is passed, and eternal destruction takes place; weeping and wailing will signify nothing: the cries and howlings of the damned in hell are of no avail; their strong cryings, and most intense and earnest entreaties, will have no effect on the Lord; though he is a God of great pity and compassion, and has sympathy with his people in distress, and in all their afflictions is afflicted; yet will have no regard to cries and tears, when the decree is gone forth and carried into execution: the verb from whence the first word is derived is used for crying in this chapter, ver. 13. and the Targum renders it here by supplication and petition; so some other Jewish writers[a] interpret it of crying: and the second word is by several rendered *in straits*[b] and distress: and Cocceius has observed the notion of intense and fervent prayer in the third, and renders the whole pretty near to what has been observed[c].

Ver. 20. *Desire not the night*, &c.] Either in a literal sense, which Job might do; not for secrecy to commit sin, as the thief, murderer, and adulterer do; Elihu had no such suspicion of Job; nor for ease and rest, which he expected not; nor would his sores admit thereof; his nights were wearisome, and when come he wished they were gone, ch. vii. 2, 3, 4. but either for retirement, that he might muse and consider, and endeavour to search and find out the reason of God's dealing with men, in cutting off sometimes such great numbers together. Elihu suggests, that such a search was altogether vain and to no purpose; he would never be able to find out the reason of these things: or rather for shelter from the eye and hand of God; as nothing before mentioned could ward off his stroke, so neither could the night or darkness preserve from it; see Psal. cxxxix. 11, 12. Or else the words may be taken in a figurative sense; either of the night of calamity and distress, he might be tempted to desire and wish for, to come upon his enemies; or rather of the night of death, he wished for himself, as he often had done; in doing which Elihu suggests he was wrong; not considering that if God should take him away with a stroke, and he not be humbled and brought to repentance, what would be the consequence of it. *When people are cut off in their place*; as sometimes they are in the night, literally taken; just in the place where they stood or lay down, without moving elsewhere, or stirring hand or foot as it were. So Amraphel, and the kings with him, as Jarchi observes, were cut off in the night, the first-born of Egypt, the Midianites and Sennacherib's army; and so in the night of death, figuratively, the common passage of all men, as Mr. Broughton observes, who renders the words, *for people's passage to their place*.

Ver. 21. *Take heed, regard not iniquity*, &c.] Not any iniquity, as to shew any approbation of it, love for it, and desire after it. All appearance of sin, of every sin, is to be abstained from; but particularly by the iniquity here meant may be the sin of impatience under his affliction; murmuring at the dealings of God with him; arraigning his justice, and saying very indecent things of him, as in ch. xxxiv. 5. and xxxv. 2. Or it may mean the evil he had been guilty of in so earnestly desiring the night of death: *for this thou hast chosen rather than affliction*; chose rather to die than to be afflicted as he was; or chose rather to complain of God, as if he dealt hardly with him, and did not do justly by him, than to submit patiently to the will of God, as he ought to have done: or this he chose *through affliction*[d]; through the force of it, because of it, and by means thereof; and so is a sort of excuse that Elihu makes for him; though at the same time he would have him by no means to regard such iniquity, and indulge to it.

Ver. 22. *Behold, God exalteth by his power*, &c.] He exalts himself, or causes himself to be exalted, and even above all the blessing and praise of his creatures; by his power, in the works of creation and providence, he makes such a display of his glorious perfections, as to set him on high, and out of the reach of the highest praises of men. He exalts his Son as Mediator, and has made him higher than the kings of the earth; he exalts him as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins to his people, and to be the Judge of quick and dead. He has exalted the human nature of Christ to the grace of union to the Son of God: and exalted him in this nature at his right hand, far above all principality and power: he exalts men in a civil sense, who are in a low estate, and raises them to a very high one; promotion is alone of him, he sets up and puts down at pleasure. In a spiritual sense, he exalts men when he brings them out of a state of nature into an open state of grace; brings them out of the horrible pit, and sets their feet upon the rock Christ Jesus; takes them as beggars from the dunghill, and places them among princes, even the princes of his people; admits them to communion with himself, puts and keeps them in his favour, as in a garrison; and at last causes them to inherit the throne of glory. He exalts men, when he sets the poor on

[z] לא בצר non munitionem, Tigurine version.
[a] Vid. Aben Ezra, Bar Tzemach, Sephorno.
[b] In angustia, Mercerus, Drusius, Piscator; in arcto, Cocceius, Schultens.
[c] Num æqualis esset imploratio tua non in arcto & omnes contentiones virium, Cocceius.
[d] מעני præ afflictione, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; præ miseria ex afflictione, Michaelis.

high from affliction, and brings them out of adversity into prosperity; and which is what may be chiefly intended here: let a man be brought as low as he may, God can by his power, if he will, raise him up again. And this may be said for the comfort and encouragement of Job, in his present circumstances: and so Aben Ezra interprets it, "God will "exalt thee;" as he afterwards did. The Targum is, "behold, God alone is strong in his might;" see Psal. xxi. 13. *Who teacheth like him?* He teaches by his providences, adverse as well as prosperous; he teaches by his word and ordinances; he teaches by his Spirit and grace, and none teaches like him. Ministers of the word teach men both doctrine and duty, but not like him; they have their gifts for teaching, their wisdom and knowledge, their doctrine, and all the use they are of, from him; none teach so pleasantly, so profitably, so powerfully and effectually, as he does: the Targum adds, "right things."

Ver. 23. *Who hath enjoined him his way?* &c.] He teaches men his own ways, the methods of his grace and mercy towards them; and he prescribes to them the ways in which they should walk; but none can lead or prescribe to him; as the way of governing the world, in what manner he should act in it; who has *taught him in the path of judgment?* or *shewed to him the way of understanding?* Isa. xl. 14. and particularly whom he should afflict, in what manner he should do it, when and how long he should continue it; all which he does according to his sovereign will, and is not to be controlled; and, in a spiritual sense, no man can or ought to enjoin and prescribe to him whom he should save, and in what way; he saves whom he pleases, and in his own way, even by his Son Jesus Christ, and no other; or *who hath visited*, or *should visit on him*, or *with him his way*[e]? who can take upon him to examine into his ways, and scrutinize them, and call him to an account for what he does? no man can overlook his ways and works, or censure him for any of his actions: or, *who can say, thou hast wrought iniquity?* this may be said of every man, but it cannot be said of God by any without sin; for, as there is no iniquity in his nature, there can be none in his works; not any in his works of providence, no, not in the afflictions of his people; just and true are all his ways.

Ver. 24. *Remember that thou magnify his work*, &c.] Or his works; his works of creation and providence, which are great in themselves, and declare the greatness of God; and which, though they cannot be made greater than they are, men may be said to magnify them when they ascribe them to God, and magnify him on account of them; when they think and speak well of them, and give glory to God: and particularly by his work may be meant the chastisement of his people, which is a rod in his hand, which he appoints, and with which he smites; it is his own doing, and he may do what he pleases this way: and it becomes his people to be still and patient because he does it; and then do they magnify this work of his, when they bear it patiently, quietly submit to it, and humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. *Which men behold*; for the works of God are visible, particularly the works of creation, and the glory of God in them; which men of wisdom and understanding behold with admiration and praise; and so the Targum is, "which "righteous men praise;" and some derive the word here used from a root which signifies to *sing*, and so may be understood of men's celebrating the works of God in songs of praise; though his work here may chiefly design the afflictions he lays on his people, and particularly which he had laid upon Job, which were so visible, and the hand of God in them was so clearly to be seen, that men easily beheld it and took notice of it.

Ver. 25. *Every man may see it*, &c.] Not only was to be seen by the wise and learned, the just and good, but by the common people; whether it is to be understood of the works of creation, or of the afflictive providences of God in general, or of Job's afflictions in particular. *Man may behold it afar off*: as to time, from the creation of the world to the present time, as Jarchi; or as to place, from the heaven, so distant, where are the sun, moon, and stars; and which, though so far off, are easily beheld; or as to the manner of seeing them, not darkly, imperfectly, and in a confused manner, as things at a distance are seen, so some understand it; but rather clearly and plainly, as things easy to be seen are clearly discerned at a distance; and it signifies that the work of God here meant is so visible, that he must be quite blind and stupid that cannot see it; it may be seen, as it were, with half an eye, and a great way off; he that runs may see and read.

Ver. 26. *Behold, God is great*, &c.] In his power and might, in his wisdom and knowledge, in his truth and faithfulness, in his love, grace, and mercy, and that to admiration; and it is worthy of notice and attention, which the word *behold*, prefixed hereunto, is expressive of: or is *much* or *many*[f]; as he is in his persons; for though his essence is one, his persons are more, they are three, Father, Son, and Spirit; in his perfections, of which there is a fulness; in his thoughts, counsels, purposes, and decrees, which respect other persons and things; in his works of creation, providence, and grace, and in the blessings of his goodness, which are so many as not to be reckoned up. *And we know him not*; God is to be known by the works of creation, and even by the very Heathen; though such is their inattention to them, that they are said not to know God; yea, even the wisest among them, by all their wisdom, knew not God; for though they might know there was a God, they knew not who and what he was. God is known by his word among those who are favoured with a divine revelation of him, and especially by true believers in Christ, who know God in Christ, whom to know is life eternal; and yet these know but in part, there is no finding out the Almighty to perfection; God is not known clearly, fully, and perfectly, by any: or *we know it not*; the greatness of God; he is great, but we know not how great he is; his greatness is beyond all conception and expression.

[e] מי פקד עליו דרכו quis visitavit super illum viam ejus, Montanus, Michaelis; cum eo, Tigurine version.

[f] שגיא πολυς, Sept.; multus, Mercerus, Drusius.

Neither can the number of his years be searched out: years are ascribed to God, after the manner of men, otherwise, properly speaking, they are not applicable to him; by which time is measured, and which belongs not to the eternal God; however, the number of his years in an eternity past, and of those to come, cannot be searched out and reckoned up: it requires no great skill in arithmetic to reckon up the years of the oldest man that ever lived; yea, the months, the days, the hours, and minutes, of his life may be counted; but the years of the Most High cannot; this is a phrase expressive of the eternity of him which is, and was, and is to come, and who from everlasting to everlasting is God. He was before the world was, as the creation of it out of nothing shews. Jehovah the Father had a Son, and he loved him before the foundation of the world, and all his people in him; he made an everlasting choice of them in him, before the world began; he made an everlasting covenant with them in him, and gave them grace in him as early; he set him up as Mediator from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; and will be the everlasting and unchangeable portion of his people to all eternity. Cocceius thinks that these words are expressive of the constant love of God to the church, and the continuance of his kingdom in it; and of his most fixed purpose of love to men, and indefatigable care of them.

Ver. 27. *For he maketh small the drops of rain,* &c.] Elihu proceeds to give instances and proofs of the greatness of God, and begins with rain, as Eliphaz does, ch. v. 9, 10. a common phenomenon, what is very frequent, and well known in all ages and countries, and by all men, more or less; and yet there are some things relative to it which are beyond the comprehension of men, and shew the greatness and incomprehensibleness of God: and the design of this, and all other instances of this kind, is to convince Job of his folly in searching out the causes and reasons of God's works of providence, when the common works of nature lie out of the reach of men; and to reconcile him to them, and bring him patiently to submit to the will of God, whose ways are past finding out; and some render the words, *he restrains the drops of rain*[z]; he withholds it from the earth, which causes a drought, and so brings on a famine; others, *he subtracts*, or draws out, or draws up, the drops of water[a], which he exhales by the heat of the sun out of the earth and out of the sea; see Psal. cxxxv. 7. Amos v. 8. and which are drawn up in small particles, but form large bodies of waters in the clouds; and which are let down again upon the earth in small drops, in an easy and gentle manner, and so soak into the earth and make it fruitful; which is what is meant by our version here: this is a wonderful instance of God's power, wisdom, and goodness, and is beyond our comprehension; for no mortal man can tell how the Almighty parts and divides those large quantities of water in the clouds, that sometimes hang over our heads, into millions and ten thousand times ten thousand millions of drops, even innumerable; and causes these waters in such a manner to descend on the earth; lets them not fall at once, or in waterspouts, which would wash away the inhabitants of cities and towns, the cattle of the field, and the produce of the earth, as at the general deluge. *They pour down rain according to the vapour thereof;* the water, drawn up and formed into large bodies in the heavens, pours down rain in a gentle and plentiful manner, according to the quantity of vapours exhaled out of the earth and sea; if a small quantity is drawn up, a small quantity is let down; and if a large quantity is attracted, a large quantity, or a plentiful shower, is given: some think that a small rain is meant in the preceding clause, and a great rain in this; for there is the small rain and the great rain of his strength, ch. xxxvii. 6. The word translated *pour* has the signification of liquefying, melting, and dissolving, and of purging and purifying; and which is applicable to clouds which melt and dissolve gradually as they descend in drops upon the earth; and the water which they let down is of all the most clear and pure, as Galen and Hippocrates[y], those eminent physicians, have observed; and a late celebrated one tells us[z], that rain-water is so truly distilled by nature, that the chymist, with all his distilling art, cannot produce purer water; for, though it is exhaled out of the dirty earth, out of miry places, bogs, and ditches, yet, being bound up in the clouds as in a garment, and passing through the atmosphere, it comes down to us pure as if it had been percolated or strained through a linen cloth; and though the water as drawn up out of the sea is salt, yet carried up into the air, and there, as in an alembic, distilled, it descends to us sweet and fresh, and has not the least brackishness in it.

Ver. 28. *Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly.*] Not upon the persons of men, which they take care as much as possible to shun and avoid, but upon the fields of men, and so for the profit and advantage of men; and this denotes both the gentle manner in which the clouds let down rain, and the liberal profusion of them; they let it down both in an easy and plentiful manner, and upon an abundance of men, or upon an abundance of fields and lands belonging to men; though sometimes rain falls upon the wilderness, where no man is, ch. xxxviii. 26. The Targum is, "at the prayer of a son of a great man," or at the prayer of a man that has great interest with God; that is famous for his faith and piety, as Elijah was, to whom perhaps the Targumist may have respect. The rain is an emblem of the word of God, the Gospel of Christ, which drops and distils on the souls of men like rain, and refreshes them, and makes them fruitful; and is dispensed by the ministers of it, who are compared to clouds, according to the measure of the gift of grace received by them, and that freely and fully as they have received it.

Ver. 29. *Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds,* &c.] *Or of a cloud*[a], a thick cloud, a single one; which sometimes at the beginning is very small, about the bigness of a man's hand, 1 Kings xviii. 44.

[z] יגרע נטפי מים aufert stillas pluviæ & prohibebit, Pagninus; so Vatablus, Tigurine version, Targum, & Ben Gersom.
[a] Attrahit, Codurcus; subtrahit, i. e. a mare, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schultens.

[y] Apud Pinedam in loc.
[z] Boerhaave. Elem. Chem. p. 600. apud Schultens in loc.
[a] עב nubis, Montanus, Tigurine version, Mercerus, Piscator, Schultens.

and which in a little time spreads all over the heavens, and covers them with black clouds and darkness; none can understand, describe, and tell by what means so small a cloud at first appearance is spread to such a prodigious extent; and which is done partly for the use of God himself, to be a pavilion or tent around him, Psal. xviii. 11. and xcvii. 2. and partly for the use of men, either to let down rain on the several parts of the world, or to be a sort of an umbrella to men, to shelter them from scorching heat; nor can any understand how the clouds, stretched out to such a compass, are poised and balanced in the air, so as to retain their position as long as it is the pleasure of God; see ch. xxxvii. 16. Ben Gersom, who is followed by others[m], interprets this of the differences of the clouds, which are unaccountable, as to the form and colour of them being curious, and the matter which they contain or what issues from them; out of some rain, others hail, others snow and sleet, others wind, others thunder and lightning; and yet all arise from the same, even from vapours exhaled from the earth and sea; some become moist and cold, others hot and dry. As clouds are emblems of Gospel ministers, Isa. v. 6. this may lead us to observe the different gifts of grace bestowed on them, and the different uses they are of; some are Boanergeses, sons of thunder; others Barnabases, sons of consolation; and the extent of the Gospel ministry all over the world, which first began as a small cloud over the land of Judea, and then was spread throughout the Gentile world. Or *the noise of his tabernacle;* the tabernacle of God, which are the clouds, which are laid as the flooring of his palace, and are drawn about him as a tent or pavilion, Psal. civ. 3. and xviii. 11. where he sits invisible, and from whence, as a general of an army, he issues out his orders, and sends forth his artillery, rain, hail, snow, thunder, and lightning, and stormy wind fulfilling his word; the noise hereof is either the noise of the waters in the clouds, the sound of an abundance of rain, 1 Kings xviii. 41. or of the blustering winds, by which the clouds are moved and portend rain; or of the thunder that bursts out of them with a vehement noise, and which is usually followed with rain; and the thunder of his power who can understand? ch. xxvi. 14. This may be an emblem of the voice of God in his Gospel out of his tabernacle, the church, which the natural man understands not; or the voice of God in his providences, in which he speaks to men once and twice, and they perceive it not.

Ver. 30. *Behold, he spreadeth his light upon it,* &c.] Upon his tabernacle; that is, upon the clouds, which are his tabernacle; either the light of the sun, whereby the clouds are dispersed and blotted out; an emblem of the blotting out of sin, or the forgiveness of it, Isa. xliv. 22. which is like a clear shining after rain, 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. or on a thin cloud, whereby the rainbow is formed, an emblem of peace and reconciliation by Christ; or lightning, which bursting out of the dark cloud is spread over it, when it seems to be all in flames. Coccejus renders it, *he spreads the light about himself:* God spreads it about himself, clothing himself with light as with a garment, and dwelling in light inaccessible to men: or he *spreads* it *upon him,* upon man; causing his sun to shine on the just and unjust; or as *it,* the earth; so it was spread when first commanded to shine out of darkness, with which the earth in its primeval state was covered; and so it is spread every morning upon the earth; as soon as day breaks, the morning is spread upon the mountains, and in a short time it overspreads the whole hemisphere; an emblem this of the spread of the light of grace over the dark hearts of men, in conversion, which are like the earth in its chaotic state, or as in the night-season covered with darkness; out of which they are called and brought by the grace of God, having the true light sprung and placed in their souls; which at first is but glimmering, and at best imperfect in the present state, yet is spreading and increasing, Prov. iv. 18. and of the spread of the great and glorious light of the Gospel in the world, in the times of the apostles, and as it will be in the latter-day glory. *And covereth the bottom of the sea,* or *the roots of the sea* [n]; though one would think they should be rather covered with water and with darkness, as they are; see ch. xxxviii. 8, 9, 10. Isa. xi. 9. This is to be understood either of the light of the sun, and the rays of it, which are so piercing and penetrating as to reach to the bottom of the sea, and cover it and exhale waters out of it; or of lightning, which is equally as piercing and penetrating, or more, and strikes to the very roots of the sea, and covers them, or rather discovers them, so that the channels of waters are seen, and the foundations of the world are discovered, Psal. xviii. 14, 15. the Targum of this verse is, "he spreads upon it rain, and covers the rocks or "foundations of the sea;" and the rain is called light according to Ramban, because by the descent of it the day is enlightened, and the darkness of the clouds removed; and by this means the bottom of the sea is covered, so that it passes its bounds and covers the rocks, that is, the borders of it, as others explain it[o].

Ver. 31. *For by them judgeth he the people,* &c.] That is, by the clouds; which the Lord uses both in a way of judgment, as expressed in this clause; and in a way of mercy, as in the following; by these, and what issue out of them, as rain, hail, winds, thunder, and lightning, he sometimes punishes the inhabitants of the earth, as he did the old world by a deluge of water, which came partly from the foundations of the great deep, and partly from the windows of heaven, which destroyed man and beast, and the increase of the earth; he punished the Egyptians by a violent storm of hail; and slew many of the Canaanites with hail-stones; Pharaoh and his host sunk like lead when he blew with his wind; and Sodom and Gomorrah, with the cities of the plain, were destroyed with thunder and lightning, fire and brimstone, from heaven; as the army of the Philistines were discomfited by thunder in the times of Samuel; and the captains of fifties, with their men, were consumed by lightning in the times of Elijah; and as the heavens and the earth will be burnt with fire at the end of all things. *He giveth meat in abundance;* very plentifully, or to a multitude

[m] מפרשי differentias, Pagninus; varietates, Vatablus.
[n] שרשי הים radices maris, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[o] In Bar Tzemach in loc.

of creatures, both men and cattle; who have a liberal supply of food by means of the clouds and rain, which falling upon the earth make it fruitful, so that it gives bread to the eater, and seed to the sower; causes grass to grow up for the beasts of the field, and produces bread-corn, oil, and wine, for the benefit of men; an emblem of the variety and plenty of spiritual food dispensed to the churches of Christ, through the ministry of the word, and by the ministers of it.

Ver. 32. *With clouds he covereth the light*, &c.] Either the lightning, which is hid and covered in the black dark cloud until it bursts out of it; or the light of the sun, which is wonderful, that waters naturally clear and transparent, when formed into clouds, should obstruct the rays of the sun and darken it; see Ezek. xxxii. 7. and thus it was in the storm and tempest the Apostle Paul was in many days, which was so thick and dark, that the sun and stars did not appear of a long time, Acts xxvii. 20. *And commandeth it not to shine*, *by* the cloud *that cometh betwixt*; that is, commands the sun that it shines not, or hinders it from shining, by reason of the intervening clouds; this is an emblem of sin interposing between God and his people, which causes him to hide his face from them and not shine upon them: sins are comparable to clouds for numbers, being more than can be told; and for their nature and quality, like clouds they rise out of the earthly and carnal heart of man; and which is also like a troubled sea which cannot rest; and which reach up unto heaven and bring down wrath and vengeance from thence on wicked men; and in God's own people, like the clouds they intercept the light of his countenance, the bright shining of the sun of righteousness, the comfort, peace, and joy of the Holy Spirit: the words may be rendered, *with hands he covers the light, and commands* that it shine not *by* reason of *what comes between*; and they are understood by some, as by Schmidt particularly, of the eclipses of the sun and moon, when God as it were covers them with hands, and suffers them not to shine by intervening bodies; so the eclipse of the sun is occasioned by the moon's coming between that and the earth, and the eclipse of the moon by the interposition of the earth between that and the sun; the Targum is, "because of rapine of hands he restrains "rain, and commands it to descend because of him "that prays," who comes between and intercedes for a sinful people, as Elijah did; or, as others, he commands the lightning that it hurts not because of him that comes between and intercedes with his prayers.

Ver. 33. *The noise thereof sheweth concerning it*, &c.] The rain, that it is coming; it is a presage and prognostic of it, namely, the noise of the clouds in the air, the sound of abundance of rain there; or the noise of the winds, which is often a forerunner of it; or the noise of thunder when rain frequently follows, Jer. x. 13. *The cattle also concerning the vapour*; that is, the cattle likewise shew signs of rain, being sensible of the vapours which rise up out of the earth, and are drawn up into the air and form clouds there; these, through their sharp sight, discern the vapours rising out of the earth insensible by men; or by their quick smell [p] or taste discern them, these leaving some tincture upon the grass they are feeding on; and which occasion some motions and gestures in them by which husbandmen, and those that are accustomed to them, know that the rain is at hand: and there are various things observable in brutes, fowls, and cattle, and other creatures, which are signs of approaching rain; as the cawing of crows, the croaking of frogs, the flying about of cranes and swallows, the motion of ants, the retire of cattle to places of shelter, and the like; Aben Ezra observes that sheep lying on their right side portends rain; the above things with others are most beautifully expressed by Virgil [q], and which with many others are collected together by Pliny [r]; and though there are various interpretations given of this passage, this seems to be the most agreeable, and which suits with our version; unless the following, which I only propose, should be more eligible, *he*, that is, God, *by* it, the rain, *declares his good will* to men, likewise to *the cattle*, and *also towards what rises up* out of the earth, the herbs and plants; all which receive much benefit by the clouds and rain.

CHAP. XXXVII.

ELIHU in this chapter proceeds to shew the greatness of God as it appears in other of his works of nature, which greatly affected him, and to an attention to which he exhorts others, ver. 1, 2. particularly thunder and lightning, the direction, extent, and order of which he observes, ver. 3, 4. and then suggests that besides these there are other great things done by him, incomprehensible and unknown in various respects; as the snow, and rain, lesser and greater, which come on the earth at his command, and have such effect on men as to seal up their hands, and on the beasts of the field as to cause them to retire to their dens, and there remain, ver. 5—8. and then he goes on to take notice of wind, and frost, and the clouds, and dispersion of them; their use and ends, whether in judgment or mercy, ver. 9—13. and then calls on Job to consider these wondrous works of God, and remark how ignorant men are of the disposition of clouds for the rainbow; of the balancing of them; of the heat and quietness that come by the south wind, and of the firmness of the sky, ver. 14—21. And from all this he concludes the terrible majesty, unsearchable nature of God, the excellency of his power and justice; and that men therefore should and do

[p] Vid. Democrit. Fragment. & Rendtorf. Not. in ib. apud Fabricii Biblioth. Gr. l. 4. c. 29. p. 328, 362.
[q] Aut illum surgentem vallibus imis, &c. Georgic. l. 1. v. 374, &c. Bacon's Nat. Hist. cent. 9. p. 203.
[r] Nat. Hist. l. 18. c. 35. Vid. Democrit. Fragm. ut supra, p. 335, 358, 362, 366.

fear him, who is no respecter of persons, ver. 21, 22, 23.

Ver. 1. *At this also my heart trembleth*, &c.] At the greatness and majesty of God, not only as displayed in those works of his before observed, but as displayed in those he was about to speak of: such terrible majesty is there with God, that all rational creatures tremble at it; the nations of the world, the kings and great men of the earth, and even the devils themselves. Good men tremble in the worship of God, and at the word of God; and even at the judgments of God on wicked men, and at the things that are coming on the churches of Christ. But Elihu has a particular respect to thunder and lightning, which are very terrible to many persons [s], both good and bad [t]. At the giving of the law, there were such blazes of lightning and claps of thunder, that not only all the people of Israel in the camp trembled, but Moses himself also exceedingly feared and quaked. It is very probable, that at this time Elihu saw a storm gathering, and a tempest rising; some flashes of lightning were seen, and some murmurs [u] of thunders heard, which began to affect him; since quickly after we read that God spoke out of the whirlwind or tempest, ch. xxxviii. 1. *And is moved out of his place*: was ready to leap out of his body. Such an effect had this phenomenon of nature on him; as is sometimes the case with men at a sudden fright or unusual sound, and particularly thunder [w].

Ver. 2. *Hear attentively the noise of his voice*, &c.] Of the voice of God in the clouds; and of thunder, which is his voice, ch. xl. 9. Elihu being affected with it himself, exhorts the company about him to hearken and listen to it, and learn something from it. *And the sound that goeth out of his mouth*: as the former clause may have respect to loud thunder, a more violent crack or clap of it; so this may intend some lesser whispers and murmurs of it at a distance; or a rumbling noise in the clouds before they burst; since the word is sometimes used for private meditation. Now the voice of God, whether in his works of nature, or in the dispensations of his providence, or in his word; whether in the thunder of the law, or in the still sound of the Gospel, is to be attentively hearkened to; because it is the voice of God, the voice of the God of glory, majestic and powerful, and is attended with various effects; of which see Psal. xxix. 3—9.

Ver. 3. *He directeth it under the whole heaven*, &c.] His voice of thunder, which rolls from one end of the heaven to the other; he charges the clouds with it, and directs both it and them where they shall go and discharge; what tree, house, or man, it shall strike; and where the rain shall fall when the clouds burst: yet Pliny [x] atheistically calls thunder and lightning chance-matters. Thus the ministers of the word, who are compared to clouds, Isa. v. 6, are charged with it by the Lord: they are directed by him what they shall say, where they shall go and declare it, and he directs where it shall fall with power and weight; yea, he directs it into the very hearts of men, where it pierces and penetrates, and is a discerner and discoverer of their thoughts and intents. *And his lightning unto the ends of the earth*: it cometh out of the east, and shineth to the west, Matt. xxiv. 27. and swiftly moves to the further parts of the earth: and such a direction, motion, and extent, has the Gospel had; the glorious light of it, comparable to lightning, it first broke forth in the east, where Christ, his forerunner and his disciples, first preached it, and Christian churches were formed; and from thence it spread into the western parts of the world, and before the destruction of Jerusalem it was preached unto all nations; it had a free course, ran, and was glorified; the sound of the voice of it went into all the earth, and the words and doctrines of the apostles unto the ends of the world.

Ver. 4. *After it a voice roareth*, &c.] After the lightning comes a violent crack or clap of thunder, which is like the roaring of a lion. Such is the order of thunder and lightning, according to our sense and apprehension of them; otherwise in nature they are together: but the reasons given why the lightning is seen before, and so the same in the flash and report of a gun, are, because the sense of seeing is quicker than the sense of hearing [y]; and the motion of light is quicker than that of sound; which latter is the truest reason [z]. The roaring voice of thunder may be an emblem of the thunder of the law; its dreadful volleys of curses, vengeance, and wrath on the breakers of it, as delivered out by Boanergeses, sons of thunder; or the loud proclamation of the Gospel, made by the ministers of it; and the alarming awakening sound of the word, when attended with the spirit and power of God, to sinners asleep and dead in trespasses and sins; upon which they awake, hear, and live. *He thundereth with the voice of his excellency*: that is, God thunders with such a voice, an excellent and majestic one; for his voice of thunder is full of majesty, Psal. xxix. 4. So is the voice of Christ in the Gospel; he spake when on earth as one having authority, and he comes forth and appears in it now with majesty and glory; and speaks in it of the excellent things which he has done, of the excellent righteousness he has wrought out, of the excellent sacrifice he has offered up, and of the excellent salvation he is the author of. *And he will not stay them when his voice is heard*: either the thunder and the lightning, as some; which he does not long defer after he has given out the decree concerning them, the order and disposition for them: or rather the rain and hail; these are not stayed, but quickly follow the flash of lightning and clap of thunder

[s] —— κραδίη δέ μοι ἔξω, &c. Homer. Il. 10. v. 94, 95.

[t] As it was to Augustus Cæsar, who always carried about with him the skin of a sea-calf, as a preservative; and, on suspicion of a storm rising, would betake himself to some secret and covered place: and to Tiberius, who wore his laurel to secure him from it: and to Caligula, who, on hearing it, would get out of bed and hide himself under it. Sueton. Vit. August. c. 90. Tiber. c. 69. & Caligul. c. 51. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 15. c. 30. Vid. Virgil. Georgic. l. 1. v. 330, 331.

[u] Tonitruorum unum genus grave murmur —— aliud genus est acre quod crepitum magis dixerint. Senecæ Quæst. Nat. l. 2. c. 27.

[w] Attonitos, quorum mentes sonus ille cœlestis loco pepulit. Ibid.

[x] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 43.

[y] Senec. Nat. Quæst. l. 2. c. 12. so Aristot. Meteorolog. l. 2. c. 9.

[z] The noise is commonly about seven or eight seconds after the flash, that is, about half a quarter of a minute; but sometimes much sooner, in a second or two, or less than so, and almost immediately upon the flash: this is when the explosion is very near us. Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 109. see vol. 4. p. 396.

der: for *when he utters his voice* of thunder, *there is a multitude of waters in the heavens*; and these quickly come down and are not stopped, Jer. x. 13. The word for *stay* signifies to supplant, or act deceitfully; the name of Jacob is derived from this root, because he supplanted his brother; and so it may be rendered here, *he will not supplant*, or *deceive them*[z], *when his voice is heard*: that is, either he does not subvert them, the heavens and earth, but preserves them; though he makes them to tremble with his voice of thunder[a]: or he does not act the part of a secret, subtle, and deceitful enemy, when he thunders; but shews himself openly as a King, executing his decrees with authority[b]: or rather he deceives none with his voice; none can mistake it; all know it to be the voice of thunder when it is heard: so Christ's sheep know his voice in the Gospel, and cannot be deceived; the voice of a stranger they will not follow.

Ver. 5. *God thundereth marvellously with his voice*, &c.] Or *marvels*[c], or marvellous things, which may respect the marvellous effects of thunder and lightning: such as rending rocks and mountains; throwing down high and strong towers; shattering to pieces high and mighty oaks and cedars, and other such-like effects, mentioned in Psal. xxix. and there are some things reported which seem almost incredible, were they not well-attested facts; as that an egg should be consumed thereby, and the shell unhurt; a cask of liquor, the liquor in it spoiled, and the cask not touched; money melted in the purse, and the purse whole; the fœtus in the womb killed, and the woman preserved; with other things of the like kind mentioned by various writers[d]; and which are to be accounted for only by the swift motion and piercing and penetrating nature of lightning. So the voice of God in the Gospel thunders out and declares many wonderful things; as the doctrines of the trinity of Persons in one God; of the everlasting love of the three Persons; of the Person of Christ, and the union of the two natures in him; of his incarnation, of redemption and salvation by him; of regeneration by the spirit of God; of union to Christ, and communion with him; and of the resurrection of the dead: and it produces marvellous effects, attended with a divine power; as quickening sinners dead in trespasses and sins; enlightening those who are darkness itself; bearing down all opposition before it; casting down the strong holds of sin and Satan, and reducing the most stubborn and obstinate to the obedience of Christ. *Great things doth he, which we cannot comprehend*; or *know*[e]: great things in creation, the nature and causes of which lie greatly out of the reach of man; and which he rather guesses at than knows, and still less comprehends. Great things in providence; in sustaining all creatures and providing for them; and in the government of the world, and in his dispensations in it; his judgments being unsearchable, and his ways past finding out: and great things in grace; as the salvation of sinners by Christ, and the conversion of their souls by his spirit; and even what is known of them is known but in part and very imperfectly. This is a transition to other great things done by the Lord, besides those before mentioned, and particular instances follow.

Ver. 6. *For he saith to the snow, be thou on the earth*, &c.] In the original it is, *be thou earth*: hence one of the Rabbins formed a notion, that the earth was created from snow under the throne of glory, which is justly censured by Maimonides[f]; for there is a defect of the letter ב, as in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30. as Aben Ezra observes; and therefore rightly supplied by us, *on the earth*. This is one of the great and incomprehensible things of God. What is the cause of it, how it is generated, what gives it its exceeding whiteness and its form, we rather guess at than certainly know; and there are some things relative to it not easy to be accounted for: as that it should be generated in the lower region of the air, so near us, and yet be so cold; and be so cold in its own nature, yet be like a blanket warming to the earth; and that being so cold, it should fall in hot countries, as in many parts of Africa, as Leo Africanus asserts[g]; and though so easily melted, yet lies continually upon the top of a burning mountain, Mount Ætna, as observed by Pineda and others. God has his treasures of it, and he brings it forth from thence; it is at his command, it goes at a word speaking; it is one of the things that fulfil his word, Psal. cxlviii. 8. And if what Pliny[h] says is true, that snow never falls upon the high seas or main ocean, the expression here is, with great exactness and propriety, *be thou on the earth*. However, this is certain, that to the earth only it is useful, warming, refreshing, and fructifying; it has a wonderful virtue in it to fatten the earth. Olaus Magnus[i] reports, that in the northern countries, where it falls in great plenty, the fields are more fruitful than any others, and sooner put forth their fruits and increase than other fields prepared and cultivated with the greatest labour and diligence: and that they are often obliged to drive off the cattle from them, lest they should eat too much and burst, the fields and meadows becoming so luxurious by it; and frequently they mow off the tops of herbs and grass with their scythes, to prevent their growing too rank. The word of God, as for its purity, so for its warming, refreshing, and fructifying nature, is compared unto it, Isa. lv. 10, 11. *Likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength*: that is, God says to these as to the snow, be upon the earth; and they presently are, whether lesser or larger showers: the lesser or more gentle, according to Seneca[k], fall in the winter, and the larger in spring; the former when the north wind blows, the latter when the south; but whenever they come, they fall by the direction of God, and at his command. He and he only gives rain, the vanities of the Gentiles cannot; and these are sent to water and refresh the earth, and make it fruitful; for which reason also the word of

[z] ולא יעקבם non supplantabit ea Munster; so Schmidt, Michaelis. Gussetius, p. 632.
[a] So Schmidt.
[b] So Gussetius.
[c] נפלאות mirabilia, Pagninus, Montanus.
[d] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 51. Senec. Nat. Quæst. l. 2. c. 31.

[e] ולא נדע & nesciemus, Pagninus, Montanus; so Schultens.
[f] Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 26.
[g] Descriptio Africæ, l. 1. c. 27, 28. l. 2. c. 27, 46, 69.
[h] Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 103.
[i] De Ritu Gent. Septentr. l. 19. c. 15.
[k] Nat. Quæst. l. 4. c. 4.

God is compared thereunto, Deut. xxxii. 2. Isa. lv. 10, 11. The Targum is, "to the rain after rain in "summer, to ripen the fruits; and to the rain after "the rain, to cause the grass to bud in winter in his "strength." So a shower of rain in the singular number signifies rain that falls in summer; and a shower of rain in the plural what falls in winter.

Ver. 7. *He sealeth up the hand of every man*, &c.] That is, by deep snows and heavy rains being on the earth; where, as travellers are stopped in their journeys, and cannot proceed, so various artificers are hindered from their work, and husbandmen especially from their employment in the fields; so that their hands are as it were shut up and sealed, that they cannot work with them. Sephorno interprets this of the fruits and increase of the earth being produced and brought to perfection by means of the snow and rain, and so gathered by and into the hands of men; whereby they are led to observe the work of God and his goodness herein, and so to love and fear him; which he takes to be the sense of the following clause, *that all men may know his work*: either their own work; what they have to do at home when they cannot work abroad; or that they may have leisure to reflect upon their moral ways and works, and consider how deficient they are: or rather the work of God; that they may know and own the snow and rain are his work, and depend upon his will; or that they may have time and opportunity of considering and meditating on the works of God, in nature, providence, and grace. Some choose to read the words, *that all men of his work may know*[l]; may know him the author of their beings, and the God of their mercies. For all men are the work of his hands; he has made them, and not they themselves; and the end of all God's dealings with them is, that they may know him, fear, serve, and glorify him.

Ver. 8. *Then the beasts go into dens*, &c.] When snow and rains are on the earth in great abundance, then the wild beasts of the field, not being able to prowl about, betake themselves to dens; where they lie in wait, lurking for any prey that may pass by, from whence they spring and seize it. *And remain in their places*: until the snow and rains are gone off. As for other beasts, Olaus Magnus[m] observes, that when such large snows fall, that trees are covered with them, and the tender branches bend under the weight of them, they will come and abide under them, as in shady places, in great security, sheltered from the cold wind. The former may put us in mind of great personages, comparable to beasts of prey for their savageness and cruelty, who, when the day of God's wrath and vengeance is come, will flee to rocks and mountains, dens and caverns, there to hide themselves from it; Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17.

Ver. 9. *Out of the south cometh the whirlwind*, &c.] Or *from the chamber*[n]; from the chamber of the cloud, as Ben Gersom, from the inside of it; or from the treasury of God, who bringeth the wind out of his treasures; alluding to chambers where treasures are kept; or from the heavens, shut up and veiled around with clouds like a pavilion: but because we read of the chambers of the south, ch. ix. 9. and the southern pole was like a secret chamber, shut up, unseen, and unknown very much to the ancients; hence we render it, and others interpret it, of the south; from whence in these countries came whirlwinds. Hence we read of the whirlwinds of the south, Isa. xxi. 1. Zech. ix. 14. *And cold out of the north*: cold freezing winds from thence; or *from the scatterers*[o]: Aben Ezra interprets them of stars, the same with the *Mazzaroth*, ch. xxxviii. 32. stars scattered about the Arctic or northern pole, as some: or rather the northern winds are designed, which scatter the clouds, drive away rain, Prov. xxv. 23. and bring fair weather, ver. 22. Wherefore Mr. Broughton renders the word, "fair-"weather winds;" and, in a marginal note, "the scat-"terers of clouds[p]."

Ver. 10. *By the breath of God frost is given*, &c.] By the word of God, as the Targum; at his command it is, at his word it comes, and at his word it goes, Psal. cxlvii. 15—18. or by his will, as Ben Gersom interprets it, when it is his pleasure it should be, it appears; it may be understood of a freezing wind from the Lord, for a wind is sometimes expressed by the breath of his nostrils, Psal. xviii. 15. and as the word *God* added to things increases the signification of them, as mountains of God are strong mountains; so the breath of God may signify a strong wind, as Sephorno notes, the north wind[q]. *And the breadth of the waters is straitened*: by the frost they are reduced and brought into a narrower compass; or *made hard*, as Mr. Broughton renders it; so hard as to walk upon, to draw carriages on, and lay weights and burdens very great upon; or become compact or bound together, like metal melted, poured out, and consolidated; though some think it refers to the thawing of ice by the south winds[r], when the waters return to their former breadth; which is done by the breath or commandment of God, as appears from the place before quoted from the psalmist; for it may be rendered, *and the breadth of the waters is in pouring out*, so the Targum, when thawed; or through the pouring down of rain, so the Syriac and Arabic versions, *he sends forth plenty of water*.

Ver. 11. *Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud*, &c.] By filling it with a multitude of water, it is as it were loaded and made weary with it; and especially by sending it about thus loaded from place to place before discharged, when it becomes as a weary traveller; and then by letting down the water in it, whereby it spends itself like one that is weary; an emblem of ministers that spend and are spent for the good of men: some render it by serenity or fair weather, and so Mr. Broughton, "by clearness he wearieth the thick "vapours;" by causing a clear sky he dispels them. *He scattereth his bright cloud*: thin light clouds that

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[l] מעשהו כל אנשי omnes homines operis ipsius, Schmidt, Michaelis; so Schultens.

[m] Ut supra.

[n] מן החדר de penetrali, Montanus; so Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schultens.

[o] ממזרים a dispergentibus, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; a sparsoribus, Schultens.

[p] So David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 77. 3.

[q] Induroque nives, &c. Ovid.

[r] —— cum vere reverso
Bistonii tepuere nives, &c. Statii Theb. l. 2.

have nothing in them, and are soon dispersed and come to nothing, and are seen no more; an emblem of such as are clouds without water, Jude, ver. 12. see Zech. xi. 17. or *he scatters the cloud by his light*[t]; by the sun, which dispels clouds and makes a clear sky; an emblem of the blotting out and forgiveness of sins, and of restoring the manifestations of divine love, and the joys of salvation; see Isa. xliv. 22.

Ver. 12. *And it is turned round about by his counsels*, &c.] The cloud is, and that by the wind, which is turned about to all points of the compass, according to the will of God; by the counsels of him who sits at the helm, as the word signifies, and orders all things according to the counsel of his own will: to which are owing every shifting of the wind, and the various motions of the clouds. *That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth:* as all his creatures do; the several meteors in the air, clouds, stormy wind, fire, hail, snow, and vapour, all fulfilling his word; and which they do everywhere in the several parts of the world whither they are sent, Psal. cvii. 25, 29. and cxlviii. So ministers of the word drop down or withhold the rain of Gospel doctrine, and carry it into the several places of the world, as the Lord directs them; see Isa. v. 6. Acts xiii. 46. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

Ver. 13. *He causeth it to come*, &c.] The cloud, and rain by it. *Whether for correction;* for the reproof and chastisement of men for their sins, by suffering such quantities to fall as wash away, or corrupt and destroy, the fruits of the earth: or *for a tribe*[u], as the word sometimes signifies; the rain is sent, and comes only to a particular part or spot of ground, to one city and not to another, Amos iv. 7. or *for his land;* some particular land he has a favour for, as the land of Canaan he cared for from one end of the year to another, and therefore sent on it rain in due season, though as yet it did not appear to be the object of his peculiar regard; or for the whole earth, which is his; and wherever rain comes seasonably and in proper quantity, it is for the benefit of it; though some think the land which no man has a property in but the Lord is meant, even the wilderness where no man is, ch. xxxviii. 26, 27. or *for mercy;* to some particular spot, and to some particular persons; and indeed it is a kindness and benefit both to good and bad men; hereby the earth is watered and made fertile and fruitful, to bring forth seed to the sower and bread to the eater, see Matt. v. 45. Acts xiv. 17. the word of God is for the correction of some, and for the comfort of others, 2 Tim. iii. 16. yea, the savour of death unto death to some, and the savour of life unto life to others, 2 Cor. ii. 16. The Targum paraphrases the words, "either a rain of vengeance on "the seas and deserts, or an impetuous rain on the "trees of the mountains and hills, or a still rain of "mercy on the fruitful fields and vineyards."

Ver. 14. *Hearken unto this, O Job*, &c.] Either to the present clap of thunder then heard; or rather to what Elihu had last said concerning clouds of rain coming for correction or mercy: and improve it and apply it to his own case, and consider whether the afflictions he was under were for the reproof and correction of him for sin, or in mercy and love to his soul and for his good, as both might be the case; or to what he had further to say to him, which was but little more, and he should conclude. *Stand still;* stand up, in order to hear better, and in reverence of what might be said; and with silence, that it might be the better received and understood: *and consider the wondrous works of God;* not prodigies and extraordinary things, which are out of the common course of nature, such as the wonders in Egypt, at the Red sea, in the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan, but common things; such as come more or less under daily observation, for of such only he had been speaking, and continued to speak; such as winds, clouds, thunder, lightning, hail, rain, and snow; these he would have him consider and reflect upon, that though they were so common and obvious to view, yet there were some things in them marvellous and beyond the full comprehension of men; and therefore much more must be the works of Providence, and the hidden causes and reasons of them.

Ver. 15. *Dost thou know when God disposed them?* &c.] The clouds, that part of the wondrous works of God he was speaking of; when he decreed concerning them that they should be, when he put into them and stored them with rain, hail, snow, &c. disposed of them here and there in the heavens, and gave them orders to fall on this and the other spot of ground; wast thou present at all this, and knew what God was doing secretly in the clouds, and before heard what would break out of them, or fall from them? and if thou art ignorant of these things, canst thou imagine that thou shouldest be made acquainted with the secret springs of God's providential dealings with the children of men? *And caused the light of his cloud to shine;* either the lightning to break through the cloud, or rather the light of the sun to shine upon his cloud, prepared to receive the light reflected on it, and form the rainbow; which, as it is called his bow, the cloud in which it is may be called his cloud; which is one of the wondrous works of God, and is called by the Heathens the daughter of wonder[w]; formed in a semicircle, with various colours, and as a token that God will drown the earth no more; an emblem of the covenant of peace, and of Jesus Christ, said to be clothed with a cloud, and with a rainbow about his head, Rev. x. 1.

Ver. 16. *Dost thou know the balancings of the clouds?* &c.] How those ponderous bodies, as some of them are very weighty, full of water, are poized, and hang in the air, without turning this way or the other, or falling on the earth. *The wondrous works of him which is perfect in knowledge;* of God, who is a God of knowledge, of knowledges, 1 Sam. ii. 3. who knows himself and all his works, all creatures and things whatever, see ch. xxxvi. 4. and this is another of his wondrous works, which none but he, whose knowledge is perfect, and is the author and giver of knowledge, can know, even the poizing and balancing of the clouds in the air; we see they are balanced, but we know not how it is done.

[t] יפיץ ענן אורו dispellit nubem luce sua, Munster.
[u] לשבט in una tribu, V. L. uni tribui, Tigurine version.

[w] Apollodorus, l. 1. p. 5.

Ver. 17. *How thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth by the south* wind?] One should think there is no great difficulty in accounting for this, that a man's clothes should be warm, and he so hot as not to be able to bear them, but obliged to put them off in the summer season, when only the south wind blows, which brings heat, a serene sky, and fine weather, Luke xii. 55. and yet there is something in the concourse of divine Providence attending these natural causes, and his blessing with them, without which the garment of a man will not be warm, or at least not warming to him, Hag. i. 6. or "how thy garments "are warm when the land is still from the south," as Mr. Broughton renders the words; that is, how it is when the earth is still from the whirlwinds of the south; or when that wind does not blow which brings heat, but northerly winds in the winter time: that then a man's garments should be warm, and keep him warm.

Ver. 18. *Hast thou with him spread out the sky?* &c.] Wast thou concerned with him at the first spreading out of the sky? wast thou an assistant to him in it? did he not spread it as a curtain or canopy about himself, without the help of another? verily he did; see ch. ix. 8. Isa. xliv. 24. Which is *strong;* for though it seems a fluid and thin, is very firm and strong, as appears by what it bears, and are contained in it; and therefore is called *the firmament of his power,* Psal. cl. 1. And *as a molten looking-glass;* clear and transparent, like the looking-glasses of the women, made of molten brass, Exod. xxxviii. 8. and firm and permanent *; and a glass this is in which the glory of God, and his divine perfections, is to be seen; and is one of the wondrous works of God, made for the display of his own glory, and the benefit of men, Psal. xix. 1. Or this may respect the spreading out a clear serene sky, and smoothing it after it has been covered and ruffled with storms and tempests; which is such a wonderful work of God, that man has no hand in.

Ver. 19. *Teach us what we shall say unto him,* &c.] To this wonder-working God, of whose common works of nature we know so little; how we should reason with him about his works of Providence, when we know so little of these: for *we cannot order* our speech *by reason of darkness;* by reason of darkness in themselves, which is in all men naturally, and even in the saints in this state of imperfection; and by reason of the clouds and darkness which are about the Lord himself, who is incomprehensible in his nature and perfections; and by reason of the darkness cast about his providential dealings with men, so that they are unsearchable and past finding out; and the best of men are at a loss how to order their speech, or discourse with God concerning these things.

Ver. 20. *Shall it be told him that I speak?* &c.] And what I speak? there is no need of it, since he is omniscient, and knows every word that is spoken by men; or is any thing I have said concerning him, his ways, and his works, worthy relating, or worthy of his hearing, being so very imperfect? nor can the things I have spoken of, though common things, be fully explained to any; or should it be told him, the Lord, that he, Elihu, had spoke as Job had done, and arraigned his justice, and complained of his dealings? God forbid; he would not have it said they were spoken by him for all the world: or *shall it be recorded unto him what I speak?* as Mr. Broughton, or that I speak; shall it be recorded in a book, and that sent to God; that I will speak in thy cause, and be an advocate for thee, and endeavour to justify thee in all thou hast said? no, by no means. *If a man speak, surely he shall be swallowed up:* if he speaks of the being and perfections of God, he is soon lost; his essence, and many of his attributes, are beyond his comprehension; if he speaks of his works of nature and providence, he is presently out of his depth; there is a bathos, a depth in them he cannot fathom: if he speaks of his love, and grace, and mercy, in the salvation of man, he is swallowed up with admiration; he is obliged to say, what manner of love is this? it has heights he cannot reach, depths he cannot get to the bottom of, lengths and breadths immeasurable: or should he undertake to dispute with God, to litigate a point with him concerning his works, he could not answer him in one thing of a thousand; and particularly Elihu suggests, was he to undertake Job's cause, it would soon be lost and all over with him; so Mr. Broughton renders the words, *would any plead, when he should be undone?* who would engage in a cause he is sure would be lost, and prove his utter undoing?

Ver. 21. *And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds,* &c.] Here Elihu returns to his subject, it may be, occasioned by black clouds gathering in the heavens, as a preparation for the whirlwind, storm, and tempest, out of which the Lord is said to speak in the next chapter. And this is to be understood, not of the lightning in the cloud, which is not to be seen until it breaks out of it; nor the rainbow in the cloud, formed by the rays of light from the sun, which disappears when the wind passes and clears the sky of the cloud in which it is; nor of the Galaxy, or milky way, as Sephorno, which is not to be seen in a cloudy night; but of the sun, which is the great light and a bright one, and shines brightly; yet sometimes not to be seen by men, because of interposing clouds, until they are cleared away by winds. Though rather this respects the sun shining in its brightness, and in its full strength, in the skies or ethereal regions, in a clear day, when men are not able to look full at it: and how much less then are they able to behold him who is light itself, and in whom is no darkness at all, nor shadow of turning; who dwells in light, which no mortal can approach unto; into whose nature and perfections none can fully look, or behold the secret springs of his actions, and the reasons of his dispensations towards men? *But the wind passeth and cleanseth them;* the clouds, and clears the air of them, which obstruct the light of the sun: or *when a wind passeth and cleareth it;* the air, as Mr. Broughton, then the sun shines so brightly that it dazzles the eye to look at it.

Ver. 22. *Fair weather cometh out of the north,* &c.] Or *gold* [1], which some understand literally; this being found in northern climates as well as southern, as Pliny

* Χάλκεος οὐρανός. Pindar. Nem. Ode 6.

[1] זהב aurum, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

relates[r]; particularly in Colchis and Scythia, which lay to the north of Palestine and Arabia; and is thought by a learned man[s] to be here intended: though to understand it figuratively of the serenity of the air, bright and pure as gold, or of fair weather, which is golden weather, as Mr. Broughton renders it, "through the north the golden cometh," seems best to agree with the subject Elihu is upon; and such weather comes from the north, through the north winds, which drive away rain, Prov. xxv. 23. *With God is terrible majesty*; majesty belongs to him as he is King of kings, whose the kingdom of nature and providence is; and he is the Governor among and over the nations of the world. His throne is prepared in the heavens; that is his throne, and his kingdom ruleth over all: and this majesty of his is *terrible*, commanding awe and reverence among all men, who are his subjects; and especially among his saints and peculiar people; and strikes a terror to others, even to great personages, the kings and princes of the earth; to whom the Lord is sometimes terrible now, and will be hereafter; see Psal. lxxvi. 12. Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17. and to all Christless sinners, especially when he comes to judgment; see Isa. ii. 19. 2 Cor. v. 11. Or *terrible praise*[t]; for God is *fearful in praises*, Exod. xv. 11. which may respect the subject of praise, terrible things, and the manner of praising him with fear and reverence, Psal. cvi. 22. and ii. 11.

Ver. 23. *Touching the Almighty*, &c.] Or with respect to God, who is almighty; with whom nothing is impossible; who can do and does do all things he pleases, and more than we can ask or think; and who is all-sufficient, as this word is by some rendered; has enough of every thing in himself and of himself to make him happy; and needs not any of his creatures, nor any thing they can do or give him, but has a sufficiency for himself and them. *We cannot find him out*; found he may be in his works, and especially in his Son, the express image of his person; in whom he makes himself known as the God of grace: but he is not to be found out to perfection; neither by the light of nature, which is very dim, and by which men grope after him, if haply they may find him; nor even by the light of grace in the present state: and there are many things in God quite out of the reach of man, and ever will be, fully to comprehend; as the modes of the subsistence of the three Persons in the Godhead; the eternity and immensity of God; with all secret things, which belong not to us to inquire curiously into. He is *excellent in power*; or great and much in it; which is displayed in the works of creation and sustentation of the world; in the redemption and conversion of his people; in the support, protection, and preservation of them; and in the destruction of his and their enemies. *And in judgment*; in the government of the world in so righteous a manner; in the judgments he executes on wicked men; and as he will appear to be in the general judgment of the world, at the great day, which will be a righteous one. *And in plenty of justice*; being most just, righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; distributing justice to all, acting according to the rules of it, in all things and towards all persons; so that though he is great in power, he does not abuse that power, to do things that are not just. *He will not afflict*; without a just cause and reason for it; nor willingly, but with reluctance; nor never beyond deserts, nor more than he gives strength to bear; and only for the good of his people, and in love to them. Some render it, *he will not answer*[u]; or give an account of his matters, or the reason of his dealings with men.

Ver. 24. *Men do therefore fear him*, &c.] Or should, because of his greatness in power, judgment, and justice; and because of his goodness, in not afflicting for his pleasure's sake, but for the profit of men; and therefore they should reverence and adore him, submit to his will, patiently bear afflictions, serve him internally and externally, with reverence and godly fear. *He respecteth not any that are wise of heart*: that are wise in a natural sense: these are not always regarded by God, or are his favourites; neither temporal blessings, nor special grace, or the knowledge of spiritual things, are always given to the wise and prudent, Eccl. ix. 11. Matt. xi. 25. Or that are wise in their own conceit; there is a woe to such; and there is more hope of a fool than of him, Isa. v. 21. Prov. xxvi. 12. Or he is not *afraid* of them[w], as some choose to render the word; he fears not to reprove them and correct them for their faults, or the schemes they form to counterwork him; for he can take them in their craftiness, and carry their counsel headlong. Or *every wise in heart shall not see him*[x]: the world by wisdom knows him not; nor can any look into his heart, his thoughts, purposes, and designs, and into the causes and reasons of his actions; nor have those that are truly wise perfect vision and knowledge of him now, 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

IN this chapter the Lord takes up the controversy with Job; calls upon him to prepare to engage with him in it, and demands an answer to posing questions he puts to him, concerning the earth and the fabric of it, ver. 1—7. Concerning the sea, compared to an infant in embryo, at its birth, in its swaddling-bands and cradle, ver. 8—11. Concerning the morning light, its spread and influence, ver. 12—15. Concerning the springs of the sea, the dark parts of the earth, the place both of light and darkness, ver. 16—21. Concerning the va-

[r] Nat. Hist. l. 6. c. 11. & l. 33. c. 3, 4.

[s] Reland. de Paradiso, s. 9, 10. p. 22, 23, 24. And in the countries farthest north were mines of gold formerly, as Olaus Magnus relates, though now destroyed. De Ritu Gent. Septent. l. 6, 11. Vid. l. 3, 5.

[t] נורא הוד φοβερὰ αἴνεσις, Symmachus, formidolosa laudatio, V. L. terribilem laude, Vatablus.

[u] לא יענה non respondebit, Tigurine version; so some in Mercerus and Drusius.

[w] לא יראה non timebit, Osiander.

[x] Non videbit eum omnis sapiens corde; so some in Drusius.

rious meteors, snow, hail, rain, thunder, lightning, and the influences of the stars, ver. 22—38. and concerning provision for lions and ravens, ver. 39, 40, 41.

Ver. 1. *Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, &c.*] As soon as Elihu had done speaking, who saw the tempest rising, and gave hints of it, ch. xxxvii. 2, 14. and hastened to finish his discourse. This was raised to give notice of the Lord being about to appear, and to display his majesty, and to command reverence and attention. The Targum calls it the whirlwind of distress, as it might be to Job; and a representation of the distressed and disturbed state and condition in which he was. The person that spoke out of it is Jehovah the Son of God, the eternal Word, who very probably appeared in an human form; for there was an object seen, ch. xlii. 5. and spoke with an articulate voice to Job. *And said;* in answer to his frequent wishes and desires that the Lord would appear and take his cause in hand.

Ver. 2. *Who is this,* &c.] Meaning not Elihu the last speaker, as some think; and there are some who suppose not only that these words are directed to him, but all that is said in this and the following chapter: but it was Job the Lord spoke to and answered, as expressed in the preceding verse; and these words are taken by Job to himself, ch. xlii. 3. Concerning whom the Lord inquires, not as ignorant of him, who he was; but wondering that such a man as he should talk as he did; and as angry with him, and rebuking him for it. *That darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?* either his own counsel, his sense and sentiments of things, which were delivered in such an obscure manner as not to be intelligible by those that heard them; whereby they were led, as Job's friends were, into some mistaken notions of him: or rather the counsel of God, his works of providence, which are done according to the counsel of his will, and were misrepresented by Job, as not being wise and good, just and equitable; see ch. xxxiv. 35, 37.

Ver. 3. *Gird up now thy loins like a man,* &c.] Like a man of valour that girds on his harness for battle: Job is bid to prepare for the controversy the Lord was entering into with him; and bring forth his strong reasons and most powerful arguments in his own defence. The allusion is to the custom in the eastern countries, where they wore long garments, to gird them about their loins, when they engaged in work or war. Job had blustered what he would do, and now he is dared to it; see ch. xxiii. 4, 5, 6. and xxxi. 37. *For I will demand of thee, and answer thou me;* put questions to him, to which he required a direct and positive answer. Jehovah takes the part of the opponent in this dispute, and gives that of the respondent to Job; since Job himself had put it to his option which to take, ch. xiii. 22.

Ver. 4. *Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?* &c.] The earth has foundations, and such firm ones that it cannot be moved; but what are they, since it is hung in the air on nothing! No other than the power and will of God, who laid these foundations, and the Son of God, who has created and upholds all things by the word of his power, Heb. i. 3, 10. Where was Job then? In a state of nothingness, a mere nonentity: he was not present when this amazing work of nature was done, and saw not how the Lord went about it; and yet takes upon him to dive into the secret works and ways of Providence, for which he is rebuked by this question and the following. *Declare, if thou hast understanding:* Job had the understanding of a man in things natural and civil, and of a good man in things spiritual and divine; but he had no understanding of this, of what he is questioned about; could not declare in what place he was, and where he stood, when the earth was founded.

Ver. 5. *Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest?* &c.] Did God or a creature? The Lord, no doubt. He laid them out in his divine mind, and laid them forth by his divine power; who does all things by weight and measure. He fixed the dimensions of the earth, how long, how thick, and how broad it should be; he settled the borders and boundaries of it. This Job might know that the Lord did; but how he laid them, and what they are that are laid, he knew not. Mathematicians pretend to give us the circumference and diameter of the earth; but in their accounts are not agreed, but widely differ; which shews they are at no certainty about them[e]; and Job and the men of his age might be still less knowing: though the words may be rendered, *for thou knowest*[f]; surely such a knowing man as thou art must needs know this; and so are a severe sarcasm upon him. *Or who hath stretched the line upon it?* The measuring-line being formed according to rule, with exact symmetry and proportion. This may be the same with the circle of the earth, and the compass set upon the face of the deep or terraqueous globe, Prov. viii. 27. Isa. xl. 22. And with the same exactness and just proportion are the ways and works of Providence, which Job ought to have acquiesced in as being well and wisely done.

Ver. 6. *Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?* &c.] Or the pillars of it, as Ben Gersom interprets it; see Psal. lxxv. 3. and which Aben Ezra understands of the mountains: but be they what they may, on what can they be fastened or sunk into, when the earth hangs on nothing, and there is nothing visible to support it, nothing but the mighty hand of God? *Or who laid the corner-stone thereof?* which unites, cements, and keeps the fabric together, and is the ornament and beauty of it; but who can tell what that is? Aben Ezra interprets it of the point or centre of the earth.

Ver. 7. *When the morning stars sang together, &c.*] Either all the stars in a literal sense; for though, strictly speaking, there is but one morning star, yet all may be called so, because early created in the morning of the world; and are all stars of light, shine till the morning; and it is observed by some, that the neater

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[e] The mathematicians in Aristotle's time reckoned the breadth of the earth a little less than 40 myriads of furlongs, and the length of it 70 myriads. Aristot. de Mundo, c. 3. Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 108, 109.—According to the moderns, the circumference of the earth is 25,051½ of our statute miles, and its diameter 7,967 such miles. See Chambers's Dictionary on the word *Earth*.

[f] כי quandoquidem, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; quia, Michaelis; nam, Schultens; so Broughton.

the morning the brighter they shine: and these in their way sing the praises of God, and set forth the glory of his perfections, and occasion songs of praise in men; see Psal. cxlviii. 3. and xix. 1. Or figuratively, either angels, as most interpret them, comparable to stars for their glory, purity, and light, for their constancy, permanency, and numbers: or good men, particularly ministers of the word, and angels of the churches; who are stars in Christ's right hand, Rev. i. 20. and ii. 1. but the principal morning star is Christ himself, Rev. xxii. 16. *And all the sons of God shouted for joy;* which are usually understood of angels also, so the Targum; who are the sons of God, not by birth, as Christ, nor by adoption, as saints; but by creation, as Adam, Luke iii. 38. And because they bear some likeness to God, as holy spirits, and honour and obey him in doing his will; though the character of sons of God, as distinct from the children of men, given to professors of religion, obtained before the times of Job; see Gen. vi. 2. and who might be said to sing together, and shout for joy, when they met for social worship; see ch. i. 6. and especially when any fresh discoveries were made to them of the Messiah, and salvation by him. Thus Abraham, one of these sons of God, saw Christ's day and was glad, and shouted for joy, John viii. 56. For these words are not necessarily to be restrained to the laying of the foundation and corner-stone of the earth, as our version directs; though indeed the angels then might be present, being created as soon as the heavens were, and with the stars, as Capellus on this place observes; and rejoiced, when the foundations of the earth were laid, on beholding such a display of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God therein; and which may be said of them, in allusion to what is done at the laying of the foundation of any building of note; see Ezra iii. 10. for it may be repeated from ver. 4. *where wast thou when the morning stars,* &c. and so may refer to any rejoicing, whether of angels or men, before the times of Job, at which he was not present.

Ver. 8. *Or* who *shut up the sea with doors,* &c.] From the earth the transition is to the sea, according to the order of the creation; and this refers not to the state and case of the sea as at the flood, of which some interpret it, but as at its first creation; and it is throughout this account represented as an infant, and here first as in embryo, shut up in the bowels of the earth, where it was when first created with it, as an infant shut up in its mother's womb, and with the doors of it; see ch. iii. 10. the bowels of the earth being the storehouses where God first laid up the deep waters, Psal. xxxiii. 7. and when the chaos, the misshapen earth, was like a woman big with child. *When it brake forth* out of the abyss, as the Targum, with force and violence, as Pharez broke out of his mother's womb; for which reason he had his name given, which signifies a breach, Gen. xxxviii. 29. so it follows, as if *it had issued out of the womb;* as a child out of its mother's womb; so the sea burst forth and issued out of the bowels of the earth, and covered it all around, as in Psal. civ. 6. and now it was that the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, before they were drained off the earth; this was the first open visible production of the sea, and may be called the birth of it; see Gen. i. 2. Something like this the Heathen philosopher Archelaus had a notion of, who says[a], the sea was shut up in hollow places, and was as it were strained through the earth.

Ver. 9. *When I made the cloud the garment thereof,* &c.] For this new-born babe, the sea. *And thick darkness a swaddling-band for it;* which was the case of the sea when it burst out of the bowels of the earth and covered it, for then darkness was upon the face of the deep, a dark, foggy, misty air, Gen. i. 2. and this was before its separation from the land, and in this order it stands in this account; though since, clouds, fogs, and mists, which rise out of the sea, are as garments to it, and cover it at times, and the surrounding atmosphere, as it presses the whole terraqueous globe, and keeps the parts of the earth together, so the waters of the sea from spilling out; and these are the garments and the swaddling-bands with which the hands and arms of this big and boisterous creature are wreathed; it is said of the infant in Ezek. xvi. 4. that it was neither *salted nor swaddled at all;* but both may be said of the sea; that it is salted is sufficiently known, and that it is swaddled is here affirmed; but who except the Lord Almighty could do this? and who has managed, and still does and can manage, this unruly creature, as easily as a nurse can turn about and swaddle a new-born babe upon her lap.

Ver. 10. *And brake up for it my decreed* place, &c.] Or, as Mr. Broughton translates it, *and brake the earth for it by my decree;* made a vast chasm in the earth to hold the waters of the sea, which was provided as a sort of cradle to put this swaddled infant in; God cleaved the earth, raised the hills and sunk the valleys, which became as channels to convey the waters that ran off the earth to their appointed place, which is beautifully expressed in Psal. civ. 7, 8. and refers there, as here, to the work of creation on the second day, Gen. i. 9, 10[b]. *And set bars and doors;* to keep it in its decreed appointed place, that the waters might not go over the earth; these are the shores, as the Targum, the cliffs and rocks upon them, the boundaries of the sea; to which may be added, and what is amazing, the sand upon the sea-shore is such a boundary to it that it cannot pass, Jer. v. 22. but these would be insufficient was it not for the power and will of God, next expressed.

Ver. 11. *And said, hitherto shalt thou come, but no further,* &c.] The waters of the sea shall spread themselves to such and such shores, and wash them, but go no further; its rolling tides shall go up so far in rivers that go out of it, and then return, keeping exactly to time and place; this is said by Jehovah, the Word of God, and through his almighty power is attended to. *And here shall thy proud waves be stayed;* so high and no higher shall they lift up themselves; so far and no farther shall they roll on, than to the boundaries fixed for them; and though they may toss up themselves as proud men toss up their heads, for which

[a] Laert. Vit. Philosoph. l. 2. p. 99.

[b] Or determined, that is, appointed for it its convenient, proper, and fixed place; so David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 203. 1.

reason pride is ascribed to them, yet they shall not prevail, *Jer.* v. 22. all this may be accommodated to the afflictions of God's people, which are sometimes compared to the waves and billows of the sea, Psal. xlii. 7. and lxxxviii. 7. and these issue out of the womb of God's purposes and decrees, and are not the effects of chance; they are many, and threaten to overwhelm, but God is with his people in them, and preserves them from being overflowed by them; he has set the bounds and measures of them, beyond which they cannot go; see Isa. xxvii. 8. and xliii. 2. and also to the world, and to the men of it, who are like a troubled sea, Dan. vii. 2, 3. Isa. lvii. 20. and who rise, and swell, and dash against the people of God, being separated from them who were originally mixed with them; but the Lord restrains their wrath and fury, and suffers them not to do his people any hurt; whom he has placed in the munition of rocks out of their reach, that those proud waters cannot go over them as they threaten to do; see Psal. lxxvi. 10. and cxxiv. 2—6.

Ver. 12. *Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days;* &c.] Job had lived to see many a morning, but it never was in his power to command one; he had been in such circumstances as to wish for morning-light before it was, but was obliged to wait for it, could not hasten it, or cause it to spring before its time; see ch. vii. 3, 4. one of the Targums is, "wast thou in "the days of the first creation, and commandedst the "morning to be?" he was not, God was; he was before the first morning, and commanded it into being, Gen. i. 3, 4, 5. Isa. xliii. 13. And *caused the day-spring to know his place;* the first spring of light or dawn of day; which though it has a different place every day in the year, as the sun ascends or descends in the signs of the Zodiac, yet it knows and observes its exact place, being taught of God.

Ver. 13. *That it might take hold of the ends of the earth,* &c.] As when the morning-light springs forth, it quickly does, reaching in a short time the extreme part of the hemisphere; which, and what goes before, may be applied to the light of the Gospel, and the direction of that under divine Providence in the several parts of the world, and unto the ends of it; see Psal. xix. 4, 5, 6. Rom. x. 18. *That the wicked might be shaken out of it?* the earth, by means of the light; which may be understood either of wicked men who have been all night upon works of darkness, and betake themselves on the approach of light to private lurking-places, like beasts of prey, so that the earth seems to be, as it were, clear of them; or of their being taken up in the morning for deeds done in the night, and brought to justice, which used to be exercised in mornings, Jer. xxi. 12. Psal. ci. 8. and so the earth rid of them: thus wicked men shun the light of the Gospel, and are condemned by it; and in the latter-day light and glory they will cease from the earth; see John iii. 19, 20. Psal. x. 16. and civ. 35.

Ver. 14. *It is turned as clay to the seal,* &c.] As the clay receives a different form by the impress of the seal upon it, so the earth appears in a different manner by the spring of morning-light upon it; in the darkness of the night nothing of its form and beauty is to be seen; it is a mere *tohu* and *bohu*, like the chaos, Gen. i. 2. its rising hills, and spreading dales, and beautiful landscapes, cannot be observed with pleasure; but when the light breaks forth in the morning, it is seen in all its beauty and glory: of the change the light of the Gospel makes in men, see 2 Cor. iii. 18. *And they stand as a garment:* or things stand upon it as a garment, as Mr. Broughton renders the words; herbs, plants, and trees, unseen in the night, stand up like a vesture to the earth in the morning-light; and as they are clothed themselves, they are a garment to that, which now puts on another and beautiful habit; the pastures are clothed with flocks, and the valleys covered with corn, and the whole earth with light itself, as with a garment: and as beautifully do men made light in the Lord appear; see Isa. xli. 10. Rev. iii. 4, 5. and xii. 1.

Ver. 15. *And from the wicked their light is withholden,* &c.] Whose light is darkness, and whose day is the night, of which they are deprived when the morning-light breaks forth; see ch. xxiv. 17. it may be figuratively understood of the light of prosperity being removed from them, or the light of life, when they shall be sent into utter darkness. *And the high arm shall be broken:* their power weakened and made useless; even the power of such wicked men who have had a large share of it, and have used it in a tyrannical manner; and especially this will be their case at death; see Isa. xiv. 10, 12.

Ver. 16. *Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?* &c.] The subterraneous passages through which the waters flow into the sea and supply it; or the springs and fountains that rise up at the bottom of it [i]; and some tell us of springs of sweet water that rise there, even though the water at the bottom of the sea is salter than on the surface [k]: some render it *the drops of the sea* [l]; hast thou considered them and counted them? art thou able to do it? no: others the *perplexities* of it [m], so the Targum, the word being used in this sense, Exod. xiv. 3. the thickets of it; some speak of woods and forests in it, see note on Exod. x. 19. others *rocks* and shelves [n], and others the *borders* of it [o]; and the sense then is, hast thou entered into and travelled through the main ocean, observed the forests in it, the shelving rocks and sandy mountains in it, and gone to the utmost borders of it? *Or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?* to find out the deepest place of it, where no sounding-line can reach [p]; or walked in

[i] According to Dr. Plot, the principal fountains have their origin, and are supplied with water through subterraneous passages from the sea. De Origine Fontium, &c. apud Act. Erudit. Lips. A. M. 1685. p. 338. See Gen. vii. 11.

[k] Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 802.

[l] נבכי ים guttas maris, Tigurine version, Grotius.

[m] Perplexitates maris, Munster.

[n] Scopulos maris, Michaelis; salebrosa maris, Schultens.

[o] So Jarchi.

[p] For though the greatest depth of the sea is said by Fabianus (apud Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 2, c. 102) to be fifteen furlongs, or near two miles, this must be understood of that part of it which is fathomable and nearer land. But such as those, called Bathea Ponti, the depths of the Pontus, and are almost 300 furlongs from the continent, they are said (Plin. ib.) to be of an immense depth, and the bottom not to be found. And if the Sardinian sea, the deepest in the Mediterranean, (Aristot. Meteorolog. l. 2, c. 1,) is 1000 orgies or fathoms deep, (Posidonius apud Strabo. Geograph. l. 1, p. 37,) that is, one mile and a fifth, what must the depth of the vast ocean be!

quest of the curiosities of it, animals, plants and minerals, unknown to men; or of the riches that lie at the bottom of it, for which now the diving-bell is used, but not invented and known in the times of Job; and if Job had not done and could not do all this, how should he be able to enter into the secret springs of Providence, or trace the ways of God, whose way is in the sea, and whose paths are in the great waters, and his footsteps not known? Psal. lxxvii. 19. Rom. xi. 33.

Ver. 17. *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?* &c.] Meaning not by which death has entered into the world, and which have been the causes and occasion of it; as the sin of man, the appointment of God, and various providences, calamities and diseases; but by which men enter into the state of the dead. Men know not experimentally what death is, nor in what way they shall go out of the world, nor at what time, nor in what place; they know not what the state of the dead is, there is no correspondence between them and the living; they do not know either what they enjoy or endure, or who precisely and with certainty are in the separate abodes of bliss or misery; the gates of these dark and invisible regions to us have never been thrown open, for mortals to look into them. *Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?* the same thing in other words; the Targum and Jarchi interpret this of hell.

Ver. 18. *Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?* &c.] Which may be put for all the dimensions of it, length, breadth, diameter, and circumference, but especially it regards the superficies of it, and the measurement of that; hast thou gone over the whole face of the earth and measured it, all its parts, its hills and dales, rocks and mountains, and took a survey of all the cities, towns and villages, woods, forests, fountains, rivers, &c.? no; if a man lived as long as Methuselah, and spent all his days in this way, he could never be able to do it; and some parts are inaccessible, and not to be measured by the most skilful geometer. *Declare, if thou knowest it all;* the whole earth and every part of it, and all that is in it. Whether the other hemisphere and the antipodes were known in Job's time is a question; however not America, or the new world, which is a late discovery; and even now, in our most exact maps of the world, some parts are marked with *terra incognita*, the unknown land.

Ver. 19. *Where is the way where light dwelleth?* &c.] Or the way to the place where it dwells, and what that is. *And as for darkness, where is the place thereof?* where these were placed when they were first separated at the creation? where light goes and dwells, when it departs from us at sun-setting? and where the darkness betakes itself, and makes its abode at sun-rising? What is the chamber of the sun, and the tabernacle of it? from whence it sets out, and whither it returns? And though these questions may be answered by geographers and astronomers in their way; yet they seem to respect chiefly the disposal of light and darkness, in such a manner as to cause the revolution of them, and the inequality of days and nights in different seasons and climates; and which is not in the power of men to effect, but depends on the sovereign will of God.

Ver. 20. *That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof,* &c.] Either darkness, or rather the light; take it as it were by the hand, and guide and direct its course to its utmost bound. This only the Lord can do and does: he has set a tabernacle for the sun, which goes forth at his command as a strong man to run a race; whose going forth is from the end of the heavens, and his circuit unto the ends of it: in which his course is so steered and directed by the Lord, that he never misses his way or errs from it; but keeps his path exactly, as well as knows its rising and setting, its utmost bounds. *And that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?* from whence it sets out, and whither it returns; see Psal. xix. 4, 5, 6. And so the light and darkness of prosperity and adversity, as well as natural light and darkness, are of God, at his disposal, and bounded by him, and therefore his will should be submitted to; which is the doctrine the Lord would teach Job by all this.

Ver. 21. *Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born?* &c.] When light and darkness were first separated, and had their several apartments assigned them; their laws and rules given them, and their bounds and limits set them? No; he was not: and, had he been the first man, could not have been early enough to have been present at the doing of this, and so come at the knowledge thereof; since man was not made until the sixth day of the creation. *Or because the number of thy days is great;* reach to the beginning of time, and so as old as the creation. This was not the case. Some understand these words ironically; *thou knowest* the places and bounds of light and darkness, since thou art a very old man, born as soon as the world was. Whereas he was of yesterday, and knew nothing; which to convince him of is the design of this biting, cutting, expression. The Targum is, "didst thou know then "that thou shouldest be born, and the number of thy "days many?" No, Job did not know when he was born, nor of whom, and in what circumstances, but by the relation of others; and much less could he know before he was born, that he should be, or how long he should live in the world: but God knows all this beforehand; when men shall come into the world, at what period and of what parents, and how long they shall continue in it.

Ver. 22. *Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?*] The vapours raised, and clouds formed in the atmosphere, which is the storehouse of those meteors; and may be called treasures, because hidden in the clouds, and not seen by man until the fall of them; and because they are in the keeping, and at the command and direction of the Lord the proprietor of them; and because rich and enriching, especially snow, which falling keeps the earth warm, and makes it fruitful; and because of the abundance thereof which sometimes falls. Now we are not to imagine that the Lord has stores of these laid up in heaps, in times past for time to come; but that he can and does as easily and as soon produce them when he pleases, as one that has treasures laid up can bring them forth at once.

Ver. 23. *Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,* &c.] For the punishment or affliction of men; and is explained as follows, *against the day of battle and war?* as his artillery and ammunition to fight his

enemies with. Of hail we have instances in Scripture, as employed against the Egyptians and Canaanites, Exod. ix. 25. Josh. x. 11. and of a reserve of it in the purposes of God, and in prophecy against the day of battle with antichrist, Rev. xvi. 21. and so Jarchi interprets it here of the war of Gog and Magog. And though there are no instances of snow being used in this way in Scripture, yet there is in history. Strabo[s] reports, that at Corzena and Cambysena, which join to Mount Caucasus, such snows have fallen, that whole companies of men have been swallowed up in them; and even armies have been overwhelmed with them, as the army of the Gauls[t]; and such quantities have been thrown down from mountains, on which they have been lodged, that towns, towers, and villages, have been laid prostrate by them[u]; and in the year 443, a vast snow destroyed many[w]. Frequently do we hear in our parts of the disasters occasioned by them. The Targum particularly makes mention of snow; and renders it, *which snow I have reserved*, &c. though absurdly applies it to punishment in hell.

Ver. 24. *By what way is the light parted*, &c.] That is, dost thou know by what way it is parted or divided? as at the first creation, when God divided the light from darkness, Gen. i. 4. or at sun-rising and sun-setting; and so in the two hemispheres, when there is darkness on the one, and light on the other; or under the two poles, when there are interchangeably six months light and six months darkness. Or how it is parted in an unequal distribution of day and night, at different seasons and in different climates; or how on one and the same day, and at the same time, the sun shall shine in one part of the earth, and not another; and more especially if this had been now a fact, and known, that there should be darkness all over the land of Egypt, and light in Goshen. Some understand this of lightning, but that is after mentioned. *Which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?* that rising sometimes with the sun, or first spring of light; see Jon. iv. 8. or which light spreads and diffuses itself *from the east*, as it may be rendered. The sun rises in the east, and in a very quick and surprising manner spreads and diffuses its light throughout the hemisphere. Or this may respect the east wind itself, which scatters the clouds; and either spreads them in the heavens over the earth, or disperses them and drives away rain[x], as the north wind does: or as Mr. Broughton renders the words, *and the east wind scattereth itself over the earth*: it blowing invisibly and without our knowledge, goes and returns as other winds do, John iii. 8.

Ver. 25. *Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters*, &c.] For a very large shower of rain, as the Vulgate Latin version: for this is not to be understood of an aqueduct, channel, or canal made on earth, either for the draining of waters off of land overflowed thereby, or for the conveyance of it to different parts to overflow it; such as were cut out of the Nile in Egypt, for the overflowing of the land, to make it fruitful; such may be and have been made by men: but of a watercourse in the air or atmosphere, as a canal or channel, for the rain to come down upon the earth; and this is the work of God, and him only, who directs and steers the course of rain, that it falls regularly and gently, not in spouts and floods, but in drops larger or lesser, on what spot of ground, or part of the earth, he pleases: and if what Jarchi says is true, that every drop has its course, its canal, through which it passes, it is still more wonderful. *Or a way for the lightning of thunder;* which generally go together, and are of God. His fire and voice, and for which he makes a way, by which they burst and break forth out of the cloud, and their course is directed by him under the whole heavens; see ch. xxviii. 26. and xxxvii. 3. So the Gospel, compared to rain and lightning, has its direction and its course steered to what part of the world he pleases; see Psal. xix. 4. Acts xiii. 46, 47. and xvi. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 26. *To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man.*] Which is uninhabited by men, being so dry and barren; where there is no man to cultivate and water it, as gardens are; and where is no man to receive any advantage by the rain that comes upon it; and yet the Lord sends it for the use of animals that dwell there; which shews his care and providence with respect even to the wild beasts of the earth. This may be an emblem of the rain of the Gospel upon the Gentile world, comparable to a wilderness; see Isa. xxxv. 1.

Ver. 27. *To satisfy the desolate and waste ground*, &c.] Which is exceeding desolate, and therefore two such words are used to express it; which is so dry and thirsty that it is one of the four things that say not it is enough, Prov. xxx. 16. and yet God can and does give it rain to its full satisfaction, Psal. civ. 13. so the Lord satisfies souls, comparable to dry and thirsty ground, by his word and ordinances, with the goodness and fatness of his house; see Psal. lxiii. 1—5. and lxv. 4. *And to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?* grass for the cattle, and herb for the service of men, Psal. civ. 14. of like use is the word in a spiritual sense for the budding and increase of the graces of the spirit in the Lord's people; see Deut. xxxii. 2. Isa. lv. 10, 11.

Ver. 28. *Hath the rain a father?* &c.] None but God; hence the Heathens themselves call God Ὑέτιος[y], and Ὄμβριος[z]; see Jer. xiv. 22. he that is our father in heaven is the father of rain, and him only; whatever secondary causes there be, God only is the efficient cause, parent, and producer of it: so the Gospel is not of men but of God, is a gift of his, comes down from heaven, tarries not for men, and is a great blessing, as rain is. *Or who hath begotten the drops of the dew?* which are innumerable; he that is the parent of the rain is of the dew also, and he only[a]; to which sometimes not only the word of God, and his free favour and good will, but the people of God themselves are compared

[s] Geograph. l. 11. p. 363.
[t] Cicero de Divinatione, l. 1.
[u] Olaus Magn. de Ritu Gent. Septent. l. 2. c. 12.
[w] Whiston's Chronolog. Tables, cent. 20.
[x] Agente nimbos ocyor euro. Horat. Carmin. l. 2. Ode 16.
[y] Aristot. de Mundo, c. 7.

[z] Pausan. Attica, sive, l. 1. p. 60.
[a] Though a certain poet (Alcman Lyricus apud Macrob. Saturnal. l. 7. c. 16) says that dew is the offspring of the air and of the moon; but these can only at most be reckoned but secondary causes. The Arabs speak of an angel over dew. Abulpharag. Hist. Dynast. p. 73.

for their number, influence, and use; see Psal. cx. 3. Mic. v. 7. and their new birth is similar to the generation of dew, it being not of the will of man, but of God, according to his abundant mercy, free favour, and good will, is from above, from heaven, and is effected silently, secretly, suddenly, at an unawares; John i. 13. and iii. 3, 5, 8.

Ver. 29. *Out of whose womb came the ice*, &c.] The parent of the rain and dew is the parent of the ice also, and he only: it is therefore called *his ice*, his child, his offspring, Psal. cxlvii. 17. Here the Lord is represented as a mother, and so he is by Orpheus [b] called *metropator*, or *mother-father*. *And the hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?* this is of God, and by his breath; see ch. xxxvii. 10.

Ver. 30. *The waters are hid as with a stone*, &c.] The superficies of waters by frost become as hard as a stone, and will bear great burdens, and admit of carriages to pass over them [c], where ships went before; so that the waters under them are hid and quite out of sight: an emblem of the hard heart of man, which can only be thawed by the power and grace of God, by the south wind of the spirit blowing, and the sun of righteousness rising on it. *And the face of the deep is frozen*; or bound together by the frost, as the Targum; it is taken, laid hold on, and kept together, as the word signifies, so that it cannot flow. Historians speak of seas being frozen up, as some parts of the Scythian sea, reported by Mela [d], and the Cimmerian Bosphorus, by Herodotus [e], and the northern seas by Olaus Magnus [f]; as that men might travel over them on foot or on horseback, from one country to another; and Strabo relates [g], that where a sea-fight has been in the summer time, armies and hosts have met and fought in the winter. In Muscovy the ice is to six and ten feet deep [h]; in the year 401 the Euxine sea [i] was frozen over for the space of twenty days; and in the year 763 the seas at Constantinople were frozen one hundred miles from the shore, so thick as to bear the heaviest carriages [k].

Ver. 31. *Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades*, &c.] Of which see the note on ch. ix. 9. and this constellation of the seven stars which is meant, rising in the spring, the pleasantnesses of the season, as the word may be rendered, may be intended here; which cannot be restrained or hindered from taking place in the proper course of the year; which is beautifully described in Cant. ii. 12, 13. and may in a spiritual sense relate to the effects of powerful and efficacious grace, the influences of which are irresistible, and cause a spring-time in the souls of men, where it was before winter, a state of darkness, deadness, coldness, hardness, and unfruitfulness, but now the reverse. Some versions read, *the bands of the Pleiades* [l], as if the sense was, canst thou gather and bind, or cluster together, such a constellation as the seven stars be, as I have done? thou canst not; and so not stop their rising or hinder their influences, according to the other versions: *or loose the bands of Orion?* of which see the note on ch. ix. 9. and Amos v. 8. This constellation appears in the winter, and brings with it stormy winds, rain, snow, and frost, which latter binds up the earth, that seeds and roots in it cannot spring up; and binds the hands of men from working, by benumbing them, or rendering their materials or utensils useless; for which reasons bands are ascribed to Orion, and are such strong ones that it is not in the power of men to loose: the seasons are not to be altered by men; and Job might be taught by this that it was not in his power to make any change in the dispensations of Providence; to turn the winter of adversity into the spring of prosperity; and therefore it was best silently to submit to the sovereignty of God, and wait his time for a change of circumstances.

Ver. 32. *Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season?* &c.] Which are thought to be the same with *the chambers of the south*, ch. ix. 9. the southern pole [m] with its stars, signified by chambers, because hidden from our sight in this part of the globe; and here by Mazzaroth, from *nazar*, to separate, because separated and at a distance from us; some think [n] the twelve signs of the Zodiac are meant, each of which are brought forth in their season, not by men, but by the Lord; see Isa. xl. 26. *Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?* a constellation of many stars called its sons, of which see ch. ix. 9. Schmidt conjectures that Jupiter and his satellites are meant; but rather what we call the greater and lesser Bear, in the tail of which is the north pole-star, the guide of mariners, said [o] to be found out by Thales, by which the Phœnicians sailed, but is not to be guided by men; this constellation is fancied to be in the form of a wain or waggon, and is called Charles's wain; could this be admitted, there might be thought to be an allusion to it [p], and the sense be, canst thou guide and lead this constellation, as a waggon or team of horses can be guided and led? stars have their courses, Judg. v. 20. but are not steered, guided, and directed by men, but by the Lord himself.

Ver. 33. *Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven?* &c.] Settled by the decree, purpose, and will of God, and are firm and stable; see Psal. cxlviii. 6. Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. the laws and statutes respecting their situation, motion, operation, influence, and use, which are constantly observed: these are so far from being made by men, and at their direction, that they are not known by them, at least not fully and perfectly. *Canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?* or over it; of the heavens over the earth; not such an one as judicial astrologers ascribe unto them, as to influence the bodies of men, especially the tempers and dispositions of their minds; to affect their wills and moral actions, the events and occurrences of their lives, and the fate

[b] Apud Clement. Stromat. l. 5. p. 608.
[c] Nunc hospita plaustris, &c. Virg. Georgic. l. 3. v. 362.
[d] De Situ Orbis, l. 3. c. 5.
[e] Melpomene, sive, l. 4. c. 30. Vid. Macrob. Saturnal. l. 7. c. 12.
[f] De Ritu Gent. Septent. l. 1. c. 13.
[g] Geograph. l. 7. p. 211. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 1. c. 22.
[h] Scheuchzer. Phys. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 810.
[i] Universal History, vol. 16. p. 489.
[k] Universal History, vol. 17. p. 45.
[l] מעדנות כימה δεσμὸν πλειάδος, Sept. nexus stellarum, Schmidt; so Jarchi and Targum.—According to the Talmud, the word signifies 100 stars. Vid. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 58. 2.
[m] David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 77. 3.
[n] Vatablus, Codurcus, Schultens; so Suidas in voce Μαζουρώθ.
[o] Callimachus apud Laert. Vit. Thalet. p. 16.
[p] Vid. Hinckelman. Præfat. ad Alkoran. p. 29, 30.

of nations and kingdoms; their dominion is not moral and civil, but physical or natural, as to make the revolutions of night and day, and of the several seasons of the year; and to affect and influence the fruits of the earth, &c. see Gen. i. 16. Deut. xxxiii. 13, 14. Hos. ii. 21, 22, 23. but this dominion is solely under God, and at his direction, and is not of men's fixing.

Ver. 34. *Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?*] Thy gardens, fields, and farms; canst thou, in a magisterial way, call to and demand of the clouds to let down rain in large quantities, sufficient to water them and make them fruitful? no, thou canst not: thou mayest cry and call as long as thou wilt, not a cloud will stir, nor a drop of water be let down; rain is to be had in a suppliant way, through the prayer of faith, as by Elijah, but not in a dictatorial authoritative way: the clouds and rain are only at the disposal of the Lord; ask of him, and he will give them; but they are not to be commanded, Zech. x. 1. see Amos v. 8.

Ver. 35. *Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?*] Thy humble servants; we have been where thou didst send us, and have executed what we were bid to do, and are returned, and here we are waiting further orders; see Matt. viii. 9. no; lightnings are only at the command of God, and there have been some awful instances of it, Lev. x. 1. Numb. xi. 1. and xvi. 35. but not in the power of men; indeed we have an extraordinary instance in Elijah, who, at the motion, and under the impulse of the spirit of prophecy in him, called for fire, or lightning, to consume captains with their fifties, and it came down on them, and consumed them, 2 Kings i. 10, 12. but he is not to be imitated herein: when the disciples of Christ desired the same upon a provocation, they were severely reproved by him, Luke ix. 54, 55. were these at the call and dispose of men, what dreadful things would be done in the world! for if good men, when provoked, would make use of such a power to destroy the lives of men, much more bad men; and our eyes would continually behold the flashes of lightning, and our ears hear the roarings of thunder, and the terrible effects thereof; but neither mercies nor judgments are at the command of men, but of God.

Ver. 36. *Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?* &c.] That is, of man, in his heart, as explained in the next clause; such wisdom as to guide the stars, know the ordinances of heaven, set their dominion on earth, manage and direct the clouds and lightning; no such wisdom is put in man: *or who hath given understanding to the heart?* to understand all the above things, and answer to the several questions put in this chapter; though, as these clauses may respect much one and the same thing, they may be understood of wisdom and understanding in man, whether natural or spiritual; and seeing they are found there, the question is, who put them there, or how came they there? who gave them to him? the answer must be, God himself, and no other; man has his rational soul, his intellectual powers, the light of nature and reason in him; all his understanding in arts and sciences, trades and manufactures, is of the Lord, and not of himself or another, see ch. xxxii. 8. Exod. xxxvi. 1, 2. Isa. xxviii. 23—29. all spiritual wisdom and understanding, which lies in a man's concern for his eternal welfare, in the knowledge of himself, and of his state and condition by nature, and of the way of life and salvation by Christ, and of the truths and doctrines of the Gospel, is all of God and Christ, and by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; no man, therefore, has any reason to glory in his wisdom and knowledge, of whatsoever kind, as though he had not received it; nor should he dare to arraign the wisdom of God in his providential dealings with men; since he that teaches man knowledge must needs know better than man how to govern the world he has made, and dispose of all things in it. The last clause is in the Vulgate Latin rendered, *who hath given to the cock understanding?* and so the Targums and other Jewish writers [p] interpret it; and they observe [q], that in Arabia a cock is called by the word that is here used: and in their morning-prayers, and at hearing a cock crow, they say [r], "Blessed be the Lord, who giveth to the "cock understanding to distinguish between the day "and the night:" but however remarkable the understanding of this creature is, which God has given it, and which is even taken notice of by Heathen writers [s]; that it should know the stars, distinguish the hours of the night by crowing, and express its joy at the rising of the sun and moon; yet such a sense of the text seems impertinent, as well as that of the Septuagint version, of giving to women the wisdom and knowledge of weaving and embroidery.

Ver. 37. *Who can number the clouds in wisdom?* &c.] Or has such wisdom as to be able to count them when the heavens are full of them; hence they are used to denote a great multitude, Isa. lx. 8. Heb. xii. 1. or *declare* them [t], set forth and explain the nature of them, their matter, motion, and use; none can do this perfectly or completely. Aben Ezra interprets it, who can make them as sapphire? in which he is followed by Mr. Broughton and others [u]; the sapphire is a precious stone, very clear and lucid, of a sky-colour. And then the sense is, who can make a clear and serene sky, when it is cloudy? None but the Lord; see ch. xxxvii. 11. *Or who can stay the bottles of heaven?* or *barrels*, as Mr. Broughton; the clouds in which the rain is bottled or barrelled up; and when it is the pleasure of God to pour them out, who can stay, stop, or restrain them? or who can *cause* them *to lie down* [w]? that is, on the earth; to descend or *distil* on it, as the same translator. Who can do this, when it is the will of God to withhold them? To stop or unstop those bottles, to restrain rain, or pour it forth, is entirely at his dispose, and not man's; see ver. 34. Gen. viii. 2. Amos iv. 7.

Ver. 38. *When the dust groweth into hardness, and the*

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[p] Jarchi, Bamban, Simeon Bar Tzemach.

[q] Vajikra Rabba, s. 25. fol. 166. 1. Vid. T. Roshhashanah, fol. 26. 1.

[r] Seder Tephillot. fol. 2. 2. Ed. Basil. & Bab. Beracot, fol. 60. 2.

[s] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 21. Ælian. de Animal. l. 4. c. 29.

[t] יספר enarrabit, V. L. vel explicabit, Mercerus, Schmidt.

[u] Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vid. Ravii Orthograph. Ebr. p. 22.

[w] ישכיב cubare faciet, Drusius, Schmidt; quiescere, Montanus; descendere, Pagninus, so Aben Ezra; effundit humi, Schultens.

clods cleave fast together?] When the dust is attenuated, and ground, as it were, into powder; and the clods cleave together, as if glued, as in a drought for want of rain: or the bottles of heaven being unstopped and poured out; or "sprinkling the dust with a this sprinkling," as Mr. Broughton. Or rather, pouring on the dust with pouring; that is, pouring down rain, by unstopping the bottles of heaven. The dust, as meal, by water poured into it, cements, unites, and is compacted, and becomes earth, that may be cultivated; is clodded and cleaves together, and may be ploughed and sown.

Ver. 39. *Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion?* &c.] From meteors the Lord passes to animals, beasts, and birds, wherefore some here begin the 39th chapter, which only treats of such; and he begins with the lion, the strongest among beasts, and most fierce, cruel, and voracious; and asks, who hunts his prey for him? Not man, who cannot; and if he could, durst not: but the Lord does; and, according to some writers[x], he has provided a small creature, between a fox and a wolf, called a jackal; which goes before the lion, and hunts the prey for him. And could this be understood particularly of the old lion, as Cocceius and others, naturalists[y] observe, that young lions hunt for the old ones, when they are not able to go in search of prey; and when they have got it, either bring it to them, or call them to partake of it with them. *Or fill the appetite of the young lions*, whose appetite is sharp and keen, and requires a great deal to fill it, and especially to satisfy a great many of them; herds of them, as Mr. Broughton renders the word, and which signifies a company; see Psal. lxviii. 30. Men cannot feed them, but God can and does; there being some ends in Providence to be answered thereby, see Psal. civ. 21. see also Psal. xxxiv. 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 40. When *they couch in their dens*, and *abide in the covert to lie in wait?*] Which some understand of old lions, who, for want of strength, lie couchant in their dens, or in some covert place, waiting for any prey that passes by, to seize upon it. But the same pasture and places are used by younger lions, as well as old ones; who are emblems of wicked men, cruel persecutors, and bloodthirsty tyrants, who fill their palaces and kingdoms with murder and rapine; see Psal. x. 8, 9, 10. Nah. ii. 11, 12.

Ver. 41. *Who provideth for the raven his food?* &c.] Not man, but God; he feeds the ravens, creatures very voracious, mean, and useless, Luke xii. 24. *When his young ones cry unto God*; cry for want of food; which is interpreted by the Lord as a cry unto him, and he relieves them, Psal. cxlvii. 9. when deserted by the old ones; either left in their nests through forgetfulness, as some[z]; or because they are not, till fledged, black like them, as others[a]; when God feeds them, as some say[b], with a kind of dew from heaven, or with flies that fly about them, and fall into their mouths; or with worms bred out of their dung. But these things are not to be depended on; it may rather respect them when cast out of the nest by the old ones, when able to fly, which is testified by naturalists[c]; and with this agrees what follows: *they wander for lack of meat*; being obliged to shift for themselves, when God takes care of them; which is an instance of his providential goodness; and how this is to be improved, see Matt. vi. 26. Luke xii. 24.

CHAP. XXXIX.

THIS chapter treats of various creatures, beasts and birds, which Job had little knowledge of, had no concern in the make of them, and scarce any power over them; as of the goats and hinds, ver. 1—4. Of the wild ass, ver. 5—8. Of the unicorn, ver. 9—12. Of the peacock and ostrich, ver. 13—18. Of the horse, ver. 19—25. and of the hawk and eagle, ver. 26—30.

Ver. 1. *Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth?* &c.] Which creatures are so called, because they dwell among the rocks[d], and run upon them; and though their heads are loaded with a vast burden of horns upon them, yet can so poize themselves, as, with the greatest swiftness, to leap from mountain to mountain, as Pliny says[e]: and if they bring forth their young in the rocks, as Olympiodorus asserts, and which is not improbable, it is not to be wondered, that the time of their bringing forth should not be known by men, to whom the rocks they run upon are inaccessible. *Canst thou mark the time when the hinds do calve?* that is, precisely and exactly, and so as to direct, order, and manage, and bring it about, as the Lord does: and it is wonderful that they should calve, and not cast their young before their time, when they are continually in flight and fright, through men or wild beasts, and are almost always running and leaping about; and often scared with thunder, which hastens birth, Psal. xxix. 9. otherwise the time of their bringing forth in general is known by men, as will be observed in the following verse.

Ver. 2. *Canst thou number the months that they fulfil?* &c.] Which some understand both of wild goats and hinds. Common goats fulfil five months, they conceive in November, and bring forth in March, as Pliny[f] observes; but how many the wild goats of the rock fulfil is not said by him or any other I know of: the same writer says[g] of hinds, that they go eight months. *Or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?* naturalists[h] tell us, that the hinds conceive after the rise of the star Arcturus, which rises eleven

x Thevenot's Travels, part 2. c. 12.
y Ælian. de Animal. l. 9. c. 1.
z Plin. apud Servium in Virgil. Georgic. l. 1. p. 169.
a Pirke Eliezer, c. 21.
b Hieron. in Psal. cxlvii. 9.
c Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 3. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 12.

d —— Amantis saxa capellæ. Ovid. Epist. 15. v. 55.
e Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 53. Ælian. de Animal. l. 14. c. 16.
f Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 50.
g Ib. c. 32.
h Ib. & l. 2. c. 47. Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 6. c. 29. Solinus, c. 32.

days before the autumnal equinox; so that they conceive in September; and as they go eight months, they bring forth in April; but then the exact time to a day and hour is not known. Besides, who has fixed the time for their bringing forth, and carries them in it through so many dangers and difficulties? None but the Lord himself. Now if such common things in nature were not known perfectly by Job, how should he be able to search into and find out the causes and reasons of God's providential dealings with men, or what is in the womb of Providence?

Ver. 3. *They bow themselves*, &c.] That they may bring forth their young with greater ease and more safety: for it seems the hinds bring forth their young with great difficulty; and there are provisions in nature made to lessen it; as thunder, before observed, which causes them to bring forth the sooner; and there is an herb called *seselis*, which it is said[i] they feed upon before birth, to make it the easier; as well as they use that, and another called *aros*, after the birth, to ease them of their after-pains. *They bring forth their young ones*; renting and cleaving asunder the membrane, as the word signifies, in which their young is wrapped. *They cast out their sorrows*; either their young, which they bring forth in pains and which then cease; or the secundines, or after-birth, in which the young is wrapped, and which the philosopher says[k] they eat, and is supposed to be medical to them. None but a woman seems to bring forth with more pain than this creature; and a wife is compared to it, Prov. v. 19.

Ver. 4. *Their young ones are in good liking*, &c.] Plump, fat, and sleek, as fawns are: *they grow up with corn*; by which they grow, or without in the field, as the word also signifies; and their growth and increase is very quick, as Aristotle observes[l]. *They go forth, and return not unto them*; they go forth into the fields, and shift and provide for themselves, and trouble their dams no more; and return not to them, nor are they known by them.

Ver. 5. *Who hath sent out the wild ass free?* &c.] Into the wide waste, where it is, ranges at pleasure, and is not under the restraint of any; a creature which, as it is naturally wild, is naturally averse to servitude, is desirous of liberty and maintains it: not but that it may be tamed, as Pliny[m] speaks of such as are; but it chooses to be free, and, agreeably to its nature, it is sent out into the wilderness as such: not that it is set free from bondage, for in that it never was until it is tamed; but its nature and inclination, and course it pursues, is to be free. And now the question is, who gave this creature such a nature, and desire after liberty? and such power to maintain it? and directs it to take such methods to secure it, and keep clear of bondage? It is of God. *Or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?* not that it has any naturally upon it, and is loosed from them; but because it is as clear of them as such creatures are, which have been in bands and are freed from them: therefore this mode of expression is used, and which signifies the same as before.

Ver. 6. *Whose house I have made the wilderness*, &c.] Appointed that to be his place of residence, as being agreeable to his nature, at a distance from men, and in the less danger of being brought into subjection by them. Such were the deserts of Arabia; where, as Xenophon[n] relates, were many of these creatures, and which he represents as very swift: and Leo Africanus[o] says, great numbers of them are found in deserts, and on the borders of deserts; hence said to be used to the wilderness. Jer. ii. 24. *And the barren land his dwellings*; not entirely barren, for then it could not live there; but comparatively, with respect to land that is fruitful: or *salt land*[p]; for, as Pliny[q] says, every place where salt is is barren.

Ver. 7. *He scorneth the multitude of the city*, &c.] Choosing rather to be alone in the wilderness and free than to be among a multitude of men in a city, and be a slave as the tame ass; or it despises and defies a multitude of men, that may come out of cities to take it. Leo Africanus says[r], it yields to none for swiftness but Barbary horses: according to Xenophon[s], it exceeds the horse in swiftness; and when pursued by horsemen, it will outrun them, and stand still and rest till they come near it, and then start again; so that there is no taking it, unless many are employed. Aristotle[t] says it excels in swiftness; and, according to Bochart[u], it has its name in Hebrew from the Chaldee word פרא, to *run*. Or it may be rendered, *the noise of the city*, so Cocceius; the stir and bustle in it, through a multiplicity of men in business. *Neither regardeth he the crying of the driver*; or *hears*[w]; he neither feels his blows, nor hears his words; urging him to move faster and make quicker dispatch, as the tame ass does; he being neither ridden nor driven, nor drawing in a cart or plough.

Ver. 8. *The range of the mountains is his pasture*, &c.] It ranges about the mountains for food; it looks about for it, as the word signifies, and tries first one place and then another to get some, it having short commons there. *And he searcheth after every green thing*; herb or plant, be it what it will that is green, it seeks after; and which being scarce in deserts and mountains, it searches about for and feeds upon it, wherever it can find it; grass being the peculiar food of these creatures, see ch. vi. 5. and which is observed by naturalists[x].

Ver. 9. *Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee*, &c.] Whether there is or ever was such a creature, as described under the name of an unicorn, is a question: it is thought the accounts of it are for the most part fabulous; though Vartomannus[y] says he saw two at Mecca, which came from Ethiopia, the largest of

[i] Cicero de Natura Deorum, l. 2. Plin. Nat. Hist. c. 8. 32. Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 5.

[k] Aristot. ib.

[l] Ib. l. 6. c. 29.

[m] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 44.

[n] De Expedition. Cyri, l. 1.

[o] Descriptio Africæ, l. 9. p. 752.

[p] מלחה salsuginem, Montanus; salsuginosam terram, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[q] Nat. Hist. l. 31. c. 7.

[r] Ut supra.

[s] Ut supra.

[t] Hist. Animal. l. 6. c. 36.

[u] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 1. c. 9. col. 63.

[w] לא ישמע non audiet, Pagninus, Montanus.

[x] Oppiani Cyneget. l. 3.

[y] Navigat. l. 1. c. 19.

which had a horn in his forehead three cubits long. There are indeed several creatures which may be called *monocerots*, who have but one horn; as the *rhinoceros*, and the Indian horses and asses [z]. The Arabic geographer [a] speaks of a beast in the Indies, called *carcaddan*, which is lesser than an elephant and bigger than a buffalo; having in the middle of the forehead an horn long and thick, as much as two hands can grasp: and not only on land, but in the sea are such, as the *nahr whal*, or Greenland whale [b]; but then they do not answer to the creature so called in Scripture: and, besides, this must be a creature well known to Job, as it was to the Israelites; and must be a strong creature, from the account that gives of it, and not to be taken as here. And Solinus [c] speaks of such monocerots or unicorns, which may be killed, but cannot be taken, and were never known to be in any man's possession alive; and so Ælianus [d] says of the like creature, that it never was remembered that any one of them had been taken. Some think the *rhinoceros* is meant; but that, though a very strong creature, and so may be thought fit for the uses after mentioned, yet may be tamed; whereas the creature here is represented as untamable, and not to be subdued, and brought under a yoke and managed; and besides, it is not very probable that it was known by Job. Bochart [e] takes it to be the *oryx*, a creature of the goat kind; but to me it seems more likely to be of the ox kind, to be similar to them, and so might be thought to do the business of one; and the rather, because of its great strength, and yet could not be brought to do it, nor be trusted with it: for the questions concerning it relate to the work of oxen; and as the wild ass is opposed to the tame one in the preceding paragraph, so here the wild ox to a tame one. And both Strabo [f] and Diodorus Siculus [g] relate, that among the Troglodytes, a people that dwelt near the Red sea, and not far from Arabia, where Job lived, were abundance of wild oxen or bulls, and which far exceeded the common ones in largeness and swiftness; and the creature called the *reem* in the original, has its name from height. Now the question is, could Job take one of these wild bulls or oxen, and tame it, and make it willing to do any work or service he should choose to put it to? No, he could not. *Or abide by thy crib?* manger or stall, as the tame or common ox will; who, when it has done its labour, is glad to be led to its stall and feed, and then lie down and rest, and there abide; see Isa. i. 3. but not so the wild ox.

Ver. 10. *Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the furrow?* &c.] Put the yoke and harness upon him, and fasten it to the plough to draw it, that he may make furrows with it in the field, or plough up the ground as the tame ox does? thou canst not. *Or will he harrow the valleys after thee?* draw the harrow which is used after ploughing to break the clods, and make the land smooth and even? he will not: valleys are particularly mentioned, because arable land is usually in them; see Psal. lxv. 13.

Ver. 11. *Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great?* &c.] No; tame oxen are employed because they are strong to labour, Psal. cxliv. 14. and they are to be trusted, in ploughing or treading out the corn, under direction, because they are manageable, and will attend to business with constancy; but the wild ox, though stronger, and so fitter for labour, is yet not to be trusted, because unruly and unmanageable: if that sort of wild oxen called *uri* could be thought to be meant, for which Bootius [h] contends, Cæsar's account of them would agree with this character of the *reem*, as to his great strength: he says of them [i], they are in bigness a little lesser than elephants, of the kind, colour, and shape of a bull: they are of great strength and of great swiftness, and not to be tamed. *Or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?* to plough thy fields, to harrow thy lands, and to bring home the ripe corn? as in the next verse; thou wilt not.

Ver. 12. *Wilt thou believe him that he will bring home thy seed?* &c.] Draw in the cart, and bring home the ripe sheaves of corn, as the tame ox does? no; thou knowest him too well to believe he will bring it home in safety. *And gather it into thy barn;* to be trodden out, which used to be done by oxen in those times: if therefore Job could not manage such unruly creatures as the wild ass and the wild ox, and make them serviceable to him, how unfit must he be to govern the world, or to direct in the affairs of Providence?

Ver. 13. Gavest thou *the goodly wings unto the peacocks?* &c.] Rather *ostriches*, as the Vulgate Latin and Tigurine versions render it; some render it, *the wing of those that exult is joyful*, so Montanus; that is, of the ostriches; who, in confidence of their wings, exult and glory over the horse and his rider, ver. 18. for peacocks are not remarkable for their wings, but for their tails; whereas the wings of the ostrich are as sails unto them, as several writers observe [k]; and with which they rather run, or row, than fly: hence it is called by Plautus [l] *passer marinus*, the sea-sparrow: and the feathers of it are more goodly than those of the wings of the peacock; and besides, it is a question whether the peacock was where Job lived, and in his times; since it is originally from the Indies, and from thence it was brought to Judea in the times of Solomon; and was not known in Greece and Rome [m] until later ages. Alexander the great, when he first saw them in India, was surprised at them; and yet Solon [n] speaks of them in his time as seen by him, which was at least two hundred years before Alexander; though at Rome not common in the times of Horace [o], who calls a peacock *rara avis;* and speaks of them as sold for a great price; but ostriches were

[z] Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 3. c. 26.
[a] Nub. Clim. 1. par. 8.
[b] Ludolf. Ethiop. Hist. l. 1. c. 10. Of this narhual, or sea-unicorn, see the Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 9. p. 71, 72.
[c] Polyhistor. c. 65.
[d] De Animal. l. 16. c. 20.
[e] Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 3. c. 27. col. 969, &c.
[f] Geograph. l. 16. p. 532.
[g] Bibliothec. l. 3. p. 175.

[h] Animadvers. Sacr. l. 3. c. 1. s. 14.
[i] Comment. de Bello Gall. l. 6. c. 27.
[k] Xenophon. de Expedit. Cyri, l. 1. Ælian. de Animal. l. 2. c. 77.
[l] Persa, Act. 2. Sc. 2. v. 17.
[m] Ælian. de Animal. l. 5. c. 21.
[n] Laert. Vit. Solon. l. 1. c. 2.
[o] Sermon. l. 2. Sat. 2. v. 25, 26. Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 20. Macrob. Saturnal. l. 3. c. 13.

well known in Arabia, where Job lived, as is testified by Xenophon [p], Strabo [q], and Diodorus Siculus [r]. Moreover, what is said in the following verses is only true of the ostrich, and that only is spoken of here and there, as it follows. *Or wings and feathers unto the ostrich*; or whose wings and feathers are like the storks; and so Bochart renders the words, truly they have *the wing and feather of the stork*: the colours of which are black and white, from whence it has its name πελαργος [s] in Greek; and so Leo Africanus [t] says of the ostriches, that they have in their wings large feathers of a black and white colour; and this was a creature well known in Arabia [u], in which Job lived.

Ver. 14. *Which leaveth her eggs in the earth*, &c.] Lays them and leaves them there. Ælianus, agreeably to this, says [w], that it builds a low nest in the ground, making a hollow in the sand with its feet; though he seems to be mistaken as to the number of its eggs, which he makes to be more than eighty; more truly Leo Africanus [x], who reckons them ten or twelve; which, he says, it lays in the sand, and each of them are of the bigness of a cannon-ball, and weigh fifteen pounds, more or less. Hence, with the Arabs, it is called "the mother of eggs," because of the large eggs it lays; and with them it is a proverb, "meaner, "or of a lesser account, than the eggs of an ostrich," because its eggs are neglected by it [y]. *And warmeth them in the dust*; not that she leaves them to be warmed by the hot sand, or by the heat of the sun upon them, by which they are hatched, as has been commonly said, for thereby they would rather be corrupted and become rotten; but she herself warms them and hatches them, by sitting upon them in the dust and sand: and for this the above historian is express, who says [z], the female lighting on these eggs, whether her own or another's, sits on them and heats them. Concerning the ostrich hatching its eggs, Vansleb [a], from an Arabic manuscript, relates what is incredible, that they are hatched by the male and female with their eye only; that one or other of them keep continually looking at them until they are all hatched; and this I observe is asserted also by another writer [b].

Ver. 15. *And forgetteth that the foot may crush them*, &c.] The foot of the traveller, they being laid in the ground, where he may walk, or on the sand of the sea-shore, where he may tread and trample upon them unawares, and crush them to pieces; to prevent which this creature has no foresight. *Or that the wild beast may break them*; supposing they may be, though not where men walk, yet where wild beasts frequent, they may be as easily broken by the one as the other; against which it guards not, having no instinct in nature, as some creatures have, to direct to the preservation of them.

Ver. 16. *She is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not her's*, &c.] Hence said to be cruel, Lam. iv. 3. not against the young ones she hatches, for Ælianus [c] reports her as very tender of her young, and exposing herself to danger for the preservation of them; but being a very forgetful creature, having laid its eggs in the sand, where it leaves them, forgets where it has laid them; and finding other eggs sits on them and hatches them, and regards the young as its own, and is hardened against its true and real young, as not belonging to her. *Her labour is in vain without fear*; in laying her eggs and leaving them in the dust, without fear of their being crushed and broken, which yet they are, and so her labour is in vain; or her labour in hatching the eggs of others, without any fear or care of their belonging to others, which yet they do, and so she labours in vain.

Ver. 17. *Because God hath deprived her of wisdom*, &c.] Or *made her to forget* [d] what she had; an instance of her forgetfulness is mentioned ver. 15. and so Leo Africanus [e] says of it, that it is of a very short memory, and presently forgets the place where its eggs are laid. *Neither hath he imparted to her understanding*; many instances are given of its stupidity by historians, as that it will take any thing that is offered to it to eat, stones, iron, *&c.* [f]; that it will thrust its head and neck into a thicket, fancying it is hid and covered, and that none can see it; which Pliny [g] remarks as an instance of its foolishness; though Diodorus Siculus [h] takes this to be a point of prudence, for the preservation of those parts of it which are weakest. Strabo gives [i] another instance of its stupidity, its being so easily deceived by sportsmen, who, by putting the skin of an ostrich on their hands, and reaching out fruits or seeds to it, it will receive them of them, and be taken. Others observe the smallness of their heads, and so of their brains, as an argument of their want of understanding; and it has been remarked, as a proof of their having but few brains, that Heliogabalus, the Roman emperor, had six hundred heads of ostriches dressed at once for his supper, for the sake of their brains [k].

Ver. 18. *What time she lifted up herself on high*, &c.] It is sometimes eight foot high [l]; when alarmed with approaching danger she raises up herself, being sitting on the ground, and erects her wings for flight, or rather running. *She scorneth the horse and his rider*; being then, as Pliny [m] says, higher than a man on horseback, and superior to a horse in swiftness; and though horsemen have been able to take wild asses and goats, very swift creatures, yet never ostriches, as Xenophon relates [n] of those in Arabia; and this crea-

[p] Ut supra.
[q] Geograph. l. 16. p. 531.
[r] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 130.
[s] Suidas in voce πελαργος.
[t] Descriptio Africæ, l. 9. p. 706.
[u] Diodor. Sicul. ut supra.
[w] De Animal. l. 14. c. 17.
[x] Ut supra.
[y] Hottinger. Smegm. Orient. l. 1. c. 7. p. 128.
[z] Descript. Africæ, ut supra. Vid. Ælian. l. 4. c. 37.
[a] Relation of a Voyage to Egypt, p. 64.
[b] Cœlius, l. 10. c. 5. apud Sanctium in loc.
[c] Ut supra.
[d] השה oblivisci fecit eam, Montanus, Mercerus, Drusius, Cocceius, Michaelis, Schultens.
[e] Ut supra.
[f] Ælian. ut supra. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 1.
[g] Ibid.
[h] Ut supra.
[i] Geograph. l. 16. p. 531.
[k] Lamprid. Vit. Heliogab. c. 20, 30.
[l] Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 360.
[m] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 1.
[n] De Expedit. Cyri, l. 1.

ture has another method, when pursued, by which it defies and despises, as well as hurts and incommodes its pursuers, which is by casting stones backward at them with its feet as out of a sling [o].

Ver. 19. *Hast thou given the horse strength?* &c.] Not only to bear burdens and draw carriages, but for war; for it is the war-horse that is here spoken of, as what follows shews, and his strength denotes; not strength of body only, but fortitude and courage; for which, as well as the other, the horse is eminent, and both are the gift of God, and not of men. *Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?* or with strength, as the Targum; the horse having particularly great strength in its neck, as well as in other parts; or with strength of voice, as Ben Gersom explains it; and it has been generally understood of the neighing of horses, which comes through and out of their neck, and makes a vehement sound: some render it, *with a mane* [p]; and could it be made to appear that the word is so used in any other place, or in any other writings, or in any of the dialects, it would afford a very good sense, since a fine large mane to a horse is a great ornament and recommendation: the Septuagint render it by *fear*, and Jarchi interprets it of *terror;* and refers to the sense of the word in Ezek. xxvii. 35. and it may signify such a tremour as thunder makes, from whence that has its name; and it may be observed that between the neck and shoulder-bone of an horse there is a tremulous and quavering motion; and which is more vehement in battle, not from any fearfulness of it, but rather through eagerness to engage in it; and therefore Schultens translates the words, *hast thou clothed his neck with a cheerful tremour?*

Ver. 20. *Canst thou make him afraid as a grashopper?* &c.] Which is affrighted at every noise, and at any approach of men; but not so the horse; or canst thou move him, or cause him to skip and jump, or rather leap like a grashopper? that is, hast thou given, or canst thou give him the faculty of leaping over hedges and ditches, for which the horse is famous? so Neptune's war-horses are said [q] to be ευσκαρθμοι, good leapers. *The glory of his nostrils is terrible;* which may be understood of his sneezing, snorting, pawing, and neighing, when his nostrils are broad, spread, and enlarged; and especially when enraged and in battle, when he foams and fumes, and his breath comes out of his nostrils like smoke [r], and is very terrible.

Ver. 21. *He paweth in the valley,* &c.] Where armies are usually pitched and set in battle-array, and especially the cavalry, for which the valley is most convenient; and here the horse is impatient of engaging, cannot stand still, but rises up with his fore feet, and paws and prances, and, as the word signifies, digs the earth and makes it hollow, by a continual striking upon it; so generous horses are commonly described in this manner [s]. *And rejoiceth in* his *strength;* of which he is sensible, and glories in it; marches to the battle with pride and stateliness, defying, as it were, the enemy, and as if sure of victory, of which he has knowledge when obtained; for Lactantius says [t] of horses, when conquerors they exult, when conquered they grieve; it has its name in the Hebrew language from rejoicing [u]. *He goeth on to meet the armed men;* without any fear or dread of them, as follows.

Ver. 22. *He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted,* &c.] At those things which cause fear and fright to men; as arms, though ever so terrible, and armies, though never so numerous. *Neither turneth he back from the sword;* the naked sword, when it is drawn against him, and ready to be thrust into him; the horse being so bold and courageous was with the Egyptians a symbol of courage and boldness [v].

Ver. 23. *The quiver rattleth against him,* &c.] The quiver is what arrows are put into and carried in, and seems here to be put for arrows, which being shot by the enemy come whizzing about him, but do not intimidate him; unless this is to be understood of arrows rattling in the quiver when carried by the rider *upon him,* so some render the last word; and thus Homer [w] and Virgil [x] speak of the rattling quiver and sounding arrows in it, as carried on the back or shoulder; but the first sense seems best, in which another poet uses it [y]. *The glittering spear and the shield;* the lance or javelin, as Mr. Broughton renders it, and others; that is, he does not turn back from these, nor is he frighted at them when they are pointed to him or flung at him; so Ælianus [z] speaks of the Persians training up their horses and using them to noises, that in battle they might not be frighted at the clashing of arms, of swords and shields against each other; in like manner as our war-horses are trained up, not to start at the firing of a gun, or the explosion of a cannon.

Ver. 24. *He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage,* &c.] Being so eager for the battle, and so full of fierceness and rage, he bounds the plain with such swiftness that he seems rather to swallow up the ground than to run upon it. *Neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet;* for joy at hearing it; or he will not trust to his ears, but will see with his eyes whether the battle is ready, and therefore pushes forward. Mr. Broughton and others read it, *he will not stand still at the noise of the trumpet;* and the word signifies firm and stable, as well as to believe; when he hears the trumpet sound, the alarm of war, as a preparation for the battle, he knows not how to [a] stand; there is scarce any holding him in, but he rushes into the battle at once, Jer. viii. 6.

Ver. 25. *He saith among the trumpets, ha, ha,* &c.] As pleased with the sound of them, rejoicing thereat, and which he signifies by neighing. *And he smelleth the battle afar off;* which respects not so much the distance of place as of time; he perceives before-hand that it is near, by the preparations making for it, and particularly by what follows; so Pliny [b] says of horses,

[o] Plin. ut supra. Ælian. de Animal. l. 4. c. 37.
[p] Bochart, Bootius, &c.
[q] Homeri Iliad. 13. v. 31.
[r] Ignescunt patulæ nares. Claudian. in 4 Consul. Honor.
[s] Cavatque tellurem. Virgil. Georgic. l. 3. v. 87.
[t] Institut. l. 3. c. 9.
[u] שוש gavisus est. Vid. Buxtorf. in voce סוס.
[v] Clement. Alex. Stromat. l. 5. p. 567.
[w] Iliad. 1. v. 4.
[x] Pharetramque sonantem. Æneid. 9. v. 666.
[y] —— audito sonitu per inane pharetræ. Ovid. Metamorph. l. 6. v. 230.
[z] De Animal. l. 16. c. 25.
[a] Stare loco nescit. Virgil. Georgic. l. 3. v. 84. Ut fremit acer equus, &c. Ovid. Metamorph. l. 3. Fab. 10. v. 704.
[b] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 42.

they presage a fight. *The thunder of the captains, and the shouting*: they understand an engagement is just going into by the loud and thundering voice of the captains, exhorting and spiriting up their men, and giving them the word of command; and by the clamorous shout of the soldiers echoing to the speech of their captains; and which are given forth upon an onset, both to animate one another, and intimidate the enemy. Bootius[z] observes, that Virgil[a] and Oppianus[b] say most of the same things in praise of the horse which are here said, and seem to have taken them from hence: and some[c] give the horse the preference to the lion, which, when it departs from a fight, never returns, whereas the horse will. This is an emblem both of good men, Zech. x. 3. and of bad men, Jer. viii. 6.

Ver. 26. *Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom*, &c.] With so much swiftness, steadiness, and constancy, until she has seized her prey. The Vulgate Latin version and some others read, *does she become feathered, or begin to have feathers?* and so Bochart: either when first fledged; or when, as it is said[d], she casts her old feathers and gets new ones, and this every year. Now neither her flight nor her feathers, whether at one time or the other, are owing to men, but to the Lord, who gives both. *And stretch her wings towards the south?* Being a bird of passage, she moves from colder climates towards the winter, and steers her course to the south towards warmer ones[e]; which she does from an instinct in nature, put into her by the Lord, and not through the instruction of man. Or, as some say, casting off her old feathers, she flies towards the south for warmth; and that her feathers may be cherished with the heat, and grow the sooner and better. Hence it is, perhaps, as Ælianus reports[f], that this bird was by the Egyptians consecrated to Apollo or the sun; it being able to look upon the rays of it wistly, constantly, and easily, without being hurt thereby. Porphyry[g] says, that this bird is not only acceptable to the sun; but has divinity in it, according to the Egyptians; and is no other than Osiris, or the sun represented by the image of it[h]. Strabo[i] speaks of a city of the hawks, where this creature is worshipped. It has its name in Greek from the sacredness of it; and according to Hesiod[k], is very swift, and has large wings. It is called ὠκυπέτης, swift in flying, by Manetho[l]; and by Homer, ὤκιστος πετεηνῶν, the swiftest of fowls[m]. It has its name from נצה, to *fly*, as Kimchi observes[n]. Cyril of Jerusalem, on the authority of the Greek version, affirms[o], that by a divine instinct or order, the hawk, stretching out its wings, stands in the midst of the air unmoved, looking towards the south. All accounts shew it to be a bird that loves warmth, which is the reason of the expression in the text.

Ver. 27. *Doth the eagle mount up at thy command*, &c.] No; but by an instinct which God has placed in it, and a capacity he has given it above all other birds. They take a circuit in their flight, and bend about before they soar aloft: but the eagle steers its course directly upwards towards heaven, till out of sight; and, as Apuleius says[p], up to the clouds, where it rains and snows, and beyond which there is no place for thunder and lightning. *And make her nest on high?* so the philosopher says[q]; eagles make their nests not in plains, but in high places, especially in cragged rocks, as in the next verse.

Ver. 28. *She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.*] Where she and her young are safe: so Pliny[r] says, eagles make their nests in rocks, even in the precipices of them, as the philosopher quoted in the preceding verse; and here on the tooth, edge, or precipice of the rock, which is inaccessible, and so like a strong fortified place.

Ver. 29. *From thence she seeketh the prey*, &c.] From the high rock; from whence she can look down into valleys, and even into the sea; and spy what is for her purpose, and descend and seize upon them; as lambs, fawns, geese, shell-fish, *&c.* though they may lie in the most hidden and secret places. Wherefore in the original text it is, *she diggeth the prey* or *food*[s]; as treasure hid in secret is dug or diligently searched for; and for which she is qualified by the sharpness of her sight, as follows: and *her eyes behold afar off*; from the high rocks and higher clouds, even from the high sky, as Ælianus[t] expresses it; and who observes that she is the most sharpsighted of all birds; and so, Homer[u] says, some affirm.

Ver. 30. *Her young ones also suck up blood*, &c.] As well as herself, being brought up to it by her. The eagle cares not for water, but drinks the blood of her prey; and so her young ones after her, as naturalists report[w]. And Ælianus says[x] the same of the hawk, that it eats no seeds, but devours flesh and drinks blood, and nourishes her young ones with the same. *And where the slain are, there is she*: where there has been a battle, and carcasses left on the field, the eagles will gather to them. This is particularly true of that kind of eagles called vulture-eagles, as Aristotle[y] and Pliny[z] observe; see Matt. xxiv. 28. Now since Job was so ignorant of the nature of these creatures, and incapable of governing and directing them; and what they had of any excellency were of God, and not of him, nor of any man; how unfit must he be to dispute with God, and contend with him about his works of providence? which to convince him of was the design of this discourse about the creatures; and which had its intended effect, as appears in the next chapter.

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[z] Animadvers. Sacr. l. 3. c. 6. s. 1.
[a] Georgic. l. 3.
[b] Cyneget. l. 1.
[c] Horus Ægypt. apud Stech. Cœlum Sephirot. Heb. c. 6. s. 1. p. 106.
[d] Ælian. de Animal. l. 12. c. 4.
[e] Ibid. l. 2. c. 43. Plin. l. 10. c. 8.
[f] De Animal. l. 7. c. 9. & l. 10. c. 14.
[g] De Abstinentia, l. 4. s. 9.
[h] Kircher. Prodrom. Copt. p. 232.
[i] Geograph. l. 17. p. 562.
[k] Opera & Dies, l. 1. v. 208.
[l] Apotelesm. l. 5. v. 170.
[m] Iliad. 15. v. 238. Odyss. 13. v. 87.
[n] Sepher Shorash. rad. נצה.
[o] Catecheş 9. s. 6.
[p] Florida 1.
[q] Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 32.
[r] Nat. Hist. l. 10. 3.
[s] חפר אכל fodit escam; Montanus, Mercerus.
[t] De Animal. l. 2. c. 26. & l. 1. c. 42. Aristot. & Plin. ut supra.
[u] Iliad. 17. v. 674, 675. so Diodor. Sic. l. 3. p. 145.
[w] Aristot. de Animal. l. 8. c. 3. 18. Ælianus, l. 2. c. 26.
[x] Ib. l. 10. c. 14.
[y] Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 32.
[z] Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 3.

CHAP. XL.

In this chapter Job is called upon to give in his answer, ver. 1, 2. which he does in the most humble manner, acknowledging his vileness and folly, ver. 3, 4, 5. And then the Lord proceeds to give him further conviction of his superior justice and power, ver. 6—9. and one thing he proposes to him, to humble the proud, if he could, and then he would own his own right hand could save him, ver. 10—15. and observes to him another instance of his power in a creature called *behemoth*, which he had made, and gives a description of, ver. 15—24.

Ver. 1. *Moreover the Lord answered Job*, &c.] The Lord having discoursed largely of the works of nature, in order to reconcile the mind of Job to his works of providence, stopped and made a pause for a little space, that Job might answer if he thought fit; but he being entirely silent, the Lord began again: *and said*; as follows:

Ver. 2. *Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him?* &c.] Is he capable of it? He ought to be that takes upon him to dispute with God, to object or reply to him; that brings a charge against him, enters the lists, and litigates a point with him; which Job wanted to be at. But could he or any other instruct him, who is the God of knowledge, the all-wise and only-wise God; who gives man wisdom, and teaches him knowledge? What folly is it to pretend to instruct him! Or can such an one be *instructed?* as the Targum: he is not in the way of instruction; he that submits to the chastising hand of God may be instructed thereby, but not he that contends with him; see Psal. xciv. 12. Or should he be one that is instructed? no, he ought to be an instructor, and not one instructed; a teacher, and not one that is taught; he should be above all instruction from God or man that will dispute with the Almighty. The word for *instruct* has the signification of chastisement, because instruction sometimes comes that way; and then the sense either is, shall a man contend with the Almighty that chastises him? Does it become a son or a servant to strive against a parent or a master that corrects him? Or does not he deserve to be chastised that acts such a part? Some derive the word from one that signifies to remove or depart, and give the sense, shall the abundance, the all-sufficiency of God, go from him to another, to a man; and so he, instead of God, be the all-sufficient one? Or rather the meaning of the clause is, has there not been much, enough, and more than enough said, Job, to chastise thee, and convince thee of thy mistakes? must more be said? is there any need of it? *He that reproveth God, let him answer it;* he that reproves God, for his words, or works, or ways, finding fault with either of them, ought to answer to the question now put; or to any or all of those in the preceding chapters, and not be silent as Job now was.

Ver. 3. *Then Job answered the Lord*, &c.] Finding that he was obliged to answer, he did, but with some reluctance: *and said:* as follows:

Ver. 4. *Behold, I am vile*, &c.] Or *light* *; which may have respect either to his words and arguments, which he thought had force in them, but now he saw they had none; or to his works and actions, the integrity of his life, and the uprightness of his ways, which he imagined were weighty and of great importance, but now being weighed in the balances of justice were found wanting; or it may refer to his original meanness and distance from God, being dust and ashes, and nothing in comparison of him; and so the Septuagint version is, *I am nothing;* see Isa. xl. 17. or rather to the original vileness and sinfulness of his nature he had now a sight of, and saw how he had been breaking forth in unbecoming expressions concerning God and his providence: the nature of man is exceeding vile and sinful; his heart desperately wicked; his thoughts, and the imaginations of them, evil, and that continually; his mind and conscience are defiled; his affections inordinate, and his understanding and will sadly depraved; he is vile in soul and body; of all which an enlightened man is convinced, and will acknowledge. *What shall I answer thee?* I am not able to answer thee, who am but dust and ashes; what more can I say than to acknowledge my levity, vanity, and vileness? he that talked so big, and in such a blustering manner of answering God, as in ch. xiii. 22. and xxxi. 35, 36, 37. now has nothing to say for himself. *I will lay mine hand upon my mouth:* impose silence upon himself, and as it were lay a restraint upon himself from speaking: it looks as if there were some workings in Job's heart; he thought he could say something, and make some reply, but durst not, for fear of offending yet more and more, and therefore curbed it in; see Psal. xxxix. 1.

Ver. 5. *Once have I spoken; but I will not answer*, &c.] Some think this refers to what he had just now said of his vileness, he had owned that, and that was all he had to say, or would say, he would give no other answer; Jarchi says, some suppose he has respect to his words in ch. ix. 22. *Yea, twice; but I will proceed no further:* the meaning seems to be, that he who had once and again, or very often, at least in some instances, spoken very imprudently and indecently, for the future would take care not to speak in such a manner: for this confession was not quite free and full; and therefore the Lord takes him in hand again, to bring him to make a more full and ingenuous one, as he does in ch. xlii.

Ver. 6. *Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind*, &c.] Some think that the whirlwind ceased while the Lord spake the words in ver. 2. which encouraged Job to make the answer he did; but others are of opinion that it continued, and now increased, and was more boisterous than before. The Targum calls it the whirlwind of tribulation: comfort does not

* קלתי levis sum, Coccejus, Michaelis; leviter locutus sum, V. L.

always follow immediately on first convictions; Job, though humbled, was not yet humbled enough: God will have a fuller confession of sin from him: it was not sufficient to say he was vile, he must declare his sorrow for his sin, his abhorrence of it, and of himself for it, and his repentance of it; and that he had said things of God he ought not to have said, and which he understood not; and though he had said he would answer no more, God will make him say more, and therefore continued the whirlwind, and to speak out of it; for he had more to say to him, and give him further proof of his power to his full conviction. *And said;* as follows.

Ver. 7. *Gird up thy loins now like a man,* &c.] And prepare to give an answer to what should be demanded of him. The same way of speaking is used in ch. xxxviii. 3. see the note there.

Ver. 8. *Wilt thou also disannul my judgment?* &c.] The decrees and purposes of God concerning his dealings with men, particularly the afflictions of them, which are framed with the highest wisdom and reason, and according to the strictest justice, and can never be frustrated or made void; or the sentence of God concerning them, that is gone out of his mouth and cannot be altered; or the execution of it, which cannot be hindered: it respects the wisdom of God in the government of the world, as Aben Ezra observes, and the particular dealings of his providence with men, which ought to be submitted to; to do otherwise is for a man to set up his own judgment against the Lord's, which is as much as in him lies to disannul it; whereas God is a God of judgment, and his judgment is according to truth, and in righteousness, and will take place, let men do or say what they please. *Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?* Is there no other way of vindicating thine own innocence and integrity, without charging me with unrighteousness; at least saying such things as are judged by others to be an arraignment of my justice, wisdom, and goodness, in the government of the world? Now though Job did not expressly and directly condemn the Lord, and arraign his justice, yet when he talked of his own righteousness and integrity, he was not upon his guard as he should have been with respect to the justice of God in his afflictions; for though a man may justify his own character when abused, he should take care to speak well of God; and be it as it will between man and man, God is not to be brought into the question; and though some of his providences are not so easily reconciled to his promises, yet let God be true and every man a liar.

Ver. 9. *Hast thou an arm like God?* &c.] Such power as he has, which is infinite, almighty, and uncontrollable, and therefore there is no contending with him; as he has an arm on which good men may lean on and trust in, and by which they are supported, protected, and saved, so he has an arm to crush like a moth all that strive with him or against him. *Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* thunder is his voice; see ch. xxxvii. 4, 5. and Psal. xxix. 3, &c. and is expressive of his power, ch. xxvi. 14. and his powerful voice may be observed in calling all things out of nothing into being in creation; in commanding and ordering all things in providence according to his pleasure; and in quickening sinners through his Gospel, by his spirit and grace in conversion, and will be in calling men out of their graves and summoning them to judgment at the last day. God can both overpower and outvoice men, and therefore it is in vain to oppose him and contend with him.

Ver. 10. *Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency,* &c.] With excellent majesty, as I am decked and clothed, Psal. xciii. 1. *And array thyself with glory and beauty;* appear in the most glorious and splendid manner thou canst, make the best figure thou art able, put on royal robes, and take thy seat and throne, and sit as a king or judge in state and pomp, and exert thyself to do the following things; or take my seat and throne as the judge of the whole earth, and try if thou canst govern the world better than I do; for these and the expressions following are ironical.

Ver. 11. *Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath,* &c.] Work thyself up into a passion, at least seemingly; put on all the airs of a wrathful and enraged king on a throne of state, whose wrath is like the roaring of a lion, and as messengers of death; pour out menaces plentifully, threatening what thou wilt do; and try if by such means thou canst humble the spirit of a proud man, as follows. *And behold every one* that is *proud, and abase him;* look sternly at him, put on a fierce, furious, and menacing countenance, and see if thou canst dash a proud man out of countenance, and humble him before thee, as I am able; among the many instances of divine power the Lord pitches upon this one, and proposes it to Job to try his skill and power upon, the humbling of a proud man.

Ver. 12. *Look on every one* that is *proud,* and *bring him low,* &c.] As the Lord often does; see Isa. ii. 11, 12. this is the same as before. *And tread down the wicked in their place;* the same with the proud, for pride makes men wicked; it is a sin, and very odious in the sight of God, and is highly resented by him; he resists the proud: now Job is bid, when he has brought proud men low, and laid their honour in the dust, to keep them there, to trample upon them, and tread them as mire in the street; and that in their own place, or wherever he should find them; the Septuagint render it *immediately;* see Isa. xxviii. 3.

Ver. 13. *Hide them in the dust together,* &c. Either in the dust of death, that they may be seen no more in this world, in the same place and circumstances where they shewed their pride and haughtiness; or in the dust of the grave, and let them have an inglorious burial, like that of malefactors thrown into some common pit together; as, when multitudes are slain in battle, a large pit is dug, and the bodies are cast in together without any order or decency; or it may be rendered *alike*[*], let them be treated equally alike, no preference given to one above another. And *bind their faces in secret;* alluding, as it is thought, to malefactors when condemned and about to be executed, whose faces are then covered, as Haman's was, Esther vii. 8. or to the dead when buried, whose faces are bound with napkins, as Lazarus's was, John xi. 44. the mean-

[*] יחד pariter, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schultens.

ing of all these expressions is, that Job would abase and destroy, if he could, every proud man he met with, as God does, in the course of his providence, sooner or later. There had been instances of divine power in this way before, or in the times of Job, which might come to his knowledge; as the casting down of the proud angels out of heaven, and of casting proud Adam out of paradise, the drowning the proud giants of the old world, and of dispersing the proud builders of Babel, and of destroying Sodom and Gomorrah by fire, one of whose reigning sins was pride; and of drowning proud Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea; which last seems to have been done much about the time Job lived.

Ver. 14. *Then will I also confess unto thee that thine own right hand can save thee.*] From all his enemies temporal and spiritual, and out of all evils and calamities whatsoever; and that he stood in no need of his help and assistance, yea, that he was a match for him, and might be allowed to contend with him: but whereas he was not able to do the above things proposed to him, it could not be admitted that his own right hand could save him; and therefore ought quietly to submit to the sovereignty of God over him, and to all the dispensations of his providence, and be humbled under his mighty hand, since no hand but his could save him; as no man's right hand can save him from temporal evils and enemies, and much less from spiritual ones, or with an everlasting salvation; nor any works of righteousness done by him, only the arm of the Lord has wrought salvation, and his right hand only supports and saves. Two instances are given in this and the following chapter, the one of a land-animal, the other of a sea-animal, as is generally supposed; or it may be of amphibious ones, that live both on land and water.

Ver. 15. *Behold, now behemoth,* &c.] The word is plural, and signifies *beasts*, and may be used to denote the chiefest and largest of beasts, and therefore is commonly understood of the elephant; and certain it is that a single beast is described in the following account, and so the word is rendered, Psal. lxxiii. 22. The word is here rendered by the Septuagint θηρια, *beasts*; which is the word used by the Greeks[c] for elephants, as *belluæ*, a word of the same signification, is by the Latins[d]: and so the Sabines called an elephant *barrus*, and the Indians *barro*[e], בער, a *beast*; and it may be observed, that ivory is called *shenhabbim*, 1 Kings x. 22. i. e. *shenhabehim, behem* or *behemoth*[f], the tooth of the beast: and it may be also observed, that Seneca[g] says, that the Nile produces beasts like the sea; meaning particularly the crocodile and hippopotamus. Bochart dissents from the commonly received opinion of the elephant being meant; and thinks the *hippopotamus*, or river-horse, is intended, so called from its having a head like a horse; and is said to have a mane, and to neigh like one, and to bear some resemblance to it in its snout, eyes, ears, and back[h]. And the reasons that celebrated author has given for this his opinion have prevailed on many learned men to follow him; and there are some things in the description of *behemoth*, as will be observed, which seem better to agree with the river-horse than with the elephant. It is an amphibious creature, and sometimes lives upon the land, and sometimes in the water; and by various[i] writers is often called a beast and four-footed one: *which I made with thee*; or as well as thee; it being equally the work of my hands, a creature as thou art: or made on the continent, as thou art, so Aben Ezra; and made on the same day man was made; which those observe, who understand it of the elephant; or, which cometh nearest to thee, the elephant being, as Pliny[k] says, the nearest to man in sense; and no beast more prudent, as Cicero[l] affirms. But the above learned writer, who interprets it of the river-horse, takes the meaning of this phrase to be: that it was a creature in Job's neighbourhood, an inhabitant of the river Nile in Egypt, to which Arabia joined, where Job lived; which is testified by many writers[m]: and therefore it is thought more probable that a creature near at hand and known should be instanced in, and not one that it may be was never seen nor known by Job. But both Diodorus Siculus[n] and Strabo[o] speak of herds of elephants in Arabia, and of that as abounding with them; and of various places called from them, and the hunting of them, and even of men from eating them. *He eateth grass as an ox*; which is true both of the elephant and of the river-horse: that a land-animal should eat grass is not so wonderful; but that a creature who lives in the water should come out of it and eat grass is very strange and worthy of admiration, it is observed: and that the river-horse feeds in corn-fields and on grass many writers[p] assure us; yea, in the river it feeds not on fishes, but on the roots of the water-lily, which fishermen therefore use to bait their hooks with to take it. Nor is it unlike an ox in its shape, and in some parts of its body: hence the Italians call it *bomaris*, the sea-ox; but it is double the bigness of an ox[q]. Olaus Magnus[r] speaks of a sea-horse, found between Britain and Norway; which has the head of a horse, and neighs like one; has cloven feet with hoofs like a cow; and seeks its food both in the sea and on the land, and grows to the bigness of an ox, and has a forked tail like a fish.

Ver. 16. *Lo now, his strength is in his loins,* &c.] The strength of the elephant is well known, being able to carry a castle on its back, with a number of men therein; but what follows does not seem so well to agree with it. *And his force is in the navel of his belly*; since the belly of the elephant is very tender; by means of which the rhinoceros, its enemy, in its fight with it, has the advantage of it, by getting under

[c] Suidas in voce θηρια. Plutarch in Eumene.
[d] Terent. Eunuch. Act. 3. Sc. 1. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 3.
[e] Isidor. Origin. l. 12. c. 2. Vid. Horat. Epod. 12. v. 1.
[f] Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 434.
[g] Nat. Quæst. l. 4. c. 2.
[h] Vid. Isidor. Origin. l. 12. c. 6. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 25. Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 2. c. 7.
[i] Herodot. Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 71. Plin. ib. Ammian. Marcellin. l. 22. Leo African. Descript. Africæ, l. 9. p. 759.
[k] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 1.
[l] De Natur. Deor. l. 1.
[m] Solin. Polyhist. c. 45. Ælian. de Animal. l. 5. c. 53. Philo de Præmiis, p. 924. Plin. Afric. ut supra.
[n] Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 136. & l. 3. p. 172, 174, 175.
[o] Geograph. l. 16. p. 531, 533.
[p] Diodor. Sic. l. 1. p. 31. Ælian. Plin. Solin. Ammian. ut supra.
[q] Ludolf. Ethiop. Hist. l. 1. c. 11.
[r] De Ritu Septent. Gent. l. 21. c. 26.

its belly, and ripping it up with its horn[s]. In like manner Eleazar the Jew killed one of the elephants of Antiochus, by getting between its legs, and thrusting his sword into its navel[t]; which fell and killed him with the weight of it. On the other hand, the river-horse is covered with a skin all over, the hardest and strongest of all creatures[u], as not to be pierced with spears or arrows[w]: and of it dried were made helmets, shields, spears, and polished darts[x]. That which Monsieur Thevenot[y] saw had several shot fired at it before it fell, for the bullets hardly pierced through its skin. We made several shot at him, says another traveller[z], but to no purpose; for they would glance from him as from a wall. And indeed the elephant is said to have such a hard scaly skin as to resist the spear[a]; and Pliny[b], though he speaks of the hide of the river-horse being so thick that spears are made of it; yet of the hide of the elephant, as having targets made of that, which are impenetrable.

Ver. 17. *He moveth his tail like a cedar,* &c.] To which it is compared, not for the length and largeness of it; for the tail both of the elephant and of the river-horse is short; though Vartomannus[c] says, the tail of the elephant is like a buffalo's, and is four hands long, and thin of hair: but because of the smoothness, roundness, thickness, and firmness of it; such is the tail of the river-horse, being like that of a hog or boar[d]; which is crooked, twisted, and which it is said to turn back and about at pleasure, as the word used is thought to signify. Aben Ezra interprets it, *maketh to stand;* that is, stiff and strong, and firm like a cedar. One writer[e] speaks of the horse of the Nile, as having a scaly tail; but he seems to confound it with the sea-horse. Junius interprets it of its penis, its genital part; to which the Targum in the King's Bible is inclined: and Cicero[f] says, the ancients used to call that the tail; but that of the elephant, according to Aristotle[g], is but small, and not in proportion to the bigness of its body; and not in sight, and therefore can hardly be thought to be described; though the next clause seems to favour this sense: *the sinews of his stones are wrapped together:* if by these are meant the testicles, as some think, so the Targums; the sinews of which were wreathed, implicated and ramified, like branches of trees, as Montanus renders it. Bochart interprets this of the sinews or nerves of the river-horse, which having such plenty of them, are exceeding strong; so that, as some report, this creature will with one foot sink a boat[h]; I have known him open his mouth, says a traveller[i], and set one tooth on the gunnel of a boat, and another on the second strake from the keel, more than four feet distant, and there bite a hole through the plank, and sink the boat.

Ver. 18. *His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his bones are as bars of iron.*] Than which nothing is stronger. The repetition is made for greater illustration and confirmation; but what is said is not applicable to the elephant, whose bones are porous and rimous, light and spongy for the most part, as appears from the osteology[k] of it; excepting its teeth, which are the ivory; though the teeth of the river-horse are said to exceed them in hardness[l]; and artificers say[m] they are wrought with greater difficulty than ivory. The ancients, according to Pausanias[n], used them instead of it; who relates, that the face of the image of the goddess Cybele was made of them: and Kircher[o] says, in India they make beads, crucifixes, and statues of saints of them; and that they are as hard or harder than a flint, and fire may be struck out of them. So the teeth of the morss, a creature of the like kind in the northern countries, are valued by the inhabitants as ivory[p], for hardness, whiteness, and weight, beyond it, and are dearer and much traded in; see the note on ver. 20. but no doubt not the teeth only, but the other bones of the creature in the text are meant.

Ver. 19. *He is the chief of the ways of God,* &c.] Or the beginning of them, that is, of the works of God in creation; which must be restrained to animals, otherwise there were works wrought before any of them were created. There were none made before the fifth day of the creation, and on that day was the river-horse made; in which respect it has the preference to the elephant, not made till the sixth day. But if this phrase is expressive of the superexcellency of behemoth over other works of God, as it seems to be, it must be limited to the kind of which it is; otherwise man is the chief of all God's ways or works, made either on the fifth or sixth day: and so as the elephant may be observed to be the chief of the beasts of the earth, or of land-animals, for its largeness and strength, its sagacity, docility, gentleness, and the like; so the river-horse may be said to be the chief of its kind, of the aquatic animals, or of the amphibious ones, for the bulk of its body, which is not unlike that of the elephant, as says Diodorus Siculus[q]; and it has been by some called the Egyptian elephant[r]; and also from its great sagacity, of which instances are given by some writers[s]. However, it is one of the chief works of God, or a famous, excellent, and remarkable one, which may be the sense of the expression; see Numb. xxiv. 20. It might be remarked in favour of the

[s] Ælian. de Animal. l. 17. c. 44. Plin. l. 8. c. 10, 29. Vid. Solin. c. 38. Diodor. Sic. l. 3. p. 167. & Strabo. Geograph. l. 16. p. 533.
[t] Joseph. Ben Gorion. Hist. Heb. l. 3. c. 20. 1 Maccab. vi. 46.
[u] Diodor. Sic. ut supra. Plin. l. 8. c. 25.
[w] Ptolem. Geograph. l. 7. c. 2. Fragment. Ctesiæ ad Calcem Herodot. p. 701. Ed. Gronov. Boius apud Kircher. China cum Monument. p. 193.
[x] Herodot. ut supra. Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 2. c. 7. Plin. l. 11. c. 39.
[y] Travels, part 1. c. 72.
[z] Dampier's Voyages, vol. 2. part 2. p. 103.
[a] Heliodor. Ethiop. Hist. l. 9. c. 18.
[b] Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 39. Vid. Vossium in Melam. de Situ Orbis, l. 1. c. 5. p. 28.
[c] Navigat. l. 4. c. 9.
[d] Aristot. Plin. Solin. & Isidore ut supra.
[e] Nicet. Choniat. apud Fabricii. Gr. Bibliother. vol. 6. p. 410.
[f] Epist. l. 9. ep. 22.
[g] Hist. Animal. l. 2. c. 1.
[h] Apud Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 5. c. 14. col. 758.
[i] Dampier's Voyages, vol. 2. part 2. p. 105.
[k] In Philosoph. Transact. vol. 5. p. 155, 156.
[l] Odoardus Barbosa apud Bochart. ut supra.
[m] Diepenses apud ib.
[n] Arcadica, sive, l. 8. p. 530.
[o] China cum Monument. p. 193.
[p] Olaus Magnus, ut supra, l. 2. c. 19. Voyage to Spitzbergen, p. 115.
[q] Ut supra.
[r] Achilles Tatius, l. 4.
[s] Ammian. Marcellin. Plin. Solin. ut supra. Vid. Plin. l. 25. c. 5.

elephant, that it seems to have its name from אלף, the first and chief; as the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet is called *aleph*: unless it should have its name from this root, on account of its docility. *He that made him can make his sword to approach* unto him; not the sword of God, as if this creature could not be killed by any but by him that made it; for whether the elephant or river-horse be understood, they are both to be taken and slain: but the sword of behemoth is that which he himself is furnished with; which some understand of the trunk of the elephant, with which he defends himself and annoys others; but that has no likeness of a sword. Bochart [t] renders the word by *harpe*, which signifies a crooked instrument, sickle or scythe; and interprets it of the teeth of the river-horse, which are sharp and long, and bended like a scythe. That which Thevenot [u] saw had four great teeth in the lower jaw, half a foot long, two whereof were crooked; and one on each side of the jaw; the other two were straight, and of the same length as the crooked, but standing out in the length: see the figure of it in Scheuchzer [w]; by which it also appears to have six teeth. Another traveller says [x], of the teeth of the sea-horse, that they are round like a bow, and about sixteen inches long, and in the biggest part more than six inches about: but another relation [y] agrees more nearly with Thevenot and Scheuchzer; that four of its teeth are longer than the rest, two in the upper jaw, one on each side, and two more in the under; these last are four or five inches long, the other two shorter; with which it mows down the corn and grass in great quantities: so that Diodorus Siculus [z] observes, that if this animal was very fruitful, and brought forth many young and frequently, the fields in Egypt would be utterly destroyed. This interpretation agrees with what follows.

Ver. 20. *Surely the mountains bring him forth food, &c.*] Grass, which grows on mountains, and is the food of the river-horse as well as of the elephant; and therefore is furnished with teeth like a scythe to mow it down; and it is not a small quantity that will suffice it, mountains only can supply it; and marvellous it is that a creature bred in a river should come out of it to seek its food on mountains. There is a creature in the northern parts, as in Russia, Greenland, *&c.* which is called morss and sea-morss, and by the description of it is much like the river-horse, of the bigness of an ox, and having an head like one, with two large long teeth standing out of its upper jaw, and an hairy skin [a], said to be an inch thick, and so tough that no lance will enter it [b]; it comes out of the sea, and by its teeth gets up to the tops of mountains, and having fed on grass rolls itself down again into the sea; and this it does by putting its hinder feet to its teeth, and so falls from the mountain with great celerity, as on a sledge [c]. *Where all the beasts of the field play*; skip and dance, and delight in each other, being in no fear of behemoth; whether understood of the elephant or river-horse; since neither of them are carnivorous creatures that feed on other animals, but on grass only; and therefore the beasts of the field may feed with them quietly and securely. Pliny [d] says of the elephant, that meeting with cattle in the fields, it will make signs to them not to be afraid of it, and so they will go in company together.

Ver. 21. *He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of the reed, and fens.*] This may be thought to agree very well with the river-horse, the inhabitant of the Nile, where reeds in great plenty grew, and adjoining to which were fenny and marshy places, and shady trees; and, as historians relate [e], this creature takes its lodging among high reeds, and in shady places; yea, the reeds and sugar-canes, and the leaves of the papyrus, are part of the food on which it lives; and hence the hunters of them sometimes cover their bait with a reed to take them; though it must be allowed that the elephant delights to be about rivers, and in clayey and fenny places [f], and therefore Ælianus [g] says it may be called the fenny animal.

Ver. 22. *The shady trees cover him* with *their shadow, &c.*] Under which it lies, as in the preceding verse; which is thought not so well to agree with the elephant, since, according to Ælianus [h] and other writers, it lies not down, at least but rarely, but sleeps standing; it being very troublesome to it to lie down and rise up again; and besides it is represented by some authors [i] as higher than the trees, and therefore this is supposed to agree better with the river-horse; especially since it follows, *the willows of the brook compass him about*; or the willows of the Nile, as some choose to render it; which would put it out of all doubt that the river-horse is intended, if it could be established, it being an inhabitant of that river; and yet the above writer [k] speaks of elephants, when grown old, seeking large thick and shady woods to take up their abode in.

Ver. 23. *Behold, he drinketh up a river,* and *hasteth not, &c.*] The elephant is indeed a very thirsty animal, and drinks largely; the philosopher [l] says it drinks nine Macedonian bushels at a feeding, and that it will drink fourteen Macedonian measures of water at once, and eight more at noon; but to drink up a river seems to be too great an hyperbole; wherefore the words may be rendered, *Behold, let a river oppress* him, or *bear* ever so hard upon him, and come with the greatest force and pressure on him [m], *he hasteth not* to get out of it; or he is not frighted or troubled, as the Targum; which agrees with the river-horse, who walks into the river, and proceeds on in it, with the

[t] Ut supra, col. 760.
[u] Travels, part 1. c. 72.
[w] Physic. Sacr. tab. 522.
[x] Dampier's Voyages, vol. 2. part 2. p. 105.
[y] Capt. Rogers apud Dampier, ib. p. 106.
[z] Ut supra.
[a] Olaus Magn. ut supra, l. 21. c. 10. Vid. Bochart. ut supra, col. 761. Eden's Travels, p. 318.
[b] See the North-West Fox, p. 232. Voyage to Spitzbergen, p. 115, 120. Supplement, p. 194.
[c] Olaus Magnus and Eden's Travels, ut supra.
[d] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 7.
[e] Ammian. Marcellin. l. 22. Bellonius & Achilles Tatius apud Bochart. ut supra.
[f] Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 46. Plin. l. 8. c. 10. Ælian. de Animal. l. 9. c. 50.
[g] Ibid. l. 9. c. 28.
[h] Ibid. c. 31.
[i] Ibid. l. 7. c. 6.
[k] Ibid. c. 8.
[l] Aristot. ut supra.
[m] Vid. Bochart. ut supra, col. 760.

greatest ease and unconcernedness imaginable; now and then lifting up his head above water to take breath, which he can hold a long time; whereas the elephant cannot wade in the water any longer than his trunk is above it, as the philosopher observes[n]; and Livy[o] speaks of fear and trembling seizing an elephant, when about to be carried over a river in boats. *He trusteth that he can draw up Jordan in his mouth*: so bold and confident he is, and not at all disturbed with its rapidity; or *though Jordan*, or rather any descending flowing stream, *gushes into his mouth*, so Mr. Broughton: for perhaps Jordan might not be known by Job: nor does it seem to have any connexion with the Nile, the seat of the river-horse; which has such large holes in its nostrils, and out of which, water being swallowed down, he can throw it with great force. Diodorus Siculus[p] represents it as lying all day in the water, and employing itself at the bottom of it, easy, careless, and unconcerned.

Ver. 24. *He taketh it with his eyes*, &c.] Or *can men take him before his eyes?* so Mr. Broughton; and others translate it to the same purpose; no, he is not to be taken openly, but privately, by some insidious crafty methods: whether it be understood of the elephant or river-horse; elephants, according to Strabo[q] and Pliny[r] were taken in pits dug for them, into which they were decoyed; in like manner, according to some[s], the river-horse is taken; a pit being dug and covered with reeds and sand, it falls into it unawares. His *nose pierceth through snares*; he discerns them oftentimes and escapes them, so that he is not easily taken in them. It is reported of the sea-morse[t], before mentioned, that they ascend mountains in great herds, where, before they give themselves to sleep, to which they are naturally inclined, they appoint one of their number as it were a watchman; who, if he chances to sleep or to be slain by the hunter, the rest may be easily taken; but if the watchman gives warning by roaring as the manner is, the whole herd immediately awake and fall down from the mountains with great swiftness into the sea, as before described; or, as Mr. Broughton, *can men take him*, to pierce *his nose with many snares?* they cannot; the elephant has no nose to be pierced, unless his trunk can be called so, and no hook nor snare can be put into the nose of the river-horse. Diodorus Siculus[u] says, it cannot be taken but by many vessels joining together and surrounding it, and striking it with iron hooks, to one of which ropes are fastened, and so the creature is let go till it expires. The usual way of taking it now is, by baiting the hook with the roots of water-lilies, at which it will catch, and swallow the hook with it; and by giving it line enough it will roll and tumble about, until, through loss of blood, it faints and dies. The way invented by Asdrubal for killing elephants was by striking a carpenter's chopping-axe into his ear[w]; the Jews[x] say a fly is a terror to an elephant, it enters into his nose and torments him grievously.

CHAP. XLI.

A LARGE description is here given of the leviathan, from the difficulty and danger of taking it, from whence it is inferred that none can stand before God, ver. 1—10. from the several parts of him, his face, teeth, scales, eyes, mouth and neck, flesh and heart, ver. 11—24. and from various wonderful terrible things said of him, and ascribed to him, ver. 25—34.

Ver. 1. *Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?* &c.] That is, draw it out of the sea or river as anglers draw out smaller fishes with a line or hook? the question suggests it cannot be done; whether by the *leviathan* is meant the whale, which was the most generally received notion; or the crocodile, as Bochart, who has been followed by many; or the *orca*, a large fish of the whale kind with many teeth, as Hasæus, it is not easy to say. *Leviathan* is a compound word of *than*, the first syllable of *thannin*, rendered either a whale, or a dragon, or a serpent, and of *levi*, which signifies conjunction, from the close joining of its scales, ver. 15, 16, 17. the patriarch Levi had his name from the same word; see Gen. xxix. 34. and the name bids fairest for the crocodile, and which is called *thannin*, Ezek. xxix. 3, 4. and xxxii. 2. Could the crocodile be established as the *leviathan*, and the behemoth as the river-horse, the transition from the one to the other would appear very easy; since, as Pliny says[a], there is a sort of a kindred between them, being of the same river, the river Nile, and so may be thought to be better known to Job than the whale; though it is not to be concealed what Pliny says[b], that whales have been seen in the Arabian seas; he speaks of one that came into the river of Arabia, six hundred feet long, and three hundred and sixty broad. There are some things in the description of this creature that seem to agree best with the crocodile, and others that suit better with the whale, and some with neither. *Or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest down?* into the river or sea, as anglers do, with lead to it to make it sink below the surface of the water, and a quill or cork that it may not sink too deep; but this creature is not to be taken in this manner; and which may be objected to the crocodile being meant, since that has no tongue[c], or at least so small that it is not seen, and cleaves close to its lower jaw, which never moves; and is taken with

[n] Aristot. ut supra. Vid. Ælian. l. 7. c. 15.
[o] Hist. l. 21. c. 28.
[p] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 31. Isidor. Origin. l. 12. c. 6.
[q] Geograph. l. 15. p. 494.
[r] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 8. See Orington's Voyage to Surat, p. 190, 193.
[s] Apud Bochart. ut supra, col. 764.
[t] Eden's Travels, p. 318. Supplement to the North-East Voyages, p. 94.
[u] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 32.
[w] Orosii Hist. l. 4. c. 18. p. 62. Liv. Hist. l. 27. c. 49.
[x] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 77. 2. & Gloss. in ib.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 28. c. 8.
[b] Ib. l. 32. c. 1.
[c] Diodor. Sicul. l. 1. p. 31. Herodot. Euterpe, sive, l. 2. c. 68. Solin. c. 45. Plutarch. de Is. & Osir. Vid. Aristot. de Animal. l. 2. c. 17. & l. 4. c. 11. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 11. c. 37. Thevenot, ut supra. Sandys's Travels, l. 2. p. 78.

hooks and cords, as Herodotus[d], Diodorus Siculus[e], and Leo Africanus[f], testify; but not so the whale.

Ver. 2. *Canst thou put an hook into his nose?* &c.] Or a rush, that is, a rope made of rushes; for of such ropes were made, as Pliny[g] affirms. *Or bore his jaw through with a thorn?* as men do herrings, or such-like small fish, for the conveniency of carrying them, or hanging them up to dry: the whale is not to be used in such a manner: but the Tentyritæ, a people in Egypt, great enemies to crocodiles, had methods of taking them in nets, and of binding and bridling them, and carrying them as they pleased[h].

Ver. 3. *Will he make many supplications unto thee?* &c.] To cease pursuing him, or to let him go when taken, or to use him well and not take away his life; no, he is too spirited and stouthearted to ask any favour, it is below him. *Will he speak soft words unto thee?* smooth and flattering ones, for the above purposes? he will not: this is a figurative way of speaking.

Ver. 4. *Will he make a covenant with thee?* &c.] To live in friendship or servitude, as follows. *Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?* oblige him to serve thee for life, or reduce him to perpetual bondage; signifying, that he is not to be tamed or brought into subjection; which is true of the whale, but not of the crocodile; for several authors[i] speak of them as making a sort of a truce with the priests of Egypt for a certain time, and of their being tamed so as to be handled, and fed, and brought up in the house.

Ver. 5. *Wilt thou play with him as* with *a bird?* &c.] In the hand or cage: leviathan plays in the sea, but there is no playing with him by land, Psal. civ. 26. *Wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?* or young girls, as Mr. Broughton renders it; tie him in a string, as birds are for children to play with? Now, though crocodiles are very pernicious to children, and often make a prey of them when they approach too near the banks of the Nile, or whenever they have an opportunity of seizing them[k]; yet there is an instance of the child of an Egyptian woman that was brought up with one, and used to play with it[l], though, when grown up, was killed by it; but no such instance can be given of the whale of any sort.

Ver. 6. *Shall thy companions make a banquet of him?* &c.] The fishermen that join together in catching fish, shall they make a feast for joy at taking the leviathan? which suggests that he is not to be taken by them, and so they have no opportunity or occasion for a feast: or will they feed on him? the flesh of crocodiles is by some eaten, and said[m] to be very savoury, but not the flesh of the whale. *Shall they part him among the merchants?* this seems to favour the crocodile, which is no part of merchandise, and to be against the whale, which, at least in our age, occasions a considerable trade for the sake of the bone and oil: but perhaps, in those times and countries in which Job lived, the use of them might not be known.

Ver. 7. *Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish-spears?*] This seems not so well to agree with the whale; whose skin, and the several parts of his body, are to be pierced with harpoons and lances, such as fishermen use in taking whales; and their flesh to be cut in pieces with their knives: but better with the crocodile, whose skin is so hard, and so closely set with scales, that it is impenetrable; see the note on Ezek. xxix. 4. Or if the words are rendered, as by some, *wilt thou fill ships with his skin? and the fishermen's boat with his head*[n]? it makes also against the whale; for this is done continually, ships of different nations are loaded every year with its skin, flesh, and the bones of its head.

Ver. 8. *Lay thine hand upon him*, &c.] If thou canst or darest. It is dangerous so to do, either to the whale or crocodile. *Remember the battle*; or *look for war*, as Mr. Broughton renders it; expect a fight will ensue, in which thou wilt have no share with this creature: *do no more*; if thou canst by any means escape, take care never to do the like again; or thou wilt never do so any more, thou wilt certainly die for it.

Ver. 9. *Behold, the hope of him is in vain*, &c.] Of getting the mastery over him, or of taking him; and yet both crocodiles and whales have been taken; nor is the taking of them to be despaired of; but it seems the *orca*, or the whale with many teeth, has never been taken and killed[o]. *Shall not* one *be cast down even at the sight of him?* the sight of a whale is terrible to mariners, lest their ships should be overturned by it; and some have been so frighted at the sight of a crocodile as to lose their senses: and we read of one that was greatly terrified at seeing the shadow of one; and the creature before mentioned is supposed to be much more terrible[p].

Ver. 10. *None is so fierce that dare stir him up*, &c.] This seems best to agree with the crocodile, who frequently lies down and sleeps on the ground[q], and in the water by night[r]; see Ezek. xxix. 3. when it is very dangerous to arouse him; and few, if any so daring, have courage enough to do it: though whales have been seen lying near shore asleep, and looked like rocks, even forty of them together[s]. *Who then is able to stand before me?* This is the inference the Lord draws from hence, or the use he makes of it; that if this creature is so formidable and terrible, that it is dangerous to arouse and provoke him, and there is no standing before him or against him; then how should any one be able to stand before the Lord, who made this creature, whenever he is angry? see Psal. lxxvi. 7.

Ver. 11. *Who hath prevented me, that I should repay him?* &c.] First given me something that was not my own, and so laid me under an obligation to him to make a return. The apostle seems to have respect to

[d] Ut supra, c. 70.
[e] Ut supra.
[f] Descriptio Africæ, l. 9. p. 762. See Sandys's Travels, ut supra, p. 79.
[g] Nat. Hist. l. 19. c. 2.
[h] Strabo Geograph. l. 17. p. 560. Ælian. de Animal. l. 10. c. 21. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 25.
[i] Herodot. ut supra, c. 69. Ælian. l. 8. c. 4. & l. 10. c. 21. Solin. c. 45. Plin. l. 8. c. 46.

[k] Ælian. l. 10. c. 21.
[l] Maxim. Tyr. Sermon. 38.
[m] Leo Africanus & Ælian. ut supra.
[n] Vid. Schultens in loc.
[o] Vid. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 845.
[p] Scheuchzer. ib.
[q] Plin. l. 8. c. 25. Solin. c. 45.
[r] Ammian. Marcellin. l. 22.
[s] See the North-West Fox, p. 203.

this passage, Rom. xi. 35. Whatsoever *is under the whole heaven is mine;* the fowls of the air, the cattle on a thousand hills, the fulness of the earth: gold, silver, precious stones, &c. All things are made by him, are his property and at his dispose; and therefore no man on earth can give him what he has not a prior right unto; see Psal. xxiv. 1. and l. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 12. *I will not conceal his parts,* &c.] The parts of the leviathan; or *his bars,* the members of his body, which are like bars of iron: *nor his power;* which is very great, whether of the crocodile or the whale: *nor his comely proportion;* the symmetry of his body, and the members of it; which, though large, every part is in just proportion to each other.

Ver. 13. *Who can discover the face of his garment?* &c.] Or rather uncover it? Not the sea, which Mr. Broughton represents as the garment of the whale; who can strip him of it, or take him out of that, and bring him to land? which, though not impossible, is difficult: but either the garment of his face, the large bulk or prominence that hangs over his eyes; or rather his skin. Who dare venture to take off his skin, or flay him alive? or take off the scaly coat of the crocodile, which is like a coat of mail to him, and which he never of himself casts off, as serpents do? *Or who can come to him with his double bridle?* either go within his jaws, which, when opened, are like a double bridle; or go near and open his jaws, and put a curb-bridle into them, and lead, direct, and rule him at pleasure. This is not to be done either to the whale or crocodile; yet the Tentyritæ had a way of getting upon the back of the crocodile; and by putting a stick across its mouth, as it opened it to bite them, and so holding both the ends of it with the right and left hands, as with a bridle, brought them to land, as Pliny [s] relates; and so the Nereides are represented as sitting on the backs of whales by Theocritus [t].

Ver. 14. *Who can open the doors of his face?* &c.] Of his mouth, the jaws thereof, which are like a pair of folding-doors: the jaws of a crocodile have a prodigious opening. Peter Martyr [u] speaks of one, whose jaws opened seven feet broad; and Leo Africanus [w] affirms he saw some, whose jaws, when opened, would hold a whole cow. To the wideness of the jaws of this creature Martial [x] alludes; and that the doors or jaws of the mouth of the whale are of a vast extent will be easily believed by those who suppose that was the fish which swallowed Jonah. *His teeth are terrible round about;* this may seem to make against the whale, the common whale having none; though the *ceti dentati* are a sort of whales that have many teeth in the lower jaw, white, large, solid, and terrible [y]. Olaus Magnus [z] speaks of some that have jaws twelve or fourteen feet long; and teeth of six, eight, and twelve feet; and there is a sort called *trumpo,* having teeth resembling those of a mill [a]. In the spermaceti whale are rows of fine ivory teeth in each jaw, about five or six inches long [b]. But of the crocodile there is no doubt; which has two rows of teeth, very sharp and terrible, and to the number of sixty [c].

Ver. 15. His *scales* are his *pride, shut up together as with a close seal,* &c.] This is notoriously true of the crocodile, whose back and tail are covered with scales, which are in a measure impenetrable and invincible; which all writers concerning it, and travellers that have seen it, agree in; see the note on Ezek. xxix. 4. but the skin of the whale is smooth; the outward skin is thin, like parchment, and is easily pulled off with the hand; and its under skin, though an inch thick, is never stiff nor tough, but soft [d]: though, if Nearchus [e] is to be credited, he reports, that one was seen fifty cubits long, with a scaly skin all over it a cubit thick; and such, it is said, were by a storm brought into our river Trent some years ago, and cast ashore, which had scales upon their backs very hard, as large and thick as one of our shillings [f]. But Aben Ezra interprets this of the teeth of the leviathan, and in which he is followed by Hasæus; which are strong like a shield, as the words used signify; so Mr. Broughton, "the strong shields have pride:" but then this is as applicable, or more so, to the scales of the crocodile; which are so close as if they were sealed together, and are like a shield, its defence, and in which it prides itself.

Ver. 16. *One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.*] This shews that it cannot be understood of the skin of the whale, and the hardness and strength of that, which is alike and of a piece; whereas those scales, or be they what they may, though closely joined, yet are distinct: those who interpret this of whales that have teeth, and these of the teeth, observe, that as they have teeth to the number of forty or fifty in the lower jaw, in the upper one are holes or sockets into which they go; and they are so very close that no wind or air can come between them [g].

Ver. 17. *They are joined one to another,* &c.] One scale to another, or *a man in his brother* [h]: which may seem to favour the notion of the whale's teeth in the sockets, which exactly answer to one another; but the next clause will by no means agree with them. *They stick together, that they cannot be sundered;* whereas they easily be, at least by the creature itself; but the scales of a crocodile are so closely joined and sealed together, that there is no parting them.

Ver. 18. *By his neesings a light doth shine,* &c.] The philosopher [i] observes, that those who look to the sun are apter to neese: and it is taken notice of by various writers [k], that the crocodile delights to be sunning itself, and lying yawning in the sun and looking at it,

[s] Ut supra.
[t] Idyll. 19.
[u] Decad. 5. c. 9.
[w] Descript. Africæ, l. 9. p. 763. So Sandys's Travels, l. 2. p. 79. Edit. 5.
[x] Epigram. l. 2. ep. 61.
[y] Vid. Plin. l. 9. c. 5, 6. and Philosoph. Transact. vol. 3. p. 544. Scheuchzer. Physic. Sacr. vol. 4. p. 843.
[z] De Ritu Gent. Septent. l. 21. c. 8.
[a] Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 2. p. 847, 848.
[b] Philosoph. Transact. abridged, vol. 7. part 3. p. 425.
[c] Ælian. l. 10. c. 21.
[d] Voyage to Spitzbergen, p. 146, 147, 154.
[e] Apud Arrian. in Indicis.
[f] Vid. Wesley's Dissertations on Job, dissert. 29. p. 290.
[g] Vid. Scheuchzer. ut supra.
[h] איש באחיהו vir in fratre suo; Montanus.
[i] Problem. s. 33. qu. 4.
[k] Ælian. l. 3. c. 11. Leo African. Descriptio Africæ, l. 9. p. 761. Pet. Martyr. Decad. 3. l. 4.

as quoted by Bochart; and so frequently neese: which neesings, through the rays of the sun, may seem to shine and give light. Though as, in neesing, water is thrown out through the nostrils, it may be observed of the whale, that it has mouths or holes in its front, through which, as through pipes, it throws out showers and floods of water, as Pliny [l] relates; which, by means of the rays of the sun, as in a rainbow, appear bright and glittering. *And his eyes* are *like the eyelids of the morning*: the break and dawn of day; a very beautiful expression, the same we call *peep of day*: Pindar [m] has *the eye of the evening*; break of day, as Ben Gersom says, is about an hour and the fifth part of an hour before the sun-rising. The eyes of the crocodile were, with the Egyptians, an hieroglyphic of the morning [n]: wherefore this seems better to agree with the crocodile than the whale, whose eyes are not much bigger than those of a bullock; and has eyelids and hair like men's eyes; the crystal of the eye is not much bigger than a pea [o]; its eyes are placed very low, almost at the end of the upper lip, and when without its guide, dashes itself against rocks and shoals [p]. Though that sort of whales called *orcæ* are said to have eyes a foot long, and of a red rosy colour, such as the morning is described by [q]; and a northern writer [r] tells us that some whales have eyes, whose circumference will admit fifteen or twenty men to sit therein; and in others it exceeds eight or ten cubits; and that the pupil is a cubit, and of a red and flaming colour; which, at a distance, in dark seasons, among the waves, appears to fishermen as fire kindled. And Thevenot [s] says of crocodiles, that their eyes are indifferently big, and very darkish.

Ver. 19. *Out of his mouth go burning lamps*, and *sparks of fire leap out.*] Which, though hyperbolical expressions, have some foundation for them in the latter; in the vast quantities of water thrown out by the whale, through its mouth or hole in its frontispiece, which in the sun may look like lamps and sparks of fire, as before observed; and especially in the *orcæ*, or whales with teeth, which eject in the same way an oily mucus, or the fat liquor of the brain, commonly called spermaceti, which may appear more bright and glittering. Ovid [t] says much the same of the boar as is here said of the leviathan.

Ver. 20. *Out of his nostrils goeth forth smoke, as* out *of a seething-pot or caldron.*] In which flesh or any thing else is boiling. It is observed that there is a likeness between the crocodile and the river-horse, and particularly in their breathing [u]: and of the former it is remarked [w], that its nostrils are very large and open, and that they breathe out a fiery smoke, as out of a furnace.

Ver. 21. *His breath kindles coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.*] Hyperbolical expressions, which the above observations may seem to justify.

Ver. 22. *In his neck remaineth strength*, &c.] This is thought to be an argument against the whale, which is said to have no neck: but whatever joins the head and body may be called the neck, though ever so small; and the shorter the neck is, the stronger it is. It is also said by some, that the crocodile has no neck also; but the philosopher [x] is express for it, that it has one and moves it: and Pliny [y] speaks of it as turning its head upwards, which it could not do without a neck. *And sorrow is turned into joy before him*: or leaps and dances before him; it departs from him: he is not afraid of any thing, though ever so threatening. Or sorrow and distress at the sight of him, in men and fishes, make them leap, and hasten to get out of the way of him and escape him.

Ver. 23. *The flakes of his flesh are joined together*, &c.] The muscles of his body are not flaccid and flabby, but solid and firmly compacted. *They are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved*; that is, not very easily, not without a large sharp cutting-knife, and that used with much strength.

Ver. 24. *His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether* millstone.] Which must be understood not of the substance but of the qualities of it, being bold, courageous, undaunted, and unmerciful; which is true both of the whale and crocodile, and particularly of the crocodile: Ælianus [z] relates of one sort of them that they are unmerciful, though elsewhere [a] he represents them as fearful.

Ver. 25. *When he raiseth up himself*, &c.] Not out of the waters, but above the surface of them, so as that his large bulk, his terrible jaws and teeth, are seen. *The mighty are afraid*; not only fishes and other animals, but men, and these the most stout-hearted and courageous, as mariners and masters of vessels. *By reason of breakings they purify themselves*; either because of the breaches of the sea made through the lifting up of this creature, threatening the overturning of vessels; or of the breaches of men's hearts through fear, they are thrown into a vomiting, and purging both by stool and urine, which are often the effects of fear, so Ben Gersom; or they acknowledge themselves sinners, or expiate themselves, endeavouring to do it by making confession of sin, declaring repentance for it, praying for forgiveness of it, and promising amendment; which is frequently the case of seafaring men in distress; see Jonah, ch. i.

Ver. 26. *The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold*, &c.] It is either broken by striking at him, or however cannot pierce him and stick in him; but since a sword is not used in fishery, rather the harpagon or harpoon may be meant, which cannot enter into the crocodile, being so fenced with scales; but the whale being struck with it, it enters deep into his flesh, and is wounded by it; wherefore this and what follows in the next verses seems best to agree with the croco-

[l] Nat. Hist. l. 9. c. 4, 6.
[m] Olymp. Ode 3. v. 36.
[n] Hor. Hieroglyph. apud Scheuchzer. vol. 4. p. 849.
[o] Voyage to Spitzbergen, p. 145.
[p] Ælian. l. 2. c. 13. Plin. l. 9. c. 62.
[q] Hasæus apud Schultens in loc.
[r] Olaus Magnus de Ritu Gent. Septent. l. 21. c. 5, 6. so Albertus Magnus de Animal. l. 24. c. 1.
[s] Travels, ut supra, p. 345.
[t] Fulmen ab ore venit; frondesque afflatibus ardent. Metamorph. l. 8. Fab. 4.
[u] Plin. l. 48. c. 8. Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 8. c. 2.
[w] Achilles Statius & Eustathius, apud Scheuchzer. ut supra.
[x] Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 6. & Part. Animal. l. 4. c. 11.
[y] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 25.
[z] De Animal. l. 12. c. 41.
[a] Ibid. l. 10. c. 24.

dile, or some other fish. *The spear, the dart, nor the habergeon;* that is, neither of these can fasten upon him or enter into him: and yet it is certain that the whale, after he has been struck and wounded by the harping-iron, men approach nearer to him and thrust a long steeled lance or spear under his gills into his breast, and through the intestines, which dispatches him: darts are not made use of in the whale-fishery; and as for crocodiles, as Peter Martyr says[e], they are not to be pierced with darts: the habergeon, or coat of mail, being a defensive piece of armour, seems not to be designed, as being never used in taking such creatures; rather therefore a javelin or hand-dart may be intended; since, as Bochart observes, in the Arabic language such an one is expressed by this word.

Ver. 27. *He esteemeth iron as straw,* &c.] You may as well cast a straw at him as a bar of iron; it will make no impression on his steeled back, which is as a coat of mail to him; so Eustathius affirms[f], that the sharpest iron is rebounded and blunted by him. And *brass as rotten wood;* or steel, any instrument made of it, though ever so strong or piercing.

Ver. 28. *The arrow cannot make him flee,* &c.] The skin of the crocodile is so hard, as Peter Martyr says, that it cannot be pierced with arrows, as before observed; therefore it is not afraid of them, nor will flee from them. *Sling-stones are turned with him into stubble;* are no more regarded by him than if stubble was cast at him; not only stones out of a sling, but out of an engine; and such is the hardness of the skin of the crocodile, that, as Isidore says[g], the strokes of the strongest stones are rebounded by it, yea, even it is said to be proof against musket-shot[h].

Ver. 29. *Darts are counted as stubble,* &c.] Darts being mentioned before, perhaps something else is meant here, and, according to Ben Gersom, the word signifies an engine out of which stones are cast to batter down walls; but these are of no avail against the leviathan. *He laugheth at the shaking of a spear;* at him, knowing it cannot hurt him; the crocodile, as Thevenot says[i], is proof against the halberd. The Septuagint version is, *the shaking of the pyrophorus,* or torch-bearer; one that carried a torch before the army, who, when shook, it was a token to begin the battle; which the leviathan being fearless of laughs at it; see the note on Obadiah, ver. 18.

Ver. 30. *Sharp stones* are *under him,* &c.] And yet give him no pain nor uneasiness. *He spreadeth sharp-pointed things upon the mire;* and makes his bed of them and lies upon them; as sharp stones, as before, shells of fishes, broken pieces of darts, arrows, and javelins thrown at him, which fall around him: this does not so well agree with the crocodile, the skin of whose belly is soft and thin; wherefore dolphins plunge under it and cut it with a thorn, as Pliny[k] relates, or with spiny fins[l]; but with the whale, which lies among hard rocks and sharp stones, and large cutting pieces of ice, as in the northern seas.

Ver. 31. *He maketh the deep to boil*[m] *like a pot,* &c.] Which is all in a froth through the violent agitation and motion of the waves, caused by its tossing and tumbling about; which better suits with the whale than the crocodile, whose motion in the water is not so vehement. *He maketh the sea like a pot of ointment;* this also seems to make against the crocodile, which is a river-fish, and is chiefly in the Nile. Lakes indeed are sometimes called seas, in which crocodiles are found; yea, they are also said to be in the seas, Ezek. xxxii. 2. and Pliny[n] speaks of them as common to the land, river, and sea; and the Nile is in the Alcoran[o] called the sea, and its ancient name was *Oceames* with the Egyptians, *i. e.* in Greek, ocean, as Diodorus Siculus[p] affirms; and so it is thought to be the Egyptian sea in Isa. xi. 15. It is observed that they leave a sweet scent behind them; thus Peter Martyr[q], in his account of the voyages of Columbus in the West Indies, says, they sometimes met with crocodiles, which, when they fled or took water, they left a very sweet savour behind them, sweeter than musk or castoreum. But this does not come up to the expression here of making the sea like a pot of ointment; but the sperm of the whale comes much nearer to it, which is of a fat oily nature, and like ointment, and which the whale sometimes throws out in great abundance, so that the sea is covered with it; whole pails full may be taken out of the water; it swims upon the sea like fat; abundance of it is seen in calm weather, so that it makes the sea all foul and slimy[r]: and there are a sort of birds called *mallemuck,* which fly in great numbers and feed upon it[s]. I cannot but remark what the bishop of Bergen observes[t] of the sea-serpent, that its excrements float on the water in summer-time like fat slime.

Ver. 32. *He maketh a path to shine after him,* &c.] Upon the sea, by raising a white froth upon it, through its vehement motion as it passes along, or by the spermaceti it casts out and leaves behind it. It is said[u] that whales will cut and plough the sea in such a manner, as to leave a shining glittering path behind them, the length of a German mile, which is three of ours. One *would think the deep* to be *hoary;* to be old and grey-headed, or white like the hair of the head of an old man, a figure often used of the sea by poets[w]; and hence *Nereus*[x], which is the sea, is said to be an old man, because the froth in the waves of it looks like white hair.

Ver. 33. *Upon the earth there is not his like,* &c.] As to form and figure; in most creatures there is some likeness between those in the sea and on the land, as sea-horses, calves, *&c.* but there is no likeness between

[e] Apud Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 5. c. 17. col. 762.
[f] Apud ibid.
[g] Origin. l. 12. c. 6.
[h] Mandelsloe in Harris's Voyages, &c. vol. 1. p. 759.
[i] Travels, part 1. b. 2. c. 72. p. 245.
[k] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 25.
[l] Sandys's Travels, l. 2. p. 72.
[m] Fervetque — æquor. Virgil. Georgic. l. 1. v. 327.
[n] Nat. Hist. l. 32. c. 11.
[o] Schultens in Job, xiv. 11.

[p] Bibliothec. l. 1. p. 17.
[q] Decad. 3. l. 4.
[r] Voyage to Spitzbergen, p. 148, 149.
[s] Vid. Scheuchzer. ut supra, p. 852. & Voyage to Spitzbergen, p. 167.
[t] Pontoppidan's History of Norway, part 2. p. 204.
[u] Vid. Scheuchzer. ibid. p. 853.
[w] πολιης ἁλος, Homer. Iliad. 1. v. 350. πολιης θαλασσης, Iliad. 4. v. 248. incanuit unda, Catullus.
[x] Phurnutus de Natura Deorum, p. 62.

a whale and any creature on earth; there is between the crocodile and the lizard; nor is any like the whale for the largeness of its bulk; the Targum is, "his dominion is not on the earth," but on the sea, as Aben Ezra notes; but rather the sense is, there is no power on earth that he obeys and submits to, as the Tigurine version; though the meaning seems to be, that there is none like him, for what follows: *who is made without fear*: yet this agrees not neither with the crocodile, which Ælianus [w] says is fearful; nor with the whale, which will make off and depart at the shoutings of men, blowing of trumpets, and making use of any tinkling instruments, at which it is affrighted, as Strabo [x], Philostratus [y], and Olaus Magnus [z], relate. It is observed [a] of their valour, that if they see a man or a long-boat, they go under water and run away; and are never known to endeavour to hurt any man, but when in danger; though a voyager [b] of our own says, "we saw whales in Whale-sound, and lying aloft "on the water, not fearing our ships, or aught else." The Targum is, "he is made that he might not be "broken;" or bruised, as Bochart; as reptiles usually may, among whom the crocodile may be reckoned, because of its short legs; and yet is made with such a hard scaly skin, that it cannot be crushed, bruised, and broken. Aben Ezra observes that some say, the word *hu*, that is, *he*, is wanting, and should be supplied, *he*, i. e. God, *made him without fear*; or that he might not be bruised; wherefore Cocceius interprets the following words entirely of God.

Ver. 34. *He beholdeth all high things*, &c.] Or *who* beholdeth all high things; even he that made leviathan, that is, God, as the above interpreter: he does that which Job was bid to do, and could not; beholds every one that is proud, and abases him, ch. xl. 11, 12. and therefore he ought to acknowledge his sovereignty and superiority over him, and submit to him. *He is a king over all the children of pride*: the proud angels that fell, and all the proud sons of men; proud monarchs and potentates of the earth, such as Nebuchadnezzar and others. But interpreters generally understand all this either of the crocodile, or of a fish of the whale-kind. Bochart observes, that the crocodile, though it has short legs, will behold, and meet unterrified, beasts abundantly taller than itself, and with one stroke of its tail break their legs and bring them low; and will destroy not only men, but all sorts of beasts, as elephants, camels, horses, oxen, boars, and every animal whatsoever. But others apply this to the whale, which beholds the tossing waves of the sea, which mount up to heaven; the clouds of heaven on high over it; the lofty cliffs or shores, and ships of the greatest bulk and height; and which, when it lifts up itself above the water, equals the high masts of ships, and is abundantly superior to all the tribes of watery animals, or the beasts of the sea. But this seems not wholly to come up to the expressions here used. Upon the whole, as there are some things that agree with the crocodile, and not the whale; and others that agree with the whale, of one sort or another, and not with the crocodile; it is uncertain which is meant, and it seems as if neither of them were intended: and to me very probable is the opinion of Johannes Camerensis [c], and to which the learned Schultens most inclines, that the leviathan is the dragon of the land-sort, called leviathan, the piercing serpent, as distinct from the dragon in the sea, Isa. xxvii. 1. which agrees with the description of the leviathan in the whole: as its prodigious bigness; its terrible countenance; its wide jaws; its three-forked tongue; its three rows of sharp teeth; its being covered all over, back and belly, with thick scales, not to be penetrated by arrows and darts; its flaming eyes, its fiery breath, and being most terrible to all, and fearless of every creature; it will engage with any, and conquer and kill an elephant [d]; hence in Ethiopia dragons have no other names than elephant-killers: and so it may be said to be king over all the children of pride; of all which proof may be given from various writers, as Pliny [e], Ælianus [f], Philostratus [g], and others; and particularly the dragon Attilius Regulus, the Roman general, killed near Bagrade in Africa, is a proof itself of almost all the above articles, as Osorius [h] has described it; nor is it any objection that the leviathan is represented as being in the sea, since the dragon, even the land-dragon, will plunge into rivers, and is often found in lakes called seas, and in maritime places, and will go into the sea itself, as Pliny [i] and Philostratus [k] relate. To which may be added, that this creature was found among the Troglodytes [l], who lived near the Red sea, and not far from Arabia, where Job dwelt, and so might be well known by him: and besides, of all creatures, it is the most lively emblem of the devil, which all the ancient Christian writers make leviathan to be; and Satan is expressly called the dragon in Rev. xii. 3, 9. So Suidas [m] says, the devil is called a dragon in Job. But be the leviathan what it may, it certainly is an illustrious instance of the power of God in making it; and therefore Job and every other man ought to submit to him that made it, in all things, and be humble under his mighty hand; owning freely, that it is his right hand, and his only, and not man's, that can save, either in a temporal or spiritual sense; for which end this and the behemoth are instanced in.

[w] De Animal. l. 10. c. 24.
[x] Geograph. l. 15. p. 499.
[y] Vit. Apollon. l. 3. c. 16.
[z] De Ritu Gent. Septent. l. 21. c. 5, 6.
[a] Voyage to Spitzbergen, p. 153.
[b] Baffin in the North-West Fox, p. 150.
[c] Apud Pinedam, in v. 1.
[d] Isidor. Origin. l. 12. c. 4.
[e] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 14.
[f] De Animal. l. 2. c. 21. & l. 10. c. 48. & l. 15. c. 21. & l. 16. c. 39.
[g] Vit. Apollon. l. 3. c. 2. Vid. Ovid. Metamorph. l. 3. Fab. 1.
[h] Hist. l. 4. c. 8.
[i] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 13.
[k] Ut supra.
[l] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 11, 12. & l. 31. c. 2.
[m] In voce [illegible], & in voce [illegible].

CHAP. XLII.

THIS chapter contains Job's answer to the last speech of the Lord's, in which he acknowledges his omnipotence, and his certain performance of his purposes and pleasure; owns his own folly and ignorance, and confesses his sins: for which he abhorred himself, and of which he repented, ver. 1—6. it also gives an account of the Lord's decision of the controversy between Job and his friends, blaming them and commending him above them; and ordered them to take sacrifices and go to Job and offer them, who should pray for them and be accepted, which was done, ver. 7, 8, 9. and it closes with a relation of the great prosperity Job was restored unto, in which he lived and died, ver. 10—17.

Ver. 1. *Then Job answered the Lord, and said.*] For though he had said he would answer no more, ch. xl. 5. yet he might mean not in the manner he had, complaining of God and justifying himself; besides he might change his mind without any imputation of falsehood or a lie; see Jer. xx. 9. to which may be added, that he had then said all he had to say, and did not know he should have more: he then confessed as much as he was convinced of, but it was not enough; and now through what the Lord had since said to him he was more convinced of his ignorance, mistakes, and sins, and had such a sight of God and of himself, that he could not forbear speaking; moreover an injunction was laid upon him from the Lord to speak again, and therefore he was obliged to give in his answer; see ch. xl. 7.

Ver. 2. *I know that thou canst* do *every thing*, &c.] As the works of creation, and the sustentation of them, shew; so the Targum, "thou sustainest all things," and can manage every creature made by him, even such as were not tractable by men, such as behemoth and leviathan, the creatures last instanced in; and was able to abase and bring low the proud, which Job could not do; and could also save him by his right hand, and bring him out of his low estate in which he was, and raise him to great prosperity again, which Job always despaired of till now; and though he had a theoretical knowledge of the omnipotence of God before, see ch. ix. 4—10. yet not a practical experimental knowledge of it; at least not to such a degree as he now had, working upon his heart, bowing his will, and bringing him to a resignation to the will of God; he not only knew he could do all things, but that he had a right to do what he pleased; and that whatever he did he did well and wisely, and in a righteous manner, of which before he seemed to have some doubt. *And that no thought can be withholden from thee*; either no thought of men, good or bad, of God or of themselves, and so is an acknowledgment of the omniscience of God, and may be an appeal to that; that God, who knows the secrets of men's hearts, knew what thoughts Job now had of God; of the wisdom, righteousness, and goodness of God in the dispensations of his providence, different from what he had before; see John xxi. 17. or rather it may be understood of every thought of God's heart, of every secret purpose and wise counsel of his; which, as they are all well known to him, and cannot be withheld from having effect, or the performance of them hindered, Job now saw and was fully assured that all that had befallen him was according to the sovereign and inscrutable purposes of God, and according to the wise counsels of his will; he knew that not only God could do every thing, but that he also did whatever he pleased.

Ver. 3. *Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?* &c.] It may be understood, and supplied, as it is by Cocceius, *thou didst say*; as the Lord had said, or to this purpose, ch. xxxviii. 2. see the note there, to which Job here replies, I am the foolish man that has done it, I own it with sorrow, shame, and confusion: or it may be interpreted as condemning every other man that should act the like part. Schultens understands this as spoken by Job of God, and renders the words, "who is this that seals up counsel, which "cannot be known?" the counsels, purposes, and decrees of God are sealed up by him, among his treasures, in the cabinet of his own breast, and are not to be unsealed and unlocked by creatures, but are impenetrable to them, past finding out by them, and not to be searched and pried into; and so the secret springs of Providence are not to be known, which Job had attempted, and for which he condemns himself. *Therefore have I uttered that I understood not*: concerning the providential dealings of God with men, afflicting the righteous, and suffering the wicked to prosper, particularly relating to his own afflictions; in which he arraigned the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, as if things might have been better done than they were; but now he owns his ignorance and folly, as Asaph did in a like case, Psal. lxxiii. 22. *things too wonderful for me, which I knew not*; things out of his reach to search into, and beyond his capacity to comprehend; what he should have gazed upon with admiration, and there have stopped. The judgments of God are a great deep, not to be fathomed with the line of human understanding, of which it should be said with the apostle, *O the depth*, &c. Job ought to have done as David did, Psal. cxxxi. 1. of which he was now convinced, and laments and confesses his folly.

Ver. 4. *Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak*, &c.] Not in the manner he had before, complaining of God and justifying himself, but in a way of humble entreaty of favours of him, of confession of sin before him, and of acknowledgment of his wisdom, goodness, and justice in all his dealings with him, which before he arraigned. *I will demand of thee*; or rather *I will make petition to thee*, as Mr. Broughton renders it; humbly ask a favour, and entreat a gracious answer; for to demand is not so agreeable to the frame and temper of soul Job was now in. *And declare thou unto me*: or make him know what he knew not; he now in ignorance applies to God, as a God of knowledge, to inform him in things he was in the dark about, and to in-

crease what knowledge he had. He was now willing to take the advice of Elihu, and pursue it, ch. xxxiv. 31, 32.

Ver. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,* &c.] From his ancestors, who in a traditionary way had handed down from one to another what they knew of God, his will and worship, his works and ways; and from those who had the care of his education, parents and tutors, who had instilled the principles of religion, and the knowledge of divine things, into him very early; and from such as might instruct in matters of religion in a public manner; and both by ordinary and extraordinary revelation made unto him, as was sometimes granted to men in that age in which Job lived; see ch. iv. 16, 17. and xxxiii. 14, 15, 16. Though he had heard more of God through his speaking to him out of the whirlwind than ever he did before, to which he had attentively listened; and the phrase, hearing by or with the hearing of the ear, denotes close attention; see Ezek. xliv. 5. *But now mine eye seeth thee;* thy Shechinah, as Jarchi; thy divine glory and Majesty; the Logos, the Word or Son of God, who now appeared in an human form, and spake to Job out of the whirlwind; and whom he saw with the eyes of his body, as several of the patriarchs had seen him, and which is the sense of an ancient writer[n]; though no doubt he saw him also with the eyes of his understanding, and had a clearer sight of his living Redeemer, the Messiah, than ever he had before; and saw more of God in Christ, of his nature, perfections, and glory, than ever he had as yet seen; and what he had heard of him came greatly short of what he now saw; particularly he had a more clear and distinct view of the sovereignty, wisdom, goodness, and justice of God in the dealings of his providence with the children of men, and with himself, to which now he humbly submitted.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore I abhor* myself, &c.] Or all my words, as Aben Ezra; all the indecent expressions he had uttered concerning God; he could not bear to think of them; he loathed them, and himself on account of them: sin is abominable in its own nature, and makes men so; it is loathsome to God, and so it is to all good men when they see it in its proper light; and especially when they have a view of the purity and holiness of God, to which that is so very contrary, and also of his grace and goodness in the forgiveness of it; see Isa. vi. 3, 5. Ezek. xvi. 63. and xx. 44. *And repent in dust and ashes;* which was an external ceremony used by mournful and penitent persons; see ch. ii. 8. Jonah iii. 6. and is expressive of the truth and sincerity of repentance; and never do any more truly mourn for sin and repent of it, are more ashamed of it, or have a more godly sorrow for it, or more ingenuously confess it, and heartily forsake it, than those who with an eye of faith behold God in Christ as a sin-forgiving God; or behold their sins through the glass of pardoning grace and mercy; see Zech. xii. 10. Luke vii. 37, 47. 1 Tim. i. 13.

Ver. 7. *And it was* so, &c.] What follows came to pass: *that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job;* which he spake to him out of the whirlwind, and after he had heard Job's confession, and the declaration he made of his humiliation and repentance: *the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite;* who with his two friends were still present and heard the speeches of the Lord to Job, and the acknowledgment he had made of sin; though some[o] think that, when the dispute ended between Job and them, they returned to their own country, where Eliphaz is now supposed to be, and was bid with his two friends to go to Job again, which they did, as is concluded from the following verses: but no doubt they stayed and heard what Elihu had to say; and the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind would command their attention and stay; and very desirous they must be to know how the cause would go, for or against Job; the latter of which they might expect from the appearance of things. Now the Lord directs his speech to Eliphaz, he being perhaps the principal man, on account of his age, wisdom and wealth, and being the man that led the dispute, began it, and formed the plan to go upon, and was the most severe on Job of any of them; wherefore the Lord said to him, *my wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends:* who were Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite; who gave into the same sentiments with Eliphaz, and went upon the same plan, speaking wrong things of God, charging Job falsely, and condemning him; which provoked the Lord, and caused his wrath to be kindled like fire against them, of which there were some appearances and breakings forth in his words and conduct towards them. *For ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath;* they had said many right things of God, and Job had said many wrong ones of him, and yet upon the whole Job had said righter things of God than they; their notion, and which they had expressed, was, that God deals with men in this life according to their outward behaviour; that God did not afflict good men, at least not sorely, nor long; and that wicked men were always punished now: from whence they drew this inference, that Job, being so long and so greatly afflicted, must be a bad man, or God would never have dealt with him after this manner. Job, on the other hand, affirmed, that wicked men enjoyed great prosperity, which good men did not; and therefore the love and hatred of God were not known by these things; and men's characters were not to be judged of by these outward things; in which he was doubtless right: some render the words *have not spoken unto me*[p], before him, in his presence; for they were all before God, and to him they all appealed, and he heard and observed all that was said, and now passed judgment. No notice is taken of Elihu, nor blame laid on him; he acting as a moderator, taking neither the part of Job, nor of his friends, but blaming both: nor did he pretend to charge Job with any sins of his former life as the cause of his calamities; only takes up some indecent, unguarded, and extravagant expressions of his in the heat of this controversy, and rebukes him for them; and throughout the whole vindicates the justice of God in his dealings with him.

[n] Euseb. Demonstr. Evangel. l. 1. c. 5. p. 11.
[o] Vid. Spanhem. Hist. Jobi, c. 8. s. 1, 2.

[p] אֵלַי ad me, Mercerus, Drusius, Coccejus; coram me, V. L.; apud me, Tigurine version.

Ver. 8. *Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks, and seven rams*, &c.] Creatures used in sacrifice before the giving of the Levitical law, Gen. iv. 4. and viii. 20. and xv. 9. and the same number of the same creatures were offered by Balaam in the country of Moab, not far from where Job lived, nor at any great distance of time from his age, Numb. xxiii. 1, 2. and among the Gentiles in after-times[s]. And these were typical of Christ, being strong creatures, especially the bullocks, and which were used for labour; and the number seven may point at the perfection of Christ's sacrifice; to which these men were directed in their sacrifices to look for the complete atonement of their sins: now though they were not at their own dwellings, and could not take these out of their own herds and flocks, and Job had none, yet they could purchase them of others; and which having done, they are bid to do as follows: *and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering*; that is, by Job, who was to offer it for them in their name, and at whose hands the Lord would accept it, and for his sake. Job, as the head and master of his family, was wont to sacrifice, as every such man did before the Aaronical priesthood took place, ch. i. 5. Now this was doing Job a great deal of honour, both by calling him his servant, as before in the preceding verse, and twice more in this; which was plainly giving the cause on his side; confirming the character he always bore, and still retained; and declaring he had other thoughts of him than his friends had; as well by sending them to him with their sacrifices to offer for them; which was saying, that they had sinned, and must offer sacrifice, and that Job was in the right; and therefore must offer the sacrifice for them. This was putting them on a great piece of self-denial; that men, who were older than Job, great personages, heads of families, and who had been wont to offer sacrifices in them, yet are now sent to Job to offer them for them; a man now in mean circumstances, and whom they had treated with great contempt; and he in his turn had used them as roughly. And it was also a trial of Job's grace, and of his forgiving spirit, to do this for them, and pray to God on their behalf: and the Lord's design in it was, to exercise the graces of them both, and to reconcile them to one another, and to himself. *And my servant Job shall pray for you*: that their sacrifice might be accepted, and their sin pardoned. In this Job was a type of Christ, as he was in many other things; see the notes on ch. xvi. 9—13. and xxx. 8, 9, 10. There is an agreement in his name; Job, whether it signifies love or hatred, desired or hated, in both ways the etymology of it is given; it agrees with Christ, who is beloved of God and man, and the desire of all nations; who hates iniquity, and was hated for his inveighing against it. Job was a type of him in his threefold state; before his low estate, in it, and after it; see Phil. ii. 6—10. In his temptations by Satan, and sufferings from men; and particularly in his office as a priest, who both offered himself a sacrifice for his people, and offers their services and sacrifices of prayer and praise to God; and who prayed for his disciples, and for all the Father has given him, for transgressors and sinners, and even for his enemies that used him ill. *For him will I accept*; or his face, that is, hear his prayer, and grant what is asked by him; as well as accept his sacrifice. *Lest I deal with you after your folly*; as all sin is, being committed against God, a breach of his law, and injurious to men themselves; see Deut. xxxii. 6. and iv. 6. Prov. viii. 36. Though here it seems to be restrained to their particular sin and folly in their dispute with Job; want of wisdom in them was discerned by Elihu, ch. xxxii. 7, 9. So it follows: *in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job*; and if by neglect of his advice, which would have been another instance of their folly, they had provoked the Lord to deal with them as their sin deserved, it must have gone hard with them. The Targum is, "lest I should do with you *what would be* "a reproach" (or disgrace); would put them to shame, and make them appear ignominious to men; as by stripping them of their substance and honour, and reducing them to the condition Job was in.

Ver. 9. *So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, went*, &c.] Having taken the above creatures for sacrifice, as directed, they went to Job with them. *And did according as the Lord commanded them*; offered them by Job for a burnt-offering, and desired him to pray for them. This they did, both as to matter and manner, as the Lord ordered them; and they did it immediately, without consulting flesh and blood, the pride and other passions of their hearts; and they all united in it, and served the Lord with one consent, which shewed them to be good men. *The Lord also accepted Job*; the sacrifice he offered; perhaps by sending fire from heaven, which consumed the burnt-offering: or *the face of Job*; he heard his prayer for his friends, and granted his request for them: or *the person of Job*, as Mr. Broughton renders it; Job in this was a type of Christ also, who is always heard in his intercession and mediation for his people. God has respect to his person, which is always acceptable to him, and in whom he is well pleased; and he has respect to his offering and sacrifice, which is of a sweet-smelling savour to him. And the persons of his people are accepted in him the Beloved, and all their services and sacrifices of prayer and praise, Matt. iii. 17. Ephes. i. 6. 1 Peter ii. 5. The Targum is, "they did as the Word of the Lord spake unto "them, and the Word of the Lord accepted the face "of Job."

Ver. 10. *And the Lord turned the captivity of Job*, &c.] Not literally, in such sense as Lot's captivity was turned; for Job's person was not seized on and carried away, though his cattle were: nor spiritually, being delivered from the captivity of sin; that had been his case many years ago, when first converted: but it is to be understood of his restoration from afflictions and calamities to a happy state; as of the return of his substance, his health and friends, and especially of his deliverance from Satan, in whose hands he had been some time, and by him distressed both in body and mind. But now his captivity was turned, and he was freed from all his distresses; and even from those which arose from the dealings of God with him, which

[s] —— Septem mactare juvencos, &c. Virgil. Æneid. 6. v. 38, 39.

he was now fully satisfied about; and this was done, *when he prayed for his friends*: as he was directed to do. A good man will not only pray for himself, as Job doubtless did, but for others also; for his natural and spiritual friends, yea, for unkind friends, and even for enemies likewise: and the prayer of an upright man is very acceptable to the Lord; and many mercies and blessings come by it; and even prayer for others is profitable to a man's self; and sometimes he soon reaps the benefit of it, as Job now did. For when and while he was praying, or quickly upon it, there was a turn in his affairs: he presently found himself in better health; his friends came about him, and his substance began to increase; Satan had no more power over him, and the presence of God was with him. All which was of the Lord; and he enjoyed it in the way of prayer, and as the fruit of that. *Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before*: or added to him double. Which chiefly respects his substance; his cattle, as appears from ver. 12. and might be true both with respect to things temporal and spiritual. *Double* may denote an abundance, a large measure of good things; see Zech. ix. 12.

Ver. 11. *Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters*, &c.] Which may be taken not in a strict sense, but in a larger sense for all that were related to him; the same with his kinsfolks, ch. xix. 14. *And all they that had been of his acquaintance before*: that knew him, visited him, conversed with him, and kept up a friendly correspondence with him; the circle of his acquaintance must have been large, for wealth makes many friends: now these had been shy of him, and kept at a distance from him, during the time of his affliction and distress; see ch. xix. 13, 14, 19. but hearing he was in the favour of God, and the cause was given on his side, and against his friends, and his affairs began to take a more favourable turn, they came to him again, and paid him a friendly visit, even all of them. *And did eat bread with him in his house*: expressing their joy for his recovery, and renewing their friendship with him: this was done either at their own expense or at Job's, for he might not be so poor at the worst as he is by most represented; for he had still an house of his own, and furniture in it, and servants to wait upon him, as appears from ch. xix. 15, 16. nor do we read of any thing being taken out of his house from him; he might still have gold and silver, and so could entertain his friends: and being a man of an excellent spirit received them kindly, without upbraiding them with their unkindness in deserting him when afflicted. *And they bemoaned him*: shook their heads at him, pitying his case, that is, which he had been in; for this they might do, though things were now better with him, and might express themselves in such manner as this, "Poor man, what "hast thou endured? what hast thou gone through "by diseases of body, loss of substance, and vexation "from friends?" and besides, though things began to mend with him, he was not come at once to the pitch of happiness he arrived unto; so that there might be still room for bemoaning, he being comparatively in poor circumstances to what he was before. *And comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him*: the evil of afflictions, of body and estate; which, though by means of Satan and wicked men, was according to the will of God, and might be said to be brought on him and done to him by the Lord, Amos iii. 6. and they congratulated him upon his deliverance from them. *Every man also gave him a piece of money, or a lamb*: which some understand in a proper sense, as being what might serve towards making up his loss of sheep, and increasing his stock of them; but others with us take it for a piece of money, in which sense it is used in Gen. xxxiii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 32. compared with Acts vii. 16. which might have the figure of a lamb impressed upon it; as we formerly had a piece of money called an angel, having the image of one stamped on it; and it was usual with the ancients both to barter with cattle instead of money before the coining of it, and when it was coined to impress upon it the figure of cattle; hence the Latin word *pecunia*, for money, is from *pecus*, cattle [y]; this piece of money in Africa is the same with the Jewish *meah* [z], which weighed sixteen barley-corns, the value of a penny. *And every one an ear-ring of gold*; or a jewel set in gold; such men used to wear in Arabia, as appears from Judges viii. 24. however Job could turn them into money, and increase his stock of cattle thereby. Though, perhaps, these presents were made him, not so much to enrich him, but as tokens of renewing their friendship with him; it being then usual in the eastern countries, as it is to this day, that whenever they pay visits, even to the greatest personages, they always carry presents with them; see 1 Sam. ix. 7.

Ver. 12. *So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning*, &c.] Which verified the words of Bildad, ch. viii. 6, 7. though they were spoken by him only by way of supposition. All blessings are of the Lord, temporal and spiritual; and sometimes the last days of a good man are his best, as to temporal things, as were David's, and here Job's; though this is not always the case: however, if their last days are but the best in spiritual things, that is enough: if they have more faith, hope, love, patience, humility, and self-denial, and resignation of will to the will of God; are more holy, humble, spiritually and heavenly minded; have more light and knowledge in divine things; have more peace and joy, and are more fruitful in every good work, and more useful; and often they are in their very last moments most cheerful and comfortable: the best wine is reserved till last. *For he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses*; just double the number of each of what he had before, ch. i. 3.

Ver. 13. *He had also seven sons, and three daughters*.] The same number of children, and of the same sort he had before, ch. i. 2. and according to Nachman the very same he had before, which the additional letter in the word *seven* is with him the notification

[y] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 18. c. 3. & l. 33. c. 3. Alex. ab. Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 15.

[z] T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 26. 1.

of; so that the doubling of what he had before, ver. 10. respects only his substance, and particularly his cattle; though the Targum says he had fourteen sons, and so Jarchi[t]; others think these may be said to be double to Job in their good qualities, external and internal, in their dispositions, virtues, and graces; and others, inasmuch as his former children were not lost, but lived with God, and would live for ever, they might now be said to be double; and so they consider this as a proof of the immortality of the soul, and of the resurrection of the body; but these senses are not to be trusted to: whether these children were by a former wife or another is uncertain.

Ver. 14. *And he called the name of the first Jemima*, &c.] That is, the name of the first and eldest daughter was called by Job Jemima; which either signifies *day*, so the Targum interprets it, and most do, and so is the same with Diana; or, as Spanheim[u] observes, it may be the same with the Arabic word *jemama*, which signifies a turtle or dove[w]; and who also observes that a country in Arabia is so called, and perhaps from her; and which seems to be confirmed by the Arabic geographer[x], who speaks of a queen called Jamama, who dwelt in a city of the country he describes as being on the north of Arabia Felix, and also speaks of a way from thence to Bozrah in Edom. *And the name of the second, Kezia*; or Cassia; an aromatic herb of a very fragrant smell, as we render the word, Psal. xlv. 8. and from this person the above learned writer conjectures Mount Casius in Arabia might have its name. *And the name of the third, Keren-happuch*; which signifies an horn or vessel of paint, such as the eastern women used to paint their faces, particularly their eyes with, Jer. iv. 30. and as Jezebel did, 2 Kings ix. 30. or *the ray of a precious stone*; some say the carbuncle[y] or ruby; according to the Targum, the emerald; in 1 Chron. xxix. 2. the word is rendered glittering stones. Now these names may have respect to Job's daughters themselves, to their external beauty, afterwards observed, so the Targum, "he called the "one Jemima, because her beauty was as the day; "the other he called Kezia, because she was precious "like cassia; and another he called Keren-happuch, "because great was the brightness of the glory of her "countenance, as the emerald." The complexion of the first might be clear as a bright day, though like that but of a short continuancy; see Cant. vi. 10. the next might have her name from the fragrancy and sweetness of her temper; and the third, as being so beautiful that she needed no paint to set her off, but was beauty and paint herself; or her beauty was as bright and dazzling as a precious stone; see Lam. iv. 7. Or these may respect their internal qualities, virtues, and graces; being children of the day, and not of the night; having a good name, which is better than all spices; and possessed of such graces as were comparable to jewels and precious stones. Though it might be, that Job, in giving them these names, may have respect to the change of his state and condition; his first daughter he called Jemima, or *day*, because it was now day with him: he had been in the night and darkness of adversity, temporal and spiritual, but now he enjoyed a day of prosperity, and of spiritual light and joy; the justness of his cause appeared, his righteousness was brought forth as the light, and his judgment as noon-day; and the dispensations of divine Providence appeared to him in a different light than he had seen them in: his second daughter he called Kezia, or Cassia, an herb of a sweet smell, in opposition to the stench of his ulcers and of his breath, which had been so very offensive, and from which he was now free; and may denote also the recovery of his good name, better than precious ointment, in which cassia was an ingredient: his youngest daughter he called Keren-happuch, the horn of paint, in opposition to his horn being defiled in the dust, and his face foul with weeping, ch. xvi. 15, 16. or if Keren-happuch signifies the *horn turned*, as Peritsol interprets it, it may have respect to the strange and sudden turn of Job's affairs: and it is easy to observe, that men have given names to their children on account of their present state and condition, or on account of the change of a former one; see Gen. xli. 51, 52. Exod. xviii. 3, 4.

Ver. 15. *And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job*, &c.] Either in the whole world, which is not improbable: or it may be rather in the land or country in which they dwelt; and which may be gathered from their names, as before observed. The people of God, and children of Christ, the antitype of Job, are all fair, and there is no spot in them; a perfection of beauty, perfectly comely, through the comeliness of Christ put upon them, and are without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. *And their father gave them inheritance among their brethren*; which was done not on account of their beauty or virtue; nor is this observed so much to shew the great riches of Job, that he could give his daughters as much as his sons, as his impartiality to his children, and his strict justice and equity in distributing his substance to them all alike, making no difference between male and female. And so in Christ, the antitype of Job, there is neither male nor female, no difference between them: but being all children, they are heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, and equally partake of the same inheritance with the saints in light.

Ver. 16. *After this lived Job an hundred and forty years*, &c.] Not after he had arrived to the height of his prosperity; not after the birth of his children, and they were grown up, and had their portions given them, which must take in a considerable number of years; but after his afflictions were over, and his prosperity began: and if his years were doubled, as some think, though that is not certain, then he must be seventy years of age when he was so sorely afflicted, and must live to the age of two hundred and ten; which is the common notion of the Jewish writers[z]: however, he must be fifty or sixty years of age at that time, since his former children were grown up and

[t] Vid. Balmes. Gram. Strat. 26.
[u] Hist. Jobi, c. 12. s. 7.
[w] Golii Lexic. Arab. col. 2767, 2768.
[x] Geograph. Nub. Climat. 2. par. 6.
[y] Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 356.
[z] T. Bava Bathra, fol. 15. 2. Seder Olam Rabba, c. 3.

were for themselves; and it is said[a], his afflictions continued seven years. So that it is not at all improbable that he lived to be about two hundred years of age; and which was a singular blessing of God to him, if you compare his age with that of Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Joshua, between the two former and the two latter he may be supposed to live. *And saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations*; Joseph saw but the third, Job the fourth, he was a great-great-grandfather. This was no doubt a pleasant sight to him, to see such a numerous offspring descending from him; and especially if they were walking in the ways of God, as probably they were, since no doubt he would take all the care of their education that in him lay. This is the great blessing promised to the Messiah, the antitype of Job, Isa. liii. 10. see also Isa. lix. 21.

Ver. 17. *So Job died*, &c.] As every man does, though he lived so long, and as Methuselah the oldest man did; and though a good man, the best of men die as well as others: *so Job died*, as a good man, in the Lord, in faith and hope of eternal life and happiness; and so he died in all his outward prosperity and happiness, having great substance and a numerous offspring. *Being old*; as he might be truly called, being two hundred years of age or thereabout: *and full of days*; lived out all his days, the full term of life in common, and longer than it was usual for men to live. He had a long life to satisfaction, as is promised, Psal. xci. 16. He lived as long as he desired to live, was quite satisfied with living; not that he loathed life, as he once did, and in that sense he did, and from such principles and with such views as he then had, ch. vii. 15, 16. But he had enough of life, and was willing to die; and came to his grave, as Eliphaz said, *like a shock of corn in his season*, ch. v. 26. Adrichomius[b], from certain travellers, speaks of the sepulchre of Job, in the form of a pyramid, in the plains of the land of Uz, to the east of the city Sueta, shewn to this day, and had in great honour by Greeks and others; and which is more probable than what some say[c], that his grave is in Constantinople, where there is a gate called Job's gate, from thence: but the Job there buried was a general of the Saracens, who died besieging that city with a numerous army, and was there buried, A. D. 675[d]. There is a fragment at the end of the Septuagint and Arabic versions of this book, said to be translated from a Syriac copy, which gives a very particular account of Job's descent; as, "that he dwelt in the land of Ausitis, on the "borders of Idumæa and Arabia; that his name was "first Jobab; that he married an Arabian woman, and "begot a son, whose name was Ennon; that his father was Zare, a son of the sons of Esau; that his "mother was Bosorra (or Bosra); and that he was the "fifth from Abraham. And these are the kings that "reigned in Edom, which country he reigned over; "the first was Balac, the son of Beor, the name of "whose city was Dennaba; after Balac, Jobab, called "Job; after him Asom, who was governor in the "country of Theman; after him Adad, the son of "Barad, who cut off Midian in the field of Moab, "the name of whose city was Gethaim. The friends "that came to him (Job) were Eliphaz, of the sons "of Esau, the king of the Themanites; Baldad, "king of the Sauchæans; and Sophar, king of the "Minæans." The substance of this is confirmned by Aristæus, Philo, and Polyhistor[e], ancient historians.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

THE title of this book may be rendered *the Book of Praises, or Hymns*; the psalm which our Lord sung at the passover is called an *hymn*, Matt. xxvi. 30. and the 145th Psalm is entitled תהלה, *an Hymn of David*; and the psalms in general are called *hymns* by Philo the Jew[a], and songs and hymns by Josephus[b]; and to these several names of this book the apostle manifestly refers in Ephes. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. The Jews divided the writings of the Old Testament into three parts: the first division is the Law, or five books of Moses; the second is the Prophets; former and latter; and the third, the *Hagiographa*, or holy writings; to which division Christ has a regard in Luke xxiv. 44. and because the book of Psalms stand first in the last division, the whole goes by its name. This book by the Apostle Peter is entitled as here, Acts i. 20. the title in the Syriac version is, "the Book of the Psalms "of David, King and Prophet," with which agrees the Arabic version. As to the divine authority of it, that it was written by inspiration of God, we have not only the testimony of David, who says, *the Spirit of God spake by me*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. but the testimonies of Christ and his apostles, Matt. xxii. 43. Acts i. 16. and iv. 24, 25. and, as Aben Ezra[c] observes, the whole of it was spoken ברוח הקודש, *by the Holy Ghost*. Concerning the penman or amanuensis, employed by the spirit of God in writing it, there are different opinions. The Jews make mention of ten, which are differently reck-

[a] Saidas in voce Iωβ.
[b] Theatrum Terræ S. p. 93.
[c] Juchasin, fol. 9. 2.
[d] Schindler. Lexic. Pentaglott. col 64.

[e] Apud Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. l. 9. c. 25.
[a] De Mutat. Nom. p. 1068.
[b] Antiquitat. l. 7. c. 12. s. 3.
[c] Præfat. in Psalm.

oned by them. According to Jarchi[e], they were Adam, Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Asaph, and the three sons of Korah. According to Kimchi[f], they were Adam, the first, Melchizedek, Abraham, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, Moses, and the three sons of Korah; Asir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. Some ascribe all the Psalms to David[g], and think that those which are said to be a psalm of Asaph, or of Heman, &c. should be rendered *a psalm to Asaph*, &c. and only signify that they were psalms delivered to them, to be sung in a public manner. But the truest opinion seems to be, that the greater part of them were written by David, and for the most part those that have no title; and the rest by those whose names they bear. Some were written at and after the Babylonish captivity, as Psalm cxxvi. and cxxxvii. The manner or form in which they were written was metre[h], though some deny it that the Jews had metre; as appears by the different accentuation of them from other writings, and from their being sung vocally and on musical instruments. Josephus[i], the Jewish historian, says, that "David being free from war, and enjoy-"ing a profound peace, composed songs and hymns to "God, of various metre; some trimeter, and some "pentameter;" *i. e.* some of three feet, and others of five feet: for the Psalms of David are thought to be of the *lyric* kind; and Gomarus, in his Lyra, has given many instances out of them, which are of the *iambic, trochaic* kind, &c. though the Jews for many years have lost the knowledge of the sacred poetry. R. Benjamin[k] indeed says, that in his time there were at Bagdad R. Eleazar and his brethren, who knew how to sing the songs, as the singers did when the temple was standing. The subject-matter of this book is exceeding great and excellent; many of the psalms respect the person, offices, and grace of Christ; his sufferings and death, resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God; and so are exceeding suitable to the Gospel dispensation. The whole book is a rich mine of grace and evangelical truths, and a large fund of spiritual experience; and is abundantly suited to every case, state, and condition, that the church of Christ, or particular believers, are in at any time.

PSALM I.

THIS psalm, though without a title, may reasonably be thought to be a psalm of David; since the next psalm, which is also without a title, is ascribed to him, Acts iv. 25. and since both are joined together as one psalm by the Jews[l]; see the note on Acts xiii. 33. and since this is the general preface to the whole book, which is chiefly of David's penning, it is entitled, in the metaphrase of Apollinarius, "a Song of David, the "Prophet and King."

Ver. 1. *Blessed is the man*, &c.] This psalm begins in like manner as Christ's sermon on the mount, Matt. v. 2. setting forth the praises and expressing the happiness of the man who is described in this and the following verse. The words may be rendered, O, *the blessednesses of the man*, or *of this man*[m]; he is doubly blessed, a thrice happy and blessed man; blessed in things temporal and spiritual; happy in this world, and in that to come. He is to be praised and commended as a good man, so the Targum: "the good-"ness, or, O, the goodness of the man;" or as others, "O, the right goings or happy progress, or prosperous "success of the man[n]," who answers to the following characters; which right walking of his is next observed, and his prosperity in ver. 3. Some have interpreted this psalm of Christ, and think it is properly spoken of him[o]. *That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly*: all men are by nature and practice ungodly, without God, without the true knowledge, fear, and worship of God, and are at enmity against him. It is a character that belongs to God's elect as well as others, whilst in a state of nature; and is sometimes used to illustrate the love of Christ in dying for them, and the grace of God in the justification of them, Rom. iv. 5. and v. 6. But here it describes not such who are wicked in heart and life in common only, but the reprobate part of mankind, profligate and abandoned sinners, such as Jude speaks of, ver. 4. and for whom the law is made, and against whom it lies, 1 Tim. i. 9. The word[p] here used signifies such who are restless and continually in mischief; who are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, ever casting up mire and dirt: they are always disquieted themselves, and are ever disquieting others; nor do they cease from being so till they are laid in their graves. And to these *counsel* is ascribed, which supposes capacity and wisdom; as, generally speaking, such are wise and prudent in natural and civil things, and are wise to do evil, though to do good they have no knowledge: and counsel implies consultation and deliberation; they act deliberately in sinning, they cast about in their minds, form schemes, and contrive ways and means how to accomplish their vicious purposes; and sometimes they enter into a confederacy, and consult together with one consent, and their counsel is generally against the Lord, though it does not prosper and prevail; and against his Christ, his people, truths and ordinances; it takes in both their principles and practices; and the sum of their counsel is to indulge themselves in sin, to throw off all religion, and to cast off the fear and worship of God, Job xxi. 14, 15. Now *not to walk* herein is not to

[e] Praefat. in Psalm.
[f] Praefat. in Ibid.
[g] R. Hona in Midrash Tillim, fol. 2. 1.
[h] Vid. Lowth. de Sacr. Poes. Heb. Praelect. 3. s. 32, &c.
[i] Ut supra.
[k] Itinerar. p. 70, 71.
[l] T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 9. 2.

[m] אשרי האיש beatitudines illius viri, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus.
[n] Recti incessus, felices progressus, ac prosperi successus, Michaelis; so Piscator.
[o] Justinian. in Octapl. Psalt. in loc. Romualdus apud Mabillon. Itinerar. Ital. p. 181.
[p] רשעים significat eos qui sine quiete & indesinenter impie degunt; Vatablus.

hearken to their counsel, to give into it, agree with it, pursue it, and act according to it; and happy is the man, who, though he may fall in the way of it, and may have bad counsel given him by ungodly men, yet does not consent to it, take it, and act upon it. This may be applied to the times of the Messiah, and the men of the age in which he lived; and the rather, since the next psalm, in which mention is made of the counsel of the ungodly, manifestly belongs unto them. The men of that generation were a set of ungodly men, who consulted against Christ to take away his life; and blessed is the man, as Joseph of Arimathea, who, though he was in that assembly which conspired against the life of Christ, did not walk in, nor consent unto, their counsel and their deeds, Luke xxiii. 51. *Nor standeth in the way of sinners*; all men are sinners through Adam's disobedience, and their own actual transgressions, and such were the elect of God, when Christ died for them; and indeed are so after conversion, for no man lives without sin. But here it intends notorious sinners, who are open, bold, and daring in iniquity; the word [p] signifies such, who in shooting miss the mark, and go aside from it, as such sinners do from the law of God; proceed from evil to evil, choose their own ways, and delight in their abominations. Now their *way* is not only their *opinion*, as the Syriac version renders it, their corrupt sentiments, but their sinful course of life; which is a way of darkness, a crooked path, and a road that leads to destruction and death: and happy is the man that does *not stand* in this way, which denotes openness, impudence, and continuance; who, though he may fall into this way, does not abide in it; see Rom. vi. 1, 2. The Pharisees in the time of Christ, though they were not openly and outwardly sinners, yet they were secretly and inwardly such; and the way they stood in was that of justification by the works of the law: but happy is the man, as the Apostle Paul and others, who stands not in that way, but in the way Christ Jesus, and in the way of life and righteousness by him. *Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful*; by whom may be meant proud and haughty persons, in opposition to the humble and lowly, as in Prov. iii. 34. such who are proud of their natural abilities, knowledge, and wisdom, of their honours and riches, or of their own righteousness, and despise others; or such who are desperate in wickedness, of whom there is no hope; see Prov. ix. 7, 8. and Deists and atheists, who scoff at divine revelation, and mock at a future state, at death, hell, and judgment, as in Isa. xxviii. 14, 15. 2 Peter iii. 3. Now happy is the man that does not sit or keep company with such persons; who comes not into their secret and into their assembly; does not associate himself with them, nor approve of their dispositions, words, principles, and actions; see Psal. xxvi. 4, 5. Such were the Scribes and Pharisees in Christ's time; they derided him and his doctrines, scoffed at him when he hung upon the cross, and despised him and his apostles, and his Gospel; but there were some that did not join with them, to whom he, his ministers, and truths, were precious and in high esteem, and to whom he was the power and wisdom of God.

Ver. 2. *But his delight is in the law of the Lord*, &c.] Not the law of nature, which was inscribed on Adam's heart in innocence, but now greatly impaired by sin, and become very imperfect and very insufficient to make men happy, or to lead them to true felicity; nor the law of Moses, which is a fiery law, and works wrath, accuses of sin, pronounces guilty, curses and condemns to death; and therefore cannot be delighted in by a sensible sinner, unless as it is in the hands of Christ, and as fulfilled by him, who is the end of it; and as it is written on the heart of a regenerate man, who, so far as it is, delights in it after the inward man, and serves it with his spirit: but rather the Scriptures, as much and as many parts of them as were written in David's time; particularly the five books of Moses, which are called the Law, and the Testimony of the Lord; which being inspired by God, were profitable and delightful to read, and to hear explained; and as they were David's delight, and the men of his council, Psal. cxix. 24. so they were the delight of every good man, there being many things in them concerning the Messiah, his grace and kingdom; see Luke xxiv. 44. Acts xxvi. 22, 23. Moreover the word תורה, here used, signifies *doctrine*, and may intend the evangelic doctrine, as it does in Psal. xix. 7. which is a psalm concerning the doctrine of the apostles that went into all the world; and in like sense is the word used in Isa. ii. 3. and xlii. 4. of the doctrine of the Messiah, that is, the Gospel; and is the same with the law, or doctrine of faith, in Rom. iii. 27. And this may be called the doctrine of the Lord, because he is the author of it; it came by him, he revealed it; and because he is the subject of it; it is concerning him, his person, office, grace, and righteousness; and so far as it was published in the times of David, it was a joyful sound, good news and glad tidings, and the delight of good men. *And in his law doth he meditate day and night*; as Joshua was directed to do, and David did, Josh. i. 8. Psal. cxix. 97. This is to be understood of a diligent reading and serious consideration of it; and of the employment of the thoughts, and of deep study upon it, in order to find out the sense and meaning of it; and which is to be done constantly, every day, as often as there is leisure and opportunity for it; or, as Kimchi on the place observes, whenever a man is free from the business of life; unless this should be taken figuratively, of the day of prosperity and night of adversity, whether in things temporal or spiritual, which are each of them proper seasons to meditate in, upon the word of God and Gospel of Christ.

Ver. 3. *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water*, &c.] Or, *for then shall he be*, &c. as Alshech renders the words; and the Hebrew particle *vau* is often used for *then*[q]. As the preceding verses describe the man who is blessed, this points at his blessedness, and shews and proves him to be an happy man; for he is comparable to a *tree*: not to a dry tree, or a tree without fruit, or whose fruit is withered; but to a fruitful tree, a green and flourishing one; to a green olive-tree, or a palm-tree, or a cedar in Lebanon; to which David compares himself and the righteous, Psal. lii. 8. and xcii. 12. and here such an one is com-

[p] חטאים qui longissime aberrant a scopo legis; Gejerus.

[q] Vid. Noldii Concord. Part. Ebr. p. 30[illegible].

pared to a tree *planted*; not to one that grows of itself, a wild tree, a tree of the wood; but to one that is removed from its native place and soil, and planted elsewhere; and so designs such who are broken off of the wild olive-tree, and are grafted into the good olive-tree; who are planted in Christ Jesus, and in the church, the house of the Lord; of which transplantation the removal of Israel into Canaan's land was an emblem, Psal. lxxx. 8. and such a spiritual plantation is of God the husbandman; whose planting the saints are efficiently, Isa. lx. 21. and lxi. 3. Matt. xv. 13. And it is owing to the word, the ingrafted word, which is the means of this ingrafture, and to the ministers of it instrumentally; some of whom plant, and others water, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7. Moreover, the happy man before described is like a tree that is situated *by the rivers of water, or divisions* [1] and rivulets of water; which running about the plants, make them very fruitful and flourishing; see Ezek. xxxi. 4. and which may intend the river of the love of God, and the streams of it, the discoveries and applications of it to regenerate persons; and also the fulness of grace in Christ, who is the fountain of gardens, the well of living waters and streams from Lebanon, to revive, refresh, supply, and comfort his people; as well as the graces of the spirit of God, which are near the saints, and like rivers of water flow out of them that believe in Christ; to which may be added the word and ordinances of the Gospel, which are the still waters, to which they are invited and led, and by which and with which they are greatly refreshed, and made fruitful. Arama interprets it of the waters of the law; it is best to understand it of the Gospel; see Isa. lv. 1. it follows, *that bringeth forth his fruit in his season*: and so appears to be a tree of righteousness, filled with the fruits of righteousness, the graces of the spirit, and good works; which are brought forth by him under the influence of grace, as he has opportunity, and according to the measure of grace bestowed. *His leaf also shall not wither*; neither tree, nor fruit, nor leaf shall wither, but shall be always green: which is expressive of the saints' perseverance: the reasons of which are, they are ingrafted in Christ the true vine, and abide in him, from whom they have their sap, nourishment, and fruit; they are rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith of him; and so they hold fast the profession of it without wavering. *And whatsoever he doth shall prosper*; meaning not so much in things temporal, of which Arama interprets it, for in these the good man does not always succeed, but in things spiritual: whatever he does in faith, from love, to the glory of God, and in the name of Christ, prospers; yea, those things in which he is concerned, that are adverse, and seem for the present to be against him, in the issue work for good to him: in short, such a man is blessed with grace here, and glory hereafter; and therefore must needs be an happy man.

Ver. 4. *The ungodly are not so*, &c.] They are not as the good man is; their manner and course of life are different; they walk in the counsel of ungodly men, like themselves, and take counsel against the Lord, his Anointed, and his people: they stand in the way of sinners, and steer their conversation according to the course of the world, and sit in the seat of the scornful; laugh at divine revelation, lampoon the Scriptures, deride good men, make a jest of religion and a future state: they have no delight in the law of the Lord, they cast it away from them, and despise it; and are so far from a constant meditation on it, that they never read it, nor so much as look into it, nor is it ever in their thoughts. They are not like to a tree, as described in the preceding verse: if they are like to trees, it is to dry trees, and not green ones, to trees without any sap, moisture, and verdure, and which are only fit fuel for the fire; to the trees of the wood, to wild olive-trees; to trees on an heath, in a desert, in parched land, and not to trees by rivers of water, but to trees that have no root, and are without fruit, Jude, ver. 12. And though they may be in a seeming prosperous condition for a time, may be in great power, riches, and honour, and spread themselves like a green bay-tree; yet suddenly they are cut down as the grass, and wither as the green herb; and even their outward prosperity destroys them; so that not any thing they have or do in the issue prospers; and therefore they are not blessed or happy as the good man is; yea, they are wretched and miserable, nay, cursed; they are cursed now, and will be hereafter; they are cursed in their basket and store, their blessings are curses to them; the law pronounces them cursed; and they will hear, *go ye cursed*, at the day of judgment. The Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, and Arabic versions, repeat the words *not so*, and read *not so the ungodly, not so*; which seems to be done for the confirmation of the truth of it: but are *like the chaff which the wind driveth away*; they are like chaff, which has no root, moisture, greenness, nor fruitfulness; they have nothing in them solid and substantial; they are destitute of all that is good; are vain and empty; without the knowledge of God and Christ; without faith in Christ and love to him; and are sensual, not having the spirit, his graces and fruits: they are like chaff for lightness, vain in their imaginations, light in their principles, frothy in their words, and unstable in all their ways; they are never long in any position, unsettled, disquieted, and tossed to and fro; and there is no peace unto them; they are like chaff, useless and unprofitable, nothing worth, fit only for everlasting burnings, which will be their case. For when Christ will gather his wheat, the righteous, which are of value, into his garner, the heavenly glory, he will burn the chaff, the wicked, with unquenchable fire. They are now like chaff, driven and carried about with every wind of doctrine, with divers and strange doctrines, and entertain every light and airy notion; and are easily drawn aside and carried away by the force of their own lusts, and with every temptation of Satan, who works effectually in them; and particularly they are like chaff before the wind of terrible judgments and calamities in this life, and of the awful judgment hereafter, when they will be driven away from the presence of the Lord into everlasting destruction. The metaphor is often used in

[1] על פלגי juxta divisiones; Musculus, Hammond; so Ben Melech.

this sense; see Job xxi. 17. Isa. xvii. 13, 14. and xxix. 5. Hos. xiii. 3. and denotes the secret, sudden, sure, and easy ruin of the ungodly, which comes upon them like a whirlwind, in an instant, which they cannot avoid; and they can no more stand before God and against him, than chaff before the wind. It follows,

Ver. 5. *Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, &c.*] Neither in temporal judgment, when God comes forth in a way of wrath and sore displeasure; for who can stand before him when he is angry? what are chaff and stubble, thorns and briers, to consuming fire? nor in the last and great day of judgment, so the Targum and Kimchi interpret the words; for that day will burn like an oven the wicked, who will be as stubble, and leave neither root nor branch: when the great day of the Lamb's wrath is come, who will be able to stand? there will be no standing for the wicked when he appears; they will all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to take their trial and hear their sentence; but they shall not stand in the same place with the righteous, not at Christ's right hand, but at his left; they shall not stand with an holy confidence, with intrepidity, and without shame, as the blessed man will; they will not stand, but fall in judgment; they will not be acquitted and discharged, but be condemned to everlasting punishment; and this sense the Targum on the place expresses, *the ungodly shall not be justified in the great day*; the Vulgate Latin and Septuagint versions render the words, *the ungodly shall not rise again in judgment*; from whence some have concluded there will be no resurrection of the wicked: which seems to be the sense of Kimchi and other Jewish writers: who assert that the souls of the wicked perish with their bodies at death, and that the latter rise not, contrary to Eccl. xii. 7. Dan. xii. 2. but that the wicked will rise may be concluded from the justice of God, which requires that the bodies which have sinned should be punished; and from the general judgment of good and bad, and from the account of the punishment of hell, which will be inflicted on the body as well as on the soul: besides, the contrary doctrine is a licentious one, and is calculated to harden wicked men in their sins, and is directly repugnant to the assertions of Christ, and the Apostle Paul, John v. 28, 29. Acts xxiv. 16. nor has it any foundation in this text, even admitting such a version; which does not absolutely affirm that the wicked shall not rise again, but that they shall not rise again in judgment, in the first resurrection, the resurrection of the just, and so as to be acquitted and discharged, but they shall rise to the resurrection of damnation. *Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*; who are made righteous by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and have a work of grace and holiness wrought in them; and who, under the influence of grace, live soberly, righteously, and godly; these are the same with the blessed man, ver. 1. and who at the day of judgment will be perfectly holy, and free from all sin; and they will be all gathered together by the holy angels; the dead saints will be raised, the living ones will be changed, and both will be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and will make up one general assembly and church of the first-born; and among these, and in this assembly, there will not be a single sinner; there are now sinners in Zion, foolish virgins with the wise, chaff and tares among Christ's wheat, and wolves and goats among his sheep; but then there will be an eternal separation, and no mixing together any more.

Ver. 6. *For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, &c.*] The way in which he walks by faith, which is in Jesus Christ; the way in which he goes to the Father, and carries to him his sacrifices of prayer and praise, which meet with acceptance through him; the way in which he seeks for and expects justification, pardon, and salvation, namely, through the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ: and also it may denote his course, his walk and conversation; for the righteous man is a follower of God, he takes up the cross and copies after Christ: he walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, according to the rule of the word, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ: and this way of his in every sense the Lord *knows*; not merely as he is omniscient, for by his omniscience his eyes are upon the ways of all men; he knows the way of the wicked as well as the way of the righteous; but the sense is, that the Lord approves of and is well pleased with his way of faith and holiness; he knows his person, so as to love him and take delight and pleasure in him; his countenance beholds him with a smile; he is well pleased with him in Christ and for his sake, on whose account he has respect to him and to his offerings, to his service and duty, to his ways and works; and hence he is a blessed man, is in a happy situation, and all he does prospers; for he and his ways please the Lord: and hence also it is that neither he nor his way shall perish; the way he is in leads to everlasting life, and he being a follower of the Lord in a way pleasing to him, he shall never perish, but have eternal life. *But the way of the ungodly shall perish*; for his way is a wicked way, the way of sinners, ver. 1. it leads to destruction and death, and all that walk in it shall perish; for it is a way the Lord knows not, does not approve of, he abhors it; wherefore the man that continues in it will be unhappy, wretched, and miserable to all eternity. These last words therefore shew the reason of the happiness of one sort of men, and the unhappiness of the other; and prove and confirm the same: the Lord knows, approves of, loves, and delights in the one; he does not approve of and delight in the other.

PSALM II.

THIS psalm is the second in order, and so it is called in Acts xiii. 33. which shews that the book of Psalms was in the same form in the apostles' days as now, and as it ever had been; and though it is without a title, yet certain it is that it is a psalm of David, since the twelve apostles of Christ with one

voice ascribe it to him, in which no doubt they spoke the generally received sense of the Jewish nation, Acts iv. 24, 25. and the Messiah is the subject of it; and that it is a prophecy concerning him, his person, office, and kingdom, appears from the express mention of the Lord's Anointed, or Messiah, in it; from his being set as King over Zion, notwithstanding the opposition made against him; from the person spoken of being called the Son of God, and that in such sense as angels and men are not, and therefore cannot belong to any creature; and from his having so large an inheritance, and such power over the Heathen; and from the reverence, service, and obedience due to him from the kings and judges of the earth; and from the trust and confidence which is to be put in him, which ought not to be placed but in a divine Person; and more especially this appears from several passages cited out of it in the New Testament, and applied to the Messiah, Acts iv. 25, 26, 27. and xiii. 33. Heb. i. 5. and v. 5. to which may be added, that the ancient Jewish doctors interpreted this psalm of the Messiah [s]; and some of the modern ones own that it may be understood either of David or of the Messiah, and that some things are clearer of the Messiah than of David [t]; and some particular passages in it are applied to him both by ancient and later writers among the Jews, as ver. 1, 2. *Why do the Heathen rage, &c.* [u] ver. 6. *I have set, &c.* [w], ver. 7. *I will declare the decree, &c.* [x], and ver. 8. *Ask of me, &c.* [y]; and we may very safely interpret the whole of him.

Ver. 1. *Why do the Heathen rage, &c.*] Or *the nations;* which some understand of the Jews, who are so called, Gen. xvii. 5. Ezek. ii. 2. because of their several tribes; and of their rage against the Messiah there have been many instances; as when they gnashed upon him with their teeth, and at several times took up stones to stone him, and cried out in a most furious and wrathful manner, *crucify him, crucify him,* Luke iv. 28, 29. John viii. 59. and x. 31. and xix. 6, 15. though it is best to interpret it of the Gentiles, as the apostles seem to do in Acts iv. 27. The Hebrew word translated *rage* is by one Jewish writer [z] explained by חברו, *associate* or *meet together*; and which is often the sense of the word in the Syriac and Chaldee languages, in which it is more used; and another [a] says, that it is expressive of *gathering together, and of a multitude;* it intends a tumultous gathering together, as is that of a mob, with great confusion and noise [b]; and so the Gentiles, the Roman soldiers, gathered together, even multitudes of them, and came out with Judas at the head of them, with swords and staves, to apprehend Christ and bring him to the chief priests and elders; these assembled together in Pilate's hall, when Christ was condemned to be crucified, and insulted him in a most rude and shocking manner; and many are the instances of the Gentiles rising in mobs, and appearing in riotous assemblies, making tumults and uproars against the apostles to oppose them, and the spread of the Gospel by them: to which they were sometimes instigated by the unbelieving Jews, and sometimes by their own worldly interest; see Acts xiii. 50. and xiv. 5, 19. and xvii. 5, 6. and xix. 23—29. to which may be added, as instances of this tumult and rage, the violent persecutions both of the Pagan emperors and of the Papists, which last are called Gentiles as well as the other; for this respects the kingdom of Christ, or the Gospel dispensation, from the beginning to the end. *And the people imagine a vain thing?* by *the people* are meant the people of Israel, who were once God's peculiar people, and who were distinguished by him with peculiar favours above all others, and in whom this prophecy has been remarkably fulfilled; they imagined and meditated a vain thing when they thought the Messiah would be a temporal King, and set up a kingdom on earth in great worldly splendour and glory, and rejected Jesus, the true Messiah, because he did not answer to these their carnal imaginations; they meditated a vain thing when they sought to take away the good name and reputation of Christ, by fixing opprobrious names and injurious charges upon him, for Wisdom has been justified of her children; and so they did when they meditated his death, with those vain hopes that he should die and his name perish, and should lie down in the grave and never rise more, Psal. xli. 5, 6, 8. for he not only rose from the dead, but his name was more famous after his death than before; they imagined a vain thing when they took so much precaution to prevent the disciples stealing his body out of the sepulchre, and giving out that he was risen from the dead, and more especially when he was risen, to hire the soldiers to tell a lie in order to stifle and discredit the report of it; they meditated vain things when they attempted to oppose the apostles, and hinder the preaching of the Gospel by them, which they often did, as the Acts of the Apostles testify; and it was after one of these attempts that the apostles, in their address to God, made use of this very passage of Scripture, Acts iv. 2, 3, 17, 18, 24, 25. and they still meditate a vain thing in that they imagine Jesus of Nazareth is not the Messiah, and that the Messiah is not yet come; and in that they are expecting and looking for him. Now the psalmist, or the Holy Ghost by him, asks *why* all this? what should move the Gentiles and the Jews to so much rage, tumult, and opposition against an holy and innocent person, and who went about doing good as he did? what end they could have in it, or serve by it? and how they could expect to succeed? what would all their rage and riot, and vain imagination, signify? it is strongly suggested hereby that it would all be in vain and to no purpose, as well as what follows.

Ver. 2. *The kings of the earth set themselves, &c.*] Rose and stood up in great wrath and fury, and presented themselves in an hostile manner, and opposed the Messiah: as Herod the great, king of Judea,

[s] Jarchi in loc.
[t] Kimchi in v. 12. & Aben Ezra in v. 6. 12.
[u] T. Bab. Avodah Zarah, fol. 3. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 19.
[w] R. Saadiah Gaon in Dan. vii. 13.
[x] Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 96. 3. Zohar in Numb. fol. 85. 2. Maimon. in Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 11. 1. & Abarbinel, Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 37. 4. & 38. 1. 2.
[y] T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 1. & Bereshit Rabba, s. 44. fol. 38. 4.
[z] Aben Ezra in loc.
[a] R. Sol. Ben Melech in loc.
[b] [illegible] congregarunt se turmatim, Vatablus; cum tumultu, Muster, Tigurine version.

who very early bestirred himself, and sought to take away the life of Jesus in his infancy; and Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, who is called a king, Mark vi. 14. who with his men of war mocked him, and set him at nought; and Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea, who represented the Roman emperor, and condemned him to death; and all the kings of the earth ever since, who ever persecuted Christ in his members, and have set themselves with all their might to hinder the spread of his Gospel and the enlargement of his interest. *And the rulers take counsel together;* as did the Jewish sanhedrim, the great court of judicature among the Jews, the members of which were the rulers of the people, who frequently met together and consulted to take away the life of Christ: though it may also include all other governors and magistrates who have entered into schemes *against the Lord, and against his Anointed,* or Messiah, Christ: by *the Lord,* or Jehovah, which is the great, the glorious, and incommunicable name of God, and is expressive of his eternal being and self-existence, and of his being the fountain of essence to all creatures, is meant God the Father; since he is distinguished from his Son, the Messiah, his anointed One, as Messiah and Christ signify; and who is so called, because he is anointed by God with the Holy Ghost, without measure, to the office of the Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King; from whom the saints receive the anointing, which teacheth all things, and every grace of the Spirit in measure; and who, after his name, are called Christians. This name of the promised Redeemer was well known among the Jews, John i. 41. and iv. 25. and which they took from this passage, and from some others.

Ver. 3. *Let us break their bands asunder,* &c.] These are not the words of the apostles, nor of the saints in Gospel times, encouraging one another, notwithstanding the rage and opposition of Jews and Gentiles against their Master and his interest, to break asunder the bands of wickedness, the idolatrous customs and practices of the Heathens, and to throw off the insupportable yoke of bondage, of Jewish traditions and ceremonies; but of the Heathen, the people, and kings of the earth, and rulers who, with one voice, say this and what follows, *and cast away their cords from us;* with relation to the Lord and his Anointed, whose laws, ordinances, and truths, they call *bands* and *cords:* so Arama interprets them of the law, and the commandments; or a *yoke,* as the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render the last word; and the phrases in general express their irreverence of God and the Messiah, their rejection of Christ and his religion; their non-subjection to him, and their refusal to have him to rule over them; and their disesteem and contempt of his Gospel, and of the ordinances of it, and of the laws and rules of his government in his churches: and also they shew the wrong notion that carnal men have of these things; that whereas Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden light; his Gospel and the truths of it make men free from the slavery of sin and Satan, and from a spirit of bondage; and true Gospel liberty consists in an observance of his commands and ordinances; yet they look upon these things as bands and cords, as fetters and shackles, as so many restraints upon their liberty, which are not to be bore: when, on the other hand, they promise themselves liberty in a disengagement from them, and in the enjoyment of their own lusts and sinful pleasures; whereas thereby they are brought into bondage, and become the servants of corruption. Some render it *cast away—from him*[c]; either from Christ, or every one from himself.

Ver. 4. *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh,* &c.] At the rage and tumult of the Heathen; at the vain imaginations of the people; at the opposition of the kings of the earth; at the mad counsel of the rulers, against him and his Messiah; and at their proposal to one another to throw off the yoke and government of them both. This is a periphrasis of God, *who dwells in the heavens,* and sits there enthroned; though he is not included and comprehended in them, but is everywhere; and his being there is mentioned in opposition to the kings of the earth, and the people in it; and to shew the vast distance there is between them, and how they are as nothing to him, Isa. xl. 15, 17, 22, Job iv. 18. and how vain and fruitless their attempts must be against him and his Messiah; and his sitting there still and quiet, serene and undisturbed, is opposed to the running to and fro, and the tumultuous and riotous assembling of the Heathen. Laughing is ascribed unto him, according to the language of men, as the Jewish writers speak[d], by an anthropopathy; in the same sense as he is said to repent and grieve, Gen. vi. 6. and expresses his security from all their attempts, Job v. 22. and xli. 29. and the contempt he has them in, and the certain punishment of them, and the aggravation of it; who will not only then laugh at them himself, but expose them to the laughter and scorn of others, Prov. i. 26. *The Lord shall have them in derision;* which is a repetition of the same thing in other words; and is made partly to shew the certainty of their disappointment and ruin, and partly to explain who is meant by him that sits in the heavens. The Targum calls him, *the Word of the Lord;* and Alshech interprets it of the Shechinah.

Ver. 5. *Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath,* &c.] Or, *and he shall speak to them;* so Noldius: that is, the Lord that sits in the heavens, and laughs, and has the Heathen, the people, the kings and rulers in derision, shall not only silently despise their furious and concerted opposition to him and his Messiah, but shall at last speak out unto them, not in his word, but in his providences; and not in love, as to his own people, when he chastises them, but in great wrath, inflicting severe and just punishment. It seems to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, after the crucifixion, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; and after the pouring out of the Spirit, and when the Gospel, to their great mortification, had got ground, and made large advances in the Gentile world. *And vex them in his sore displeasure;* or *in the heat of his anger*[e]: see Deut. xxix. 24. where the Holy Ghost speaks of the same people, and of the

[c] ממנו a nobis, sive ab illo, Nehiensis.
[d] Kimchi, Aben Ezra, & R. Sol. Ben Melech in loc.
[e] בחרונו In aestu irae suae, Junius & Tremellius.

same ruin and destruction of them at the same time, as here: and as the carrying of the Jews captive into Babylon is called their vexation, Isa. ix. 1. much more may their destruction by the Romans; then it was they howled for vexation of spirit, Isa. lxv. 14. the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost; they were filled with trouble and confusion, with terror and consternation, as the word [f] used signifies; they were vexed to see themselves straitened and pent in on every side by the Roman armies, oppressed with famine and intestine divisions, rapine and murder; to see their temple profaned and burnt, their city plundered and destroyed, and themselves taken and carried captive: and what most of all vexed them was, that their attempts against Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah, were fruitless; and that, notwithstanding all their opposition to him, his name was famous, his interest increased, his kingdom was enlarged, through the spread of his Gospel among the Gentiles; and what Jehovah in the next verse says, though it is to the comfort of his people, was to their terror and vexation.

Ver. 6. *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.*] Or, *behold, I have set*, &c. so Noldius. By Zion is meant the church of God, especially under the Gospel dispensation; see Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xiv. 1. so called, because, as Zion was, it is the object of God's love and choice, the place of his habitation and residence; where divine worship is observed, and the word and ordinances of God administered; and where the Lord distributes his blessings of grace; and which is the perfection of beauty, through Christ's comeliness put upon her; and will be the joy of the whole earth: it is strongly fortified by the power and grace of God, and is immovable and impregnable, being built on Christ, the Rock of ages: and, like Zion, it is an high hill, eminent and visible; and more especially will be so when the mountain of the Lord's house is established upon the tops of the mountains: and it is an holy one, through the presence and worship of God in it, and the sanctification of his spirit. And over this hill, the church, Christ is King; he is King of saints, and is acknowledged by them; and it is for their great safety and security, their joy, comfort, and happiness, that he is set over them: he is called by his Father *my King*, because he who is King of Zion is his Anointed, as in ver. 2. and his Son, his begotten Son, as in ver. 7. his first-born, his fellow and equal; and because he is his as King: not that he is King over him, for his Father is greater than he, as man and Mediator, or with respect to his office-capacity, in which he is to be considered as King; and therefore he is rather King under him: but he is a King of his setting up, and therefore called his; he has appointed him his kingdom, given him the throne of his father David; put a crown of pure gold on his head, and crowned him with glory and honour, and the sceptre of righteousness in his hand, and has given him a name above every name. He did not make himself a King, nor was he made so by men: but he was set up, or *anointed* by God the Father, as the word [g] here used signifies; and may refer either to the inauguration of Christ into his kingly office, and his investiture with it from all eternity, as in Prov. viii. 23. where the same word is used as here; and anointing with oil being a ceremony performed at the instalment of kings into their office, the phrase is used for the thing itself: or rather, since Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost in the human nature, at his incarnation and baptism, and especially at the time of his ascension, when he was made or declared to be LORD and CHRIST; this may refer to the time when he, as the ascended Lord and King, gave gifts to men, to his apostles, and qualified them in an extraordinary manner to carry his Gospel into the Gentile world, and spread it there, as they did with success; whereby his kingdom became more visible and glorious, to the great vexation of the Jews; for, maugre all their opposition, Christ being set by his Father King over his church and people, continued so, and his kingdom was every day more and more enlarged, to their great mortification.

Ver. 7. *I will declare the decree*, &c.] These are the words of Jehovah's Anointed and King, exercising his kingly office, according to the decree and commandment of the Father: for these words refer not to the following, concerning the generation of the Son, which does not depend on the decree and arbitrary will of God, but is from his nature; but these words relate to what go before. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Oriental versions, place this clause at the end of the preceding verse; some render it, *declaring his commandment*, or *the commandment of the Lord*: the laws that he would have observed, both by him and by the subjects of his kingdom. The Syriac and Arabic versions, *that he might declare the commandment of the Lord*; as if this was the end of his being appointed King. The word חק is differently rendered; by many, *the decree*, the purpose of God concerning Christ as Mediator, and the salvation of his people by him; and who so fit to declare this as he who lay in the bosom of the Father, and was privy to all his secret thoughts and designs, and in whom the eternal purpose was purposed? John i. 18. Ephes. iii. 11. The Chaldee paraphrase renders it by קימא, *the covenant*, the everlasting covenant of grace; and who so proper to declare this as he with whom the covenant was made, and who is the covenant itself, in whom all the blessings and promises of it are, and the messenger of it? Mal. iii. 1. It may not be unfitly applied to the Gospel, which is the sum and substance of both the decree and covenant of God; it is what was ordained before the world for our glory. This Christ was appointed to preach, and did declare it in the great congregation; the same with the counsel of God, Acts xx. 27. The words will bear to be rendered, *I will declare* אל חק *to the command* [h]; or according to the order and rule prescribed by Jehovah, without adding to it or taking from it: agreeably to which he executed his office as King, and Prophet also. The

[f] יבהלמו conturbabit, V. L. Vatablus, Gejerus; so Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; terrebit, Pagninus, Montanus; so Cocceius, Michaelis; see Ainsworth.

[g] נסכתי εχρισα, Symmachus; unxi, Musculus, Vatablus, Ainsworth, Piscator, Muis, Cocceius; ego inunxi, Junius & Tremellius; inunxi, Michaelis.

[h] אל חק Heb. ad decretum, Michaelis, Piscator; juxta vel secundum statutum, Musculus, Gejerus; praescriptum & modum certum, Cocceius.

doctrine was not his own, but his Father's he preached; he spake not of himself, but as he taught and enjoined him: the Father gave him commandment what he should say and speak, John xii. 49. and he kept close to it, as he here says he would: and he ruled in his name, and by his authority, according to the law of his office; and which might be depended upon from the dignity of his person, which qualified him both for his kingly and prophetic offices, expressed in the following words: *the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son;* not by creation, as angels and men; nor by adoption, as saints; nor by office, as civil magistrates; nor on account of his incarnation or resurrection; nor because of the great love of God unto him; but in such a way of filiation as cannot be said of any creature nor of any other, Heb. i. 5. He is the true, proper, natural, and eternal Son of God, and as such declared, owned, and acknowledged by Jehovah the Father, as in these words; the foundation of which relation lies in what follows: *this day have I begotten thee;* which act of begetting refers not to the nature, nor to the office, but the person of Christ; not to his nature, not to his divine nature, which is common with the Father and Spirit; wherefore if his was begotten, theirs must be also; much less to his human nature, in which he is never said to be begotten, but always to be made, and with respect to which he is without father: nor to his office as Mediator, in which he is not a Son, but a servant; besides, he was a Son previous to his being Prophet, Priest, and King; and his office is not the foundation of his sonship, but his sonship is the foundation of his office; or by which that is supported, and which fits him for the performance of it: but it has respect to his person; for, as in human generation, person begets person, and like begets like, so in divine generation; but care must be taken to remove all imperfection from it, such as divisibility and multiplication of essence, priority and posteriority, dependence, and the like: nor can the modus or manner of it be conceived or explained by us. The date of it, *to-day*, designs eternity, as in Isa. xliii. 13. which is one continued day, an everlasting now. And this may be applied to any time and case in which Christ is declared to be the Son of God; as at his incarnation, his baptism, and transfiguration upon the mount, and his resurrection from the dead, as it is in Acts xiii. 33. because then he was declared to be the Son of God with power, Rom. i. 4. and to his ascension into heaven, where he was made Lord and Christ, and his divine sonship more manifestly appeared; which seems to be the time and case more especially referred to here, if it be compared with Heb. i. 3, 4, 5.

Ver. 8. *Ask of me*, &c.] Jehovah is either here again introduced speaking, or these words are a continuation of the Son's account of what his Father said unto him; which do not suppose any superiority in the one, or inferiority in the other; but are only expressive of the Father's great respect and affection for his Son, as such a way of speaking among men shews, Esther v. 3. Matt. xiv. 7. and of the great interest the Son had in his Father, who could ask nothing but he had it; and shews the perfect harmony, agreement, and unity between them: see 1 Kings iii. 5. Christ, in the council and covenant of grace and peace, asked many things of his Father, which were granted; he asked for the persons of all the elect to be his bride and spouse, and his heart's desire was given him, and the request of his lips was not withheld from him: he asked for all the blessings of grace for them; for spiritual life here, and eternal life hereafter; and all were given him, and put into his hands for them, Psal. xx. 2, 3, 4. and here it is promised him, *and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession;* by *the Heathen*, and *the uttermost parts of the earth*, are meant God's elect among the Gentiles, and who live in the distant parts of the world; which are Christ's other sheep, the Father has given to him as his portion, and whom he has made his care and charge: as if it was not enough that he should be King of Zion, or have the government over his chosen ones among the Jews, he commits into his hands the Gentiles also; see Isa. xlix. 6. and these are given him as his inheritance and possession, as his portion, to be enjoyed by him; and who esteems them as such, and reckons them a goodly heritage, and a peculiar treasure, his jewels, and the apple of his eye. These words respect the calling of the Gentiles under the Gospel dispensation; and the amplitude of Christ's kingdom in all the earth, which shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth.

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron*, &c.] Not his inheritance and possession among the Gentiles, the chosen ones given him by the Father; these he delights in, takes care of, protects, and preserves: but the stubborn and rebellious ones among the Heathen, and in the several parts of the world, who will not have him to reign over them; who treat his person with contempt, reject his government, disobey his Gospel, and despise his commands; towards these Christ will use severity, and will exert his power and break them in pieces. The Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, render it, *shall feed* or *rule them;* and so it is cited in Rev. ii. 27. and xii. 5. and xix. 15. and applied to Christ, the Word of God, and King of kings; and must be understood, as it is in those places, of the severity of his government over them, of the strictness of his justice, without the least display of mercy; and then the sense is the same with those versions which render it, *shall break them;* as the word used is interpreted by the Targum, and the Jewish commentators on the place; and which is confirmed by what follows: *thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel;* which is very easily done with a bar of iron; and, when it is done, the pieces can never be put together again: so that by the metaphor is signified the easy and irreparable ruin of the wicked; see Isa. xxx. 14. Jer. xix. 11. The word signifies that they should be so crumbled into dust, that they should be scattered about as with the wind; which, so far as it relates to the Jews, was fulfilled in their destruction by the Romans, and will have its accomplishment in the antichristian nations at the latter day; see Rev. ii. 26, 27.

Ver. 10. *Be wise now therefore, O ye kings*, &c.] This address is made not so much to the kings of the earth in David's time, as to those who would be under

the Gospel dispensation, and times of the Messiah; and particularly who would rise up, and set themselves against the Lord and his Anointed, ver. 2. and with these are to be understood their subjects: for if they are to serve the Lord, and be subject to Christ, then much more those that are under them; and they are rather spoken to particularly, because their examples have great influence on those over whom they rule, whether for good or evil. These are exhorted to be wise, or to act the wise part; for great men are not always wise; wisdom, riches, and honour, do not always go together; men may be in high places, and yet be of low understandings; however, they do not always act wisely, and particularly those kings did not, when they rose up and set themselves against the Lord and his Messiah; since such opposition must be fruitless, nor is there any counsel against the Lord. And we learn, from the connexion of these words with the following, that the truest wisdom in kings and people is to fear God, be subject to Christ, and trust in him. The words are an inference from what goes before; *therefore*, since Christ is set as King over Zion, and he is no other than the son of God, and who has a power over all flesh; one part of the world is his inheritance and possession, and the other part he will in a little time break and dash to pieces; wherefore *now*, under the Gospel dispensation, while it is to-day, and now is the accepted time and day of salvation, before the blow is given; act the wise part and leave off opposing, and become subject to so great and powerful a King. *Be instructed, ye judges of the earth*; who are under kings, being appointed by them to hear causes and minister justice; they answer to the sanhedrim of the Jews; to the rulers in ver. 2. These are exhorted to receive instructions, not in things political and civil they may be well acquainted with; but in things religious and evangelical, in the worship of God, in the Gospel of Christ, and in his ordinances; for persons in such posts should not be above instruction in these things. The word may be rendered, *be ye chastised* or *corrected*[i]; that is, suffer reproof, correction, and chastisement at the hand of God, whether by words or deeds; submit to it patiently, and receive instruction from it: for God sometimes reproves kings and princes of the earth, on account of their sins, and for the sake of his people, when they should learn righteousness; see Psal. cv. 14, 15. Isa. xxvi. 9.

Ver. 11. *Serve the Lord with fear*, &c.] Not the creature, neither more, nor besides, nor with the Creator; God and mammon cannot both be served; nor any fictitious and nominal deities, the idols of the Gentiles, who are not gods by nature; but the true Jehovah, the one and only Lord God, he only is to be worshipped and served, even Father, Son, and Spirit. Here it may be understood either of the Lord Christ, the Son of God, who is to be served by the kings and judges of the earth, he being King of kings, and Lord of lords; or rather of Jehovah the Father, since the Son seems to be distinguished from him in the next verse: and the service these persons are called unto lies not in the discharge of any office in the church, as in preaching the word, which is serving God in the Gospel of his Son; and hence the ministers of the word are eminently called the servants of the most high God; for kings and judges are not required hereby to lay aside their crowns and sceptres, and leave their seats of justice, and become preachers of the Gospel; but in acting according to the will of God revealed in his word, and in the whole worship of him, both internal and external: and this is to be done *with fear*, not with fear of man, nor with servile fear of God, but with a godly and filial fear, with a reverential affection for him, and in a way agreeable to his mind and will; with reverence and awe of him, without levity, carelesness, and negligence. *And rejoice with trembling*; some reference may be had to the joy in public worship, as at sacrifices and festivals, and the music in divine service under the law; and the singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs under the Gospel; and especially to the Gospel dispensation itself, which is a time of joy and rejoicing; the Gospel is good tidings of great joy; the kingdom of God is not in things external, but in joy in the Holy Ghost; and, above all, respect is had to a rejoicing in Christ Jesus, in his person, righteousness, and salvation: and which is consistent with *trembling*; not with a fearful looking-for of judgment, but with modesty and humility; in which sense this word, when joined with *fear* as here, is used Phil. ii. 12. and stands opposed to pride, haughtiness, and arrogance; men should so rejoice in Christ as to have no confidence in the flesh, or assume any degree of glory to themselves, or have any rejoicing in themselves, but wholly in Christ, giving all the glory of what they have to him.

Ver. 12. *Kiss the Son*, &c.] The Son of God, spoken of in ver. 7. the word used is so rendered in Prov. xxxi. 2. and comes from another which signifies to *choose*, and to *purify*, or *to be pure*; hence some render it *the elect* or *chosen One*, or *the pure One*[k]; and both agree with Christ, who is God's elect, chosen to be the Redeemer and Saviour of his people, and who is pure and free from sin, original and actual. And whereas a kiss is a token of love among friends and relations, at meeting and parting, Gen. xxxiii. 11. Ruth i. 14. it may here design the love and affection that is to be expressed to Christ, who is a most lovely object, and to be loved above all creatures and things: or, as it sometimes signifies, homage and subjection, 1 Sam. x. 1. and it is the custom of the Indians to this day for subjects to kiss their kings: it may here also denote the subjection of the kings and judges and others to Christ, who is Lord of all; or else, as it has been used in token of adoration and worship, Job xxxi. 26, 27. Hos. xiii. 2. it may design the worship which is due to him from all ranks of creatures, angels and men, Heb. i. 6. and the honour which is to be given to him, as to the Father, John v. 22. which shews the greatness and dignity of his person, and that he is the true God and eternal life: in the Talmud[l] this is interpreted of the law, where it is said, "there is no בר "but the law, according to Psal. ii. 12." which agrees with the Septuagint version. *Lest he be angry*; for

[i] הוסרו castigamini, Piscator; so Ainsworth; corrigimini, Castalio, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[k] בר ἐκλεκτὸν, Aquila; purum, Cocceius; so Kimchi & Ben Melech.
[l] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 92. 1.

though he is a Lamb, he has wrath in him, and when the great day of his wrath comes in any form on earth, there is no standing before him; and how much less when he shall appear as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire; then kings and freemen will call to the rocks to fall upon them, and hide them from him. *And ye perish from the way*: the Syriac version renders it *from his way*, the Son's way; and the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions *from the righteous way*; and the Arabic version *from the way of righteousness*; or *as to the way*, as others [m], the good way; all to one sense; meaning that way of righteousness, salvation and eternal life by Jesus Christ, which being missed by persons, they are eternally lost and undone: some render it *because of the way* [n]; that is, because of their sinful course of life; for the way of the ungodly shall perish itself, and therefore they that pursue it shall perish also: others render it *in the way* [o]; and then the sense is, lest they perish in the midst of their course of sin, in their own evil way, they have chosen and delighted in, or, to use the words of Christ, *die in their sins*, and everlastingly perish; for this perishing is to be understood not of corporeal death, in which sense righteous men perish, but of everlasting destruction: or the word which is rendered *from the way* may be translated *suddenly* [p], *immediately*, or *straightway*, and our English word *directly* is almost the same; and so may design the swift and sudden destruction of such persons who provoke the Son to wrath and anger; which sense is confirmed by what follows. *When his wrath is kindled but a little*; either to a small degree, or but for a little while; for the least degree and duration of it are intolerable, and who then can dwell in everlasting burnings, or abide the devouring flames? or when it is kindled כמעט, *suddenly* [q], in a moment, as Jarchi interprets it; and so sudden wrath brings sudden destruction. *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him*; not in horses and chariots, in riches and honours, in their own wisdom, strength, and righteousness; but in the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and who is truly and properly God; or otherwise faith and trust would not be required to be put in him: and happy are those who betake themselves to him as to their strong hold and place of defence; who look to him and believe in him for pardon, peace, righteousness, every supply of grace and eternal life; these are safe and secure in him, nor shall they want any good thing needful for them; and they have much peace, joy, and comfort here, and shall have more grace as they want it, and hereafter eternal glory and happiness.

PSALM III.

A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.

THIS is the first of the psalms that has a title, and is called a Psalm; the word for which, *mizmor*, comes from one which signifies to *cut* or *prune* [r], as trees are lopped of their superfluous branches; shewing this to be a composition of even feet, in proper metre, formed for the modulation of the voice, to some tune or musical instrument; and it is said to be *a psalm of David*, which may be rendered *a psalm for* or *to David* [s], as if it was wrote by another for his use, and inscribed to him; or rather that it was given to him by the Holy Spirit, who was the author of it, though he was the penman. It is observed by some, that wherever the dative case is used in the title of the psalm, as it most frequently is, as such a psalm to David, or to Asaph, it may signify that it came from the Lord to him, or was divinely inspired; just as it is said, the word of the Lord came to the prophets; though some render it *a psalm concerning David* [t], his troubles, his faith and security in God, his victory over his enemies, and salvation from the Lord. However, David was the composer of this psalm, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, occasioned by his flight from Absalom; who, having stolen away the hearts of the people of Israel, entered into a conspiracy with them to dethrone his father and place himself in his stead; and the people so increased continually with him, that David thought it advisable to flee from Jerusalem, 2 Sam. xv. 12, 13, 14. and at the time of his flight, or after it, he penned this psalm on account of it, and as suitable to it. And now was fulfilled what God had said, by Nathan the prophet, should befall him, because of the affair of Bath-sheba and Uriah; see 2 Sam. xii. 11. and xvi. 21, 22. David was an eminent type of Christ, and so he was in his troubles, and in these; as one of his sons conspired against him to dethrone him, and take away his life; so Judas, one of Christ's disciples or children, for disciples were called children, his familiar friend, that did eat of his bread, lifted up his heel against him, and sought to betray him, and did; and who, though he knew the designs of Judas against him, and did not flee from him, but rather went to meet him, yet it is easy to observe that he took the same route from Jerusalem as David did. At this time he went over the brook Kidron, and to the mount of Olives; see John xviii. 1. Matt. xxvii. 30. compared with 2 Sam. xv. 23, 30. And indeed the whole psalm may be applied to Christ; and so as the second psalm sets forth the dignity of Christ's person, as the son of God, and the stability and enlargement of his kingdom, notwithstanding the opposition made to him; this expresses his troubles from his enemies, his death and resurrection from the dead, his victory over his

[m] דרך quoad viam, Cocceius, Gussetius.
[n] Propter viam, Vatablus, Muis.
[o] In via, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Ainsworth, Gejerus.
[p] Subito, Noldius, p. 230. No. 1052.
[q] Ἐν τάχει, Sept. subito, Noldius, p. 473. No. 1371.
[r] מזמור a radice זמר præscidit, Gejerus.
[s] לדוד psalmus Davidi, sub. datus, Genebrardus.
[t] De Davide, vel in Davidem; so some in Mariana.

enemies, and the salvation he wrought out for his people. In short, it may be understood of David as the type, of Christ as the antitype, and of the people of God, being suited to their experiences, more or less, in all ages; and in this large and extensive way I shall choose to interpret it.

Ver. 1. *Lord, how are they increased that trouble me?* &c.] David's enemies increased in the conspiracy against him, 2 Sam. xv. 12. the hearts of the men of Israel were after Absalom, and against him. Christ's enemies increased when Judas with a multitude came to take him; when the body of the common people cried out, Crucify him; when the assembly of the wicked enclosed him, and pierced his hands and his feet. And the enemies of God's people are many; the men of this world are against them; legions of devils oppose them; and they have swarms of sins in their own hearts; and all these give trouble. David's enemies troubled him; he wept as he went up the hill, to think that his own son should seek to destroy him; that his subjects, whom he had ruled so long with clemency, and had hazarded his person in war for their defence, and to protect them in their civil and religious rights, should rebel against him. Christ's enemies troubled him, when they bound and led him away as a malefactor; when they spit upon him, smote and buffeted him; when they scourged and crucified him, and mocked at him. The enemies of the saints are troublers of them; in the world, and from the men of it, they have tribulation; Satan's temptations give them much uneasiness and distress; and their indwelling sins cause them to cry out, O! wretched men that we are. This address is made to the Lord, as the Lord God omniscient, who knew the case to be as it was, and who had a concern in it; it not being without his will, but according to it, he having foretold it, and as he who only could help out of it: and the psalmist delivers it in a complaining way, and in an expostulatory manner; reasoning the case why it should be so, what should be the reason of it, for what end and purpose it was; and as wondering at it, suggesting his own innocence, and how undeserving he was to be treated in such a way. *Many are they that rise up against me;* many in quantity, and great in quality, great in the law, in wisdom, in riches, and in stature, as Jarchi interprets it; such as Ahithophel and others, who rose up against David in an hostile manner, to dispossess him of his kingdom, and to destroy his life. And many were they that rose up against Christ; the multitude came against him as a thief, with clubs and staves: the men of this world rise up against the saints with their tongues, and sometimes with open force and violence; Satan, like a roaring lion, seeks to devour them, and their own fleshly lusts war against them.

Ver. 2. *Many there be which say of my soul,* &c.] Or *to my soul*[a], the following cutting words, which touched to the quick, reached his very heart, and like a sword pierced through it: there is *no help for him in God; or no salvation*[b]: neither in this world, nor in that which is to come, as Kimchi explains it. David's enemies looked upon his case to be desperate; that it was impossible he should ever extricate himself from it; yea, that God himself either could not or would not save him. And in like manner did the enemies of Christ say, when they had got him upon the cross; see Matt. xxvii. 43. and how frequent is it for the men of the world to represent the saints as in a damnable state! and to call them a damned set and generation of men, as if there was no salvation for them? and how often does Satan suggest unto them, that there is no hope for them, and they may as well indulge themselves in all sinful lusts and pleasures? and how often do their own unbelieving hearts say to them, that there is no salvation in Christ for them, though there is for others; and that they have no interest in the favour of God, and shall be eternally lost and perish? And this account is concluded with the word *selah*, which some take to be a musical note; and so the Septuagint render it διαψαλμα, which Suidas[c] interprets the change of the song, of the note or tune of it; and the rather it may be thought to be so, since it is only used in this book of Psalms, and in the prayer of Habakkuk, which was set to a tune, and directed to the chief singer. Kimchi derives it from a root which signifies *to lift up,* and supposes that it denotes and directs to an elevation, or straining of the voice, at the place where this word stands. Others understand it as a pause, a full stop for a while; and as a note of attention, either to something that is remarkably bad and distressing, as here; or remarkably good, and matter of rejoicing, as in ver. 4. 8. Others consider it as an affirmation of the truth of any thing, good or bad; and render it *verily, truly,* as, answering to *Amen;* so be it, so it is, or shall be; it is the truth of the thing: to this sense agrees Aben Ezra. But others render it *for ever,* as the Chaldee paraphrase; and it is a tradition of the Jews[d], that wherever it is said, *netzach, selah,* and *ed,* there is no ceasing, it is for ever and ever; and so then, according to this rule, the sense of David's enemies is, that there was no help for him in God for ever. A very learned man[e] has wrote a dissertation upon this word; in which he endeavours to prove, that it is a name of God, differently used, either in the vocative, genitive, and dative cases; as, O Selah, O God, or of God, or to God, &c. as the sense requires.

Ver. 3. *But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me,* &c.] Or *about me*[f], protecting and defending me. David was a military man, and often alludes to military affairs; and borrows words from thence, expressive of his great security from the Lord; see Psal. xviii. 2. So Jehovah the Father was a shield to Christ, in his infancy, from Herod's rage and fury; and afterwards from the insults of the Pharisees, and their attempts to take away his life before the time; and in his sufferings and death, so as that his faith and confidence in him were kept up, and he got the victory over sin,

[a] לנפשי τῃ ψυχῃ μου, Sept. animæ meæ, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so the Targum.
[b] אין ישועתה non est salus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; non ulla salus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Ainsworth.
[c] In voce Διαψ.
[d] T. Bab. Erubin, fol. 54. 1. Vid. Ben Melech in loc.
[e] Paschii Dissertatio de Selah, p. 670. in Thesaur. Theolog. Philolog. par. 1.
[f] בעדי circa me, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Muis, Ainsworth, Cocceius, Michaelis.

Satan, and the world; see Psal. xxii. 9, 10. Isa. l. 7, 8, 9. And the Lord is a shield unto all his people, Gen. xv. 1. Psal. lxxxiv. 11. They are kept by his power, and encompassed about with his favour, as with a shield; his veracity and his faithfulness in his promises, and his truth, are their shield and buckler: and especially his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the shield which faith makes use of, particularly his blood and righteousness, and salvation by him; which it holds up, and defends itself with, against the charges of the law, the accusations of conscience, and the temptations of Satan; and which are a security from the justice of God, and wrath to come. *My glory*: who took David from the sheepfold, and made him king over Israel, and raised him to all the glory he had enjoyed; and in whom he gloried as his covenant-God, and of whom he made his boast; and not of his strength, valour, wisdom, riches, and honour. So God the Father is the glory of Christ, the glorifier of him, by supporting him under his sufferings, raising him from the dead, and setting him at his own right hand, where he is crowned with glory and honour: he is the glory of his people, in whom they glory, and by whom they are called to eternal glory; and who will give it to them, and reveal it in them, even an eternal weight of it, which the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared unto. *And the lifter up of mine head*; such as the helmet is: the Lord was the lifter up of David's head when he brought him to the throne, and afterwards gave him victory over his enemies; for so the phrase of lifting up the head signifies; see 2 Kings xxv. 27. Psal. xxvii. 6. And he was the lifter up of Christ's head when he raised him from the dead; and exalted him, both with and at his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, and gave him a name above every name. And he is the lifter up of the heads of his people in conversion, when he raises them from a low estate, and sets them among princes to inherit the throne of glory; and when he gives them comfort, peace, and joy, which causes them to lift up their heads; whereas in sorrow, and mourning, and distress, the head is bowed down like a bulrush, Isa. lviii. 5. and when he gives them boldness and confidence, as at the throne of grace now, through the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon them; so at the bar of judgment hereafter, through the righteousness of Christ put upon them, as that they shall not be ashamed nor confounded; see Luke xxi. 28. 1 John ii. 28. and he will be the lifter up of their heads in the resurrection-morn, and when they shall appear with Christ in glory.

Ver. 4. *I cried unto the Lord with my voice*, &c.] The experience which the psalmist had of being heard in prayer, was what gave great encouragement to his faith, as to his interest in God and salvation by him, when his enemies were so increased about him; for crying here is to be understood of prayer, as it is often used in this book of Psalms: and so the Targum renders it, *I prayed*; and this designs vocal prayer. Sometimes there is a crying in prayer and no voice heard, as it is said of Moses, Exod. xiv. 15. and was the case of Hannah, 1 Sam. i. 13. but this was with a voice, and a loud one, as in Psal. lv. 17. denoting ardour, fervency, and importunity; and such prayer avails much with God. The object addressed in prayer is the Lord, the God of his life, and who was able to save him, and supply all his wants. *And he heard me out of his holy hill*; Selah; either out of the church, the holy hill of Zion, Psal. ii. 6. where David prayed and God granted his presence, and gave an answer to his prayers; or out from the mercy-seat and ark, which was a type of the propitiatory, Christ, and which David had brought to his own city, the hill of Zion; or from heaven, the habitation of God's holiness: David was a man of prayer, and he was often heard and answered by God. And this also is true of Christ, he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to God, that was able to save him; and he was heard by him, yea, the father always heard him; and God is a God hearing and answering the prayers of his people, sooner or later; sometimes before, sometimes at, and sometimes after their crying to him.

Ver. 5. *I laid me down and slept*, &c.] After the battle was over between Absalom's men and his, says Aben Ezra; but rather this was in the midst of his trouble and distress, since he afterwards prays for salvation; and this sleep was either, as Jarchi observes, through his heart being overwhelmed with grief; for there have been instances of persons sleeping through sorrow, as Elijah, Jonah, and the disciples of Christ, 1 Kings xix. 4, 5. Jonah i. 5. Luke xxii. 45. or rather this is expressive of the calmness and serenity of his mind amidst his troubles; he laid himself down in peace, and slept quietly and comfortably; he did not lose a night's rest, his sleep was sweet unto him; which was a blessing of life from the Lord that every one does not enjoy; see Psal. cxxvii. 2. *I awaked*; in the morning, alive and cheerful. Some lay themselves down and never awake more, as Sisera the captain of Jabin's army, and Ish-bosheth the son of Saul; and this might have been David's case, considering the circumstances he was in: and others, through perplexing thoughts and cares, or pains of body, or uneasy dreams, rise fatigued and distressed; but David arose in good health of body, and tranquillity of mind, and comfortably refreshed. *For the Lord sustained me*: the psalmist committed himself to the care and protection of God; he laid himself down in his arms, and there slept in safety; the Lord preserved him, who is Israel's keeper, that neither slumbers nor sleeps: and he rose in health and cheerfulness in the morning, being supported by his right hand. This shews, that his lying down to sleep, when in such circumstances, and awaking with cheerfulness, were not owing to rashness, stupidity, and insensibility, but to divine supports. These words may be interpreted, as they are by some of the ancients, of the death of Christ, and of his resurrection from the dead by the power of God; death is often expressed by sleep, and the resurrection of the dead by an awaking out of sleep, Dan. xii. 2. Isa. xxvi. 19. and Christ's death being signified by lying down and sleeping, may denote both the voluntariness of it, that he laid down his life freely and willingly; and his short continuance under the power of death, it was but like a night's sleep; and his resurrection from the dead, being expressed by an awaking through the Lord's sustaining him, shews that it was by the

power of God, even the exceeding greatness of his power: and the whole of this may be applied to the case and state of the saints and people of God, who at times have rest and peace amidst their enemies; though they have tribulation in the world, they have peace in Christ; and notwithstanding the temptations of Satan, and the corruptions of their own hearts, they have joy and comfort through believing in Christ; the Lord stays them with precious promises, and supports them with the discoveries of his love, and upholds them with the right hand of his righteousness.

Ver. 6. *I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people*, &c.] David was a man of courage from his youth; the instances of his attacking the lion and the bear, when he kept his father's sheep, his engaging with Goliath, and his military exploits, shew it; and though there were now many thousands up in arms against him, and his own son at the head of them; all the tribes of Israel were revolting from him, and he was only attended with a few of his friends, yet he was not dismayed; for that he refers to this insurrection appears by what follows, *that have set* themselves *against me round about*; and this was owing not to himself, but to the Lord's sustaining of him; see Psal. xxvii. 1, 2, 3. and such courage and greatness of soul did his antitype the Messiah express, and to a greater degree, when Judas, with his band of soldiers, and the multitude with clubs and staves, entered the garden to apprehend him; and when the prince of this world was marching towards him, and when he was engaged with all the powers of darkness, and when the sorrows of death compassed him about, yet he failed not, nor was he discouraged: and something of this spirit appears in true believers, when they are in the exercise of faith, have the presence of God, and the discoveries of his love; they are then not afraid what man can do unto them; nor are they afraid of devils themselves, but wrestle against them; nor of any nor all their enemies, they having victory over them, given by God through Christ.

Ver. 7. *Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God*, &c.] God sometimes, in the apprehension of his people, seems to be as if he was asleep: when he does not appear to them and for them, and does not exert his power on their behalf, then they call to him to awake and arise; see Psal. xliv. 23. and it may be some respect is had to the words of Moses when the ark set forward, Numb. x. 35. and it may be observed, that though David enjoyed so much peace and tranquillity of mind, and was in such high spirits as not to be afraid of ten thousands of men, yet he did not neglect the right means of deliverance and safety, prayer to God, who he knew was his God; and he addresses him as such, and uses his covenant-interest in him, as an argument with him to arise and save him from his enemies, who was able to do it, and to whom salvation belongs: so Christ, his antitype, prayed to God as his God to save him, and was heard by him in like manner; so the saints call upon God in a day of trouble, cry to him in their distresses, to be delivered out of them. *For thou hast smitten all mine enemies* upon *the cheek-bone*; to smite any one upon the cheek is reckoned reproachful, and is casting contempt upon them; see Job xvi. 10. and the sense is, that God had poured contempt upon his enemies in time past, and had brought them to shame and confusion: hence he puts up the above prayer as a prayer of faith for salvation, founded on past experience of God's goodness; he prayed that his God would arise and save him, and he believed he would, because he had hitherto appeared for him, and against his enemies. *Thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly*; who were like to beasts of prey, whose strength lies in their teeth, whereby they do the mischief they do; and the breaking of their teeth signifies the taking away from them the power of hurting, and refers to the victories which God had given David over the Philistines, Edomites, Syrians, and others; and may be applied to Christ, and be expressive of sin, Satan, the world, and death, being overcome and abolished by him, and of the victory which the saints have through him over the same enemies.

Ver. 8. *Salvation* belongeth *unto the Lord*, &c.] As the author of it: temporal salvation is of him; all the deliverances of the saints out of their troubles are from him; and to him is owing their spiritual and eternal salvation: this belongs to Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit: Jehovah the Father resolved upon it, chose men to it from everlasting, contrived the scheme of it in his infinite wisdom, made a covenant with his Son, in which he secured it, and appointed him to be the author of it, and sent him in the fulness of time to effect it; and Christ the Son of God, being qualified for it, being mighty to save, came into this world for that purpose, and is become the author of eternal salvation; his own arm has brought it to him, though there were many difficulties in the way; such as fulfilling the law, satisfying justice, making an end of sin, grappling with all the powers of darkness, and undergoing an accursed death: and the Spirit of God, he makes men sensible of their need of this salvation; he brings it near to them, and works faith in them to lay hold upon it, and shews them their interest in it; and in consequence of all this the glory of salvation belongs to the Lord, Father, Son, and Spirit, and should be given to the Father as the contriver of it, to the Son as the author of it, and to the Spirit as the applier of it; see Rev. vii. 10. *Thy blessing* is *upon thy people*; Selah; or it may be considered prayer-wise, let *thy blessing* be *upon thy people*[b]; either upon those that were on the side of David, or on those, as others interpret it, who had imprudently joined themselves to Absalom; which latter sense, if right, shews in what a divine frame and disposition of mind the psalmist was, to pray for his enemies: or the words are an assertion, that the blessing of the Lord was come upon his covenant-people, and does descend upon them as they are called by grace; even all spiritual blessings, the blessings of a justifying righteousness, of pardon of sin, of reconciliation and peace by the blood of Christ, of adoption, and of eternal life; the blessing of grace, and the blessing of glory.

[b] ברכתך sit benedictio tua, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

PSALM IV.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, a Psalm of David.

THIS psalm is inscribed *to the chief musician*, or *conqueror*[c]; who excelled others in the art of music, and carried the glory from them; who was very skilful, and instructed others in it, and was the master of the song, as Chenaniah, 1 Chron. xv. 22, 27. who set the tune, led on the psalm, and had the whole direction and management of it; and so the Jewish doctors[d] generally understand it of one that presided over the rest of the musicians and singers; and to such an one was this psalm sent, to be sung in public worship: for the psalms of David were not composed for private use only, but for public service; and were committed into the hands and care of the chief of the singers, as Asaph and others; see 1 Chron. xvi. 7. by whom they were preserved and transmitted to future ages for the use of the church, not only in the former but in the present dispensation. The Septuagint interpreters, and after them the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, render it *unto the end*, or for ever; to this agrees the sense of R. Saadiah Gaon[e], who says, "this is a psalm of David, "who gave it to one of the singers to sing it continu-"ally," as if it was לנצח, *for ever*; but the former sense is best, to understand it of the chief musician, or precentor, who is said to be *on neginoth*; the singular, *neginah*, is used in the title of Psalm lxi. and it is sometimes rendered *a song*, as in Job xxx. 8. Psalm lxxvii. 6. hence the Vulgate Latin version here renders it *in songs*; and the Septuagint renders it *in psalms*: and then the meaning is, that this person was the chief man that presided over the songs and psalms: though the Jewish writers[f], for the most part, interpret it of a musical instrument so called; not such an one as was blown, as the pipe and trumpet, but what was played upon with the hand; see 1 Sam. xvi. 16, 23. and xix. 9. a stringed instrument, which was touched with the fingers as an harp, or struck with a quill or bow as a violin. And as there were various instruments of music used in the temple-service, so there were persons set over them, some over one sort, and some over another; and this man presided over the instruments that were played with the hand: and it looks as if this psalm was to be sung to such an instrument, by its being inscribed and sent to him. Aben Ezra takes the word to be, the beginning of a song; and the Targum renders the whole, *to sing upon the chorus or dances*. It is called *a Psalm of David*, being written by him, under the inspiration of the spirit of God; the occasion of it was Absalom's rebellion; and it was written when he fled from him, as the preceding, as Kimchi thinks; but, according to Lightfoot and others, it was the rebellion of Sheba, 2 Sam. xx. though others refer it to the time of his distresses and persecutions by Saul; according to the Jewish Rabbins[g], where there are the words נצוח ניגון, as they are both in this title, the psalm belongs to future time, to the world to come, to the times of the Messiah.

Ver. 1. *Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness, &c.*] Or, *my righteous God*[h], who is righteous in his nature, ways, and works, the just Judge of the whole earth, who will do right; or *the vindicator of my righteousness*, as the Syriac version renders it; that is, of his innocence and uprightness, which the Lord knew and was a witness of: and since he was his covenant-God, he doubted not but he would bring it forth as the light, and favour his righteous cause, and do him justice upon his enemies: or the psalmist addresses God in this manner, because he was the author of his righteousness, and was the justifier of him, by imputing the righteousness of his Son unto him. So Christ addresses his Father, John xvii. 26. who he knew would justify him, and by whom he was justified as the surety of his people, when he rose from the dead: and so the saints can draw nigh to God the Judge of all, through the righteousness of Christ; knowing that he is just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus; and that he is just and faithful to forgive their sins, and cleanse them from all unrighteousness, on account of his blood. The petition put up by the psalmist is, to be heard when he called, that is, to hear his prayer, as it is explained in the latter part of the verse: and God is a God hearing prayer; and so David, Christ, and all the saints, have found him to be: and the encouragement to pray to the Lord, in hope of being heard, arose from past experience of divine goodness. *Thou hast enlarged me* when I was *in distress*; when he had like to have been killed by Saul casting a javelin at him; and when his house was watched by men that Saul set there, and he was let down through a window and escaped; and when he was shut in at Keilah, where Saul thought he had him safe; and at other times, to which he may here refer, as in Psal. xviii. 19. and xxxi. 8. and this may be applied to the Messiah, when in the garden, beset with sorrows, and an angel strengthened him; and when on the cross, surrounded by various enemies, whom he conquered; and when in death and the grave, from the pains and cords of which he was loosed, and set in a large place. And this agrees also with the experience of the saints; who, when in distress through sin, Satan, and the law, have been set free, through the Gospel proclaiming liberty to the captives to such enemies; and the opening of the prison to them that have been bound by them: and when they have been so shut up and straitened in themselves, that they could not come forth in the discharge of duty, and in the exercise of grace; through the spirit of the Lord, who is a spirit of liberty, they have been enlarged in the duty of prayer and of praise, and in the exercise of faith and love; and their hearts have been enlarged through the discoveries of the love of God towards them, so that they have run cheerfully in the ways of his commandments; who also gives them largeness of heart, an increase of the

[c] למנצח victori, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; vincent, Munster.
[d] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.
[e] Apud Aben Ezra in loc.

[f] Kimchi & Ben Melech in loc. and others in Aben Ezra in loc.
[g] Kimchi Præfat. in Psalm.
[h] אלהי צדקי

knowledge of Christ, and of the love of God, and fills them with joy and peace in believing, and draws out the desires of their souls to his name, and the remembrance of him. *Have mercy upon me:* the psalmist pleads no merit nor worthiness of his own, but applies to the grace and mercy of God; and sensible of his sin, both original and actual, he entreats a discovery of pardoning grace and mercy. The words may be rendered, *be gracious unto me*[i], or shew me favour; bestow the blessings of grace, grant larger measures of grace, and fresh supplies of it: and so all sensible sinners apply to God for mercy; and all the saints have recourse to him as the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, for every mercy, both temporal and spiritual. Nor is this unsuitable to the Messiah, as man and Mediator; with whom God keeps his mercy for evermore, as the head and surety of his people, and upon whom, as man, the grace of God was; and who increased, as in stature, so in favour with God and man; and which, no doubt, was desirable by him. *And hear my prayer:* the same petition with that in the beginning of the verse; invocation and prayer being the same thing.

Ver. 2. *O ye sons of men,* &c.]* Meaning great men, the nobles of Israel; and so the Jewish interpreters[k] generally explain it; such as Ahithophel, and others, who were in the conspiracy with Absalom: and so they were the kings and princes of the earth, and the rulers of the Jewish sanhedrim, the chief priests and elders, who were the enemies of Christ; and such, generally speaking, have been the persecutors of the saints; these men of power and authority, of dignity and honour, and who were in high places, and boasted of their titles and grandeur, the psalmist addresses by way of expostulation in the following words. *How long will ye turn my glory into shame?* Meaning either God, who was his glory, Psal. iii. 3. whom they reproached when they said there was no help for him in him; or his tongue, the instrument of praise, and the songs of praise he expressed by it, Psal. lvii. 8. which they jeered and scoffed at: or rather his royal glory and majesty, which they attempted to vail by casting him down from his excellency, by dethroning him, and setting up Absalom in his room. So the Jews endeavoured to turn the glory of Christ into shame, which lay in his being the only-begotten of the Father; by denying his sonship, by condemning him to death; because he said he was the Son of God; and by mocking at him under that character on the cross; and also by their spitting upon, buffetting, and crucifying the Lord of glory; by reproaching his Gospel, ministers, and people; and by not acknowledging him as the Messiah, and submitting to his righteousness. And wicked men do as much as in them lies to turn the glory of the saints into shame, by aspersing their character, taking away their good name and reputation among men; by reproaching and reviling them, and speaking all manner of evil of them; and by persecuting them in the most violent manner. How long *will ye love vanity; or a vain thing*[l]. Such as the placing of Absalom upon the throne, on which their hearts were set; and such was the vain imagination of the Jews, with which they pleased themselves, that Jesus should die, and his name perish; and such are all the attempts of wicked men to ruin and destroy the people and interest of Christ; for no weapon formed against them shall prosper. And *seek after leasing? Selah.* Or *a lie*[m]; or that which fails and deceives, as a lie does: and such were all the counsels and designs of the great men of Israel against David: and so the Jews may be said to seek after a lie, when they seek after another Messiah besides Jesus of Nazareth: for every other proves a *Bar Cozbi*, that is, the son of a lie; as the false Messiah in Adrian's time was called by themselves. And so do all such as seek after and embrace false doctrines, errors, and heresies, and are given up to believe them. Now the psalmist suggests that these great men were obstinate, and continued in these sinful practices; and that in the issue all their efforts would be vain and fruitless; and which he further strengthens by observing to them what follows.

Ver. 3. *But know,* &c.] Take notice of it, consider it, be assured of the truth of it; it may be depended upon as fact, *that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself:* which may be understood of David himself, an holy good man; a man after God's own heart; whom the Lord chose, and in a marvellous manner separated from the rest of his brethren; took him from the sheepfold, and set him upon the throne of Israel, for the glory of his great name; and therefore the attempts of his enemies against him would be without success: and also of the Messiah, God's holy One, whom he has chosen out from among the people to be their Saviour and Redeemer, to the glory of his grace; wherefore the work of the Lord has prospered in his hands: and likewise of all the saints, and of their election; which act is expressed by their being set apart, or separated from others, who are called the rest; and which is a marvellous act of grace: for the word may be rendered, *he hath wonderfully set apart*[n]. It is an amazing instance of grace that God should make one to differ from another, and separate them from their mother's womb, and call them by his grace. The object of this act is *him that is godly,* or *holy*[o]: not that any are set apart or chosen by God for their godliness, or holiness; for they are chosen through sanctification of the spirit, and not because they were, or it was foreseen they would be, holy. Holiness, faith, godliness, and good works, are the fruits of election, and not the causes of it: but the word חסיד, rendered *godly,* signifies *good* and *merciful*[p]; and designs one that God is good, and gracious, and merciful unto; who is an object of his free grace and favour; and therefore he chooses and sets him apart of his own grace and mercy, and according to his sovereign will and pleasure: and that *for himself;* for his own use

[i] חנני gratiosus esto mihi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Coccius.
[k] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.
[l] ריק inane, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Coccius; inanem rem, Piscator.
[m] כזב mendacium, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.

[n] So Ainsworth. הפלה mirificavit, V. L. mirabilem effecit, Gejerus.
[o] חסיד sanctum, V. L. Muis, De Dieu.
[p] Eum quem benigne acceperit, Junius & Tremellius; beneficiarium, Gejerus, Michaelis; gratia vel favore a Deo affectum, Hammond.

and service, for his praise and honour, and to the glory of his grace; which is his grand end in predestination, election, and in all spiritual blessings. And now all attempts against such persons are in vain; all charges against them are of no avail; all methods, whether by open force of persecutors, or by the cunning of false teachers, that lie in wait to deceive, to prevail against them, prove successless: and God will avenge his elect, that cry unto him day and night; as follows. *The Lord will hear when I call unto him:* and deliver out of the hands of enemies, and cut them off: wherefore it is a vain thing for men to set themselves against Christ and his people.

Ver. 4. *Stand in awe, and sin not,* &c.] That is, stand in awe of God, and his righteous judgments; be afraid of him, and tremble before him; make him your fear and your dread, and go on no longer and proceed no further in sinning against him. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, render it, *be ye angry, and sin not:* which are the words of the apostle, Eph. iv. 26. referring to this place; and which doubtless is the reason of these versions. There is an anger that is sinful, when it is without a cause, or exceeds due bounds, and is not directed to a good end, and is productive of bad effects, by words or deeds; and when it is soon raised, or long continued; and there is an anger that is not sinful; when it arises from a true zeal for God and religion; when it is kindled, not against the persons, but sins, of men; and when it is continued to answer good purposes; as the good of those with whom we are angry, and the glory of God, and the promoting of the kingdom and interest of Christ. *Commune with your own heart upon your bed:* when retired from men and business, and you are at leisure to think and meditate; then reflect upon your actions, seriously consider them; ask your heart some proper and close questions; examine narrowly and thoroughly the principles on which, and the views with which, you act. *And be still. Selah.* Cease from all your rage and fury against me, against the Lord, and against his people; or *say in your own hearts*[s], as follows.

Ver. 5. *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,* &c.] Offer for sacrifice things righteously gotten, for the Lord hates robbery for burnt-offering, Isa. lxi. 8. Some respect may be had to the unrighteous acquisitions of Absalom and his men, and who were now in possession of Jerusalem, and of the altars of the Lord, and were sacrificing on them; in which they gloried; and to which this may be opposed. Likewise sacrifices of righteousness are such as were according to the law, and were offered in a right manner; which were not maimed, nor had any blemish in them; see Mal. i. 13, 14. and particularly such as were offered up in the faith of the great sacrifice, Christ; for, without faith, it is impossible to please God by any sacrifice. And this sense is confirmed by the following clause, which requires trust in the Lord. Moreover, righteousness, with the Jews, signifies alms, beneficence, shewing mercy to the indigent; and acts of liberality are sacrifices, with which God is well pleased; and which are preferred by him to the sacrifices of the ceremonial law, Heb. xiii. 16. Hos. vi. 6. The sacrifices also of a broken heart, and of a contrite spirit, are such as God esteems of; he looks to those that have them, and dwells with them. And to this sense the Chaldee paraphrase inclines, in which the words are thus paraphrased; "subdue your corruptions, "and it shall be reckoned to you as a sacrifice of "righteousness:" and why may not the sacrifice of praise for mercies received, especially for the righteousness of Christ, be at least included, if not principally designed; since these are sacrifices which, under the ceremonial law, were more pleasing to God than others; and are always acceptable to him through Jesus Christ our Lord? Agreeably to this, Aben Ezra thinks the peace-offerings are intended, which were in a way of thanksgiving; and are opposed to sin-offerings, and trespass-offerings, and burnt-offerings; from the last of which sacrifices of righteousness are distinguished in Psal. li. 19. *And put your trust in the Lord:* not in your strength, in horses and chariots, and numbers of men; nor in wise counsels, nor in riches, nor in fleshly privileges, nor in works of righteousness, or sacrifices of righteousness; for though they are to be performed, they are not to be trusted in; nor in your own hearts. And whilst the psalmist is striking at the false confidence of the sons of men he is addressing, he may at the same time be thought to be encouraging those that were with him to trust in the Lord, Jehovah, the Son of God, before spoken of by him as the object of trust, Psal. ii. 12. to trust in his person for the acceptance of their persons and sacrifices of righteousness; and in his righteousness for justification; in his blood for pardon; in his sacrifice for expiation of sin; in his fulness for daily supplies; and in his power for protection and safety. And it is right to trust in him at all times; in times of affliction, temptation, and desertion: he is always the same; in him is everlasting strength; he has an heart as well as an ability to help and succour, and none ever trusted in him and were confounded. Such have peace and safety, and can want no good thing.

Ver. 6. There be *many that say, who will shew us any good?* &c.] These may be thought to be the men of the world; carnal worldly-minded men, seeking after temporal good, and taking up their rest and contentment in it; to whom the psalmist opposes his wish and request, in the following words. Or these are the words of the men that were along with David, wishing themselves at home and in their families, enjoying the good things of life they before had; or rather these are the words of the same many, the enemies of David, spoken of in Psal. iii. 1, 2. who were wishing, as Kimchi observes, that Absalom's rebellion might prosper; that David might die and his son reign in his stead, so the evil they wished to him was good to them: or they may be the words of the same men, expressing the desperate condition that David and his friends were in, which the psalmist represents in this manner, *who will shew us any good?* none, say they, will shew them any good, neither God nor man; there is no help for him in God; he and his friends must unavoidably perish: and this produces

[s] אמרו בלבבכם dicite in corde vestro, Montanus, Cocceius, Gussetius; loquimini, Pagninus, Piscator.

the following petition, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*: meaning his gracious presence, the manifestations of himself, the discoveries of his love, communion with him, the comforts of his spirit, and the joys of his salvation; suggesting that in the enjoyment of these things lay their good and happiness, and their safety also; his face and favour, love and grace, being as a shield to encompass them, and as a banner over them, Psal. v. 12. Cant. ii. 4. and so Jarchi observes, that the word here used signifies to lift up for a banner [r]; some respect seems to be had to the form of the priest's blessing, Numb. vi. 24—26. and the words are opposed to the good desired by carnal men, and express the true happiness of the saints, Psal. lxxxix. 15. this is a blessing wished for not only by David, but by his antitype the Messiah, Matt. xxvii. 46. and by all believers.

Ver. 7. *Thou hast put gladness in my heart*, &c.] The Ethiopic version reads it *into our heart*; in granting the above request; for, nothing so rejoices the hearts of God's people as the light of his countenance, or the enjoyment of his gracious presence: this was matter of exceeding joy to Christ himself, Psal. xxi. 6. Acts ii. 28. and so it is to all his members; this causes inward gladness, gladness of heart, and is opposed to the external rejoicings of wicked men and of hypocrites; and this is of God's putting into the heart; and indeed none can put gladness either into a wounded conscience, into the heart of a sensible sinner, or into the soul of one that is panting after the presence of God, and communion with him, but God himself. *More than in the time* that *their corn and their wine increased*: meaning the time of harvest and of vintage; when there is a good harvest, and a good vintage, there is joy among men, and the contrary when it is otherwise, Isa. ix. 3. Joel i. 12. these things being of general use, spread an universal joy among people; there is scarce any earthly thing that occasions more joy than these do; and yet the joy on such occasions is not to be compared with spiritual joy, that is a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Some take the מ to be not comparative, but causal, and render the words [s], *thou hast put gladness in my heart from the time that their corn*, &c. as do the Chaldee paraphrase and Syriac versions; and the Arabic version renders it, *because of the multitude of fruits*, &c. and then the sense is, as if David should say concerning his enemies, "I never envied "their prosperity, I always rejoiced when they had a "good harvest, or vintage, and still do; and yet they "have rose up and rebelled against me, and requited "me evil for good." And this sense is given into by the Jewish commentators [t], and shews of what an admirable spirit, and in what a sweet disposition of mind the psalmist was; that whilst his enemies were seeking his life he was rejoicing in their prosperity; and is a sad aggravation of their wickedness: and this may also be understood of the rejoicing of David, and even of the Messiah, and likewise of all good men, at the spiritual prosperity of the saints, at any increase of grace, spiritual knowledge, and joy, signified by these outward things, as in Jer. xxxi. 12. the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, add *oil* to corn and wine.

Ver. 8. *I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep*, &c.] Signifying, that he had such a calmness and serenity of mind, amidst all his troubles, that he could not only lay himself down in great peace, and much composure of mind, but sleep also, and that as soon as laid down almost; some lay themselves down, but cannot sleep, through the anxiety of their minds; but the psalmist could do both: or the word rendered *both* may be translated *together* [u]; and the sense be either that he would lie down and sleep together with his friends, committing himself and them to the care and protection of God; or that he should lie down and sleep together with his enemies; meaning that he was assured that there would quickly be a reconciliation and peace between them; see Prov. xvi. 7. *For thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety*: suggesting that his protection and safety were owing to the power and presence of God only; and that was the reason of the tranquillity of his mind, and why he slept so quietly in the night-watches, though in such danger from his enemies; or *thou, Lord, makest me only or alone* [w], being solitary and destitute of friends, *to dwell in safety*; under the shadow of thy wings, encompassed by thy favour, and surrounded by thy power; see Deut. xxxiii. 28.

PSALM V.

To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, a Psalm of David.

THIS psalm, being written by David under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is inscribed and sent to him who had the direction and management of the musical instruments used in religious worship in David's time, and afterwards in the temple-service, called *nehiloth*; as the preceding psalm is inscribed to him who presided over those called *neginoth*; and as they seem to be such instruments as were played upon with the hand, stringed instruments, so these seem to be wind-instruments, such as were blown with the mouth; as the flute, cornet, pipe, trumpet, and hautboy; the word being derived from the same root as *chalil*, the pipe, is, and signifies hollow, and so designs such hollow instruments as above: Rabbenu Hai [x] thinks the instrument intended was so called from the humming of bees, which its sound resembled; *nechil*

[r] So Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 515, 519.

[s] מעת דגנם a vel ex tempore quo frumentum eorum, &c. Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Cocceius.

[t] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, & Kimchi in loc.

[u] יחדו simul, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus, Cocceius.

[w] לבדד me solum, Cocceius; me seorsim, Gejerus.

[x] Apud Kimchi & Ben Melech in loc. So David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 93. 1.

chel deborim, with the Rabbins [y], signifying a swarm of bees; and a word from the same root in the Arabic language is used for a bee [z]; though others have thought it might be so called from the murmuring noise of a brook or river, to which the sound of it might be like; because a word from the same root this is thought to come in the Hebrew language signifies a brook or river. The Septuagint version, which is followed by the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, renders it, *for that which obtained the inheritance*; and the Arabic version, *concerning the inheritance*; and to this agrees the old Midrash [a] of the Jews; but what is the meaning is left to every one to conjecture; the reason of these versions is because the root from whence this word is supposed to be derived signifies *to inherit*: the Targum renders the whole inscription thus, *to sing upon the dances a song of David*, as it does the title of the preceding psalm; Aben Ezra takes the word, as he does *neginoth*, to be the first word of some song, to the tune of which this psalm was to be sung; and Jarchi interprets it *troops* or *armies*, and says it is a prayer on account of the troops of enemies that came against Israel; and that the singer said this psalm on the behalf of all Israel. The Syriac interpreter calls it a prayer in the person of the church, when it went in the morning to the house of the Lord. The occasion of it seems to be the same with that of the two former: and certain it is that the psalmist was in distress by reason of wicked men when he wrote it, as appears from several passages in it: the ancient Jewish doctors [b] understood by them Doeg and Ahithophel; some think it was penned, as the preceding psalm, on account of the rebellion of Sheba, 2 Sam. xx.

Ver. 1. *Give ear to my words, O Lord*, &c.] Meaning not his words in common conversation, but in prayer; the words which came out of his mouth, and were audibly expressed by him at the throne of grace, and design vocal prayer; and so stand distinguished from the meditation of his heart, sacred ejaculations, or mental prayer; see Psal. liv. 2. and xix. 14. and words in prayer to God ought to be few, at least not repeated, Eccl. v. 2. Matt. vi. 7. and these should be a man's own words, as were the psalmist's; not what were suggested by another, or written in a book before him, but what were of his own composing and putting together, under the direction of the spirit of God; who put words into his mouth, and furnished him both with words and matter, and which he freely uttered before the Lord: and this is the *parrhesia*, boldness, freedom of speech, which the Scriptures speak of, Heb. iv. 16. and x. 19. and the saints are allowed to use in prayer before God; when they may pour out their souls unto him, and freely tell him all their mind, as the psalmist now did; to which he entreats the Lord to *give ear*; not that God has a corporeal ear as man has, but he that made the ear has the power of hearing: this is an anthropopathy, and is spoken after the manner of men; such as are of kind and benevolent dispositions do not turn away, but stop and hear what a poor miserable object has to say to them, to whom they listen and return an answer; and so this phrase is expressive of the kind regard God has to the prayers of the destitute, which he does not despise but delight in; and of his bowing and inclining his ear, or of the strict and close attention he gives to them; and of the full and suitable answer he returns, in his own time and way; and is what the psalmist most earnestly entreats. He adds, *consider my meditation*; the prayer he had meditated: for meditation is requisite to prayer, and should go before it; which is necessary in order to pray with the understanding; nor should men utter any thing rashly and hastily before the Lord: it may design mental prayer, in distinction from vocal prayer, signified by his words before, such as that of Moses at the Red sea, and of Hannah before Eli, Exod. xiv. 15. 1 Sam. i. 13. The word also signifies inward mourning, sighs and groans; the root from whence this is derived signifies to mourn, and is so rendered in Isa. xxxviii. 14. where Hezekiah compares his prayers to the chattering of a crane and swallow, and the mourning of a dove; and are the same with the unutterable groanings with which the spirit of God sometimes makes intercession for the saints, Rom. viii. 26. and which are not hid from God, Psal. xxxviii. 9. but are well known to him: he understands the language of a sigh or groan; and so the words may be rendered *understand my moan* [c].

Ver. 2. *Hearken unto the voice of my cry*, &c.] Which seems to intend more than groans or words, even a loud outcry, as of a person in great distress; such as the strong crying of Christ, in the days of his flesh, when on the cross, forsaken by God, deserted by his friends, and surrounded by his enemies, Heb. v. 7. and such, in some measure, was the case of David his type. The arguments used by him, that the Lord would hearken to him, are as follow: and the first is taken from his interest in the Lord, and his relation to him, *my King and my God*; the Lord was David's King in a civil sense; though David was a king over others, yet the Lord, who is the King of kings, was King over him, and he owned him to be so; he was set upon the throne by him, had his kingdom from him, and was accountable to him: and he was his King in a natural sense, the kingdom of nature and providence belonging to him, as he was his Creator, preserver, protector, and defender; and in a spiritual sense, he being delivered from the dominion of other lords, sin, Satan, and the world, and brought to a subjection to him by his spirit and grace; and so to own him as his King and Lawgiver, as well as his Saviour. And he was his God; not in a general way, as he is the God of the spirits of all flesh living; nor merely in the peculiar way in which he was the God of the people of Israel; but in a most special manner, as being his covenant God and Father in Christ. He was his God, not only as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of all grace; who had distinguished him by special and spiritual blessings and favours; and whom David loved, believed in, and worshipped as his God.

[y] Maimon. in Misn. Bava Kama, c. 10. s. 2.
[z] Alnachal, apes, Arab. vers. Deut. i. 44.
[a] Midrash Tillim apud Viccars. in loc.

[b] Apud Kimchi & Arama in loc.
[c] הגיגי murmur meum, Vatablus, Gejerus; gemitum meum, Coccius, Hammond; gemitus & suspiria mea, Michaelis.

and this his interest in him, and relation to him, he uses with great pertinence and propriety, as an argument that he might be heard by him; since the Lord was his King, and he his subject; the Lord was his God, and he one of his people; the Lord was his Father, and he a child of his; and therefore entreats and hopes to be heard; see Isa. lxiii. 15, 16. His next argument is taken from his resolution to pray to him, and to continue to do so: *for unto thee will I pray*; and only to thee; not to the gods of the Heathen, to idols, the work of men's hands, who can neither hear nor answer, nor save; suggesting, that he would never leave off praying till he was heard; he would give him no rest, day nor night, until he received an answer.

Ver. 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, &c.*] These words may be considered either as expressing the confidence of the psalmist, that the Lord would hear and answer him, and that in the morning, every morning, as soon and as often as he prayed; or that he would hear him early, quickly, speedily, seasonably, and at the best time; or else as declaring what he would do in consequence of his resolution to pray to the Lord in the preceding verse; he would pray to him every morning: the morning is a proper time for prayer, both to return thanks to God for refreshing sleep and rest, for preservation from dangers by fire, by thieves and murderers, and for renewed mercies in the morning; as also to pray to God to keep from evil and dangers the day following; to give daily food, and to succeed in business and the employments of life; and for a continuation of every mercy, temporal and spiritual. God should be served and sought in the first place; and so to do looks as if God was with his people, and they with him, when they awake in the morning. The Targum and Arabic version consider the words as a petition, and render them, *Hear*[a] *in the morning, O Lord, my voice*, or *my prayer*; and so have the same sense as the other petitions. *In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee*; or, *set it in order*[b]; not so much respecting the order of words, the method of prayer, which is sometimes very broken and confused, and yet regarded by God; but in allusion either to the shew-bread, placed in order on the table, which was typical of Christ's continual intercession for his people, Exod. xl. 4. or to the offering of incense and other sacrifices, which when offered were put in order upon the altar; and to which prayer is compared, Psal. cxli. 2. Or the words may be rendered, *I will stand before thee in the morning*, as the Arabic version; or, *I will present unto thee*, as the Septuagint; that is, myself; see Job i. 6. Rom. xii. 1. though the supplement, *my prayer*, seems to be a good one, and so the words are supplied by the Jewish commentators[c]. *And will look up*, or *out*[d], as out of a watch-tower, Hab. ii. 1. to see if help is coming, and for an answer of prayer: the phrase is expressive of hope, expectation, faith, and confidence, that an answer would be returned; and therefore the psalmist determines to look upwards to heaven, whither he directed his prayer, and from whence the answer must come; and to look out from his watch-tower, where he was waiting for it, and to continue patiently expecting it till he had it: and the ground of his confidence were the nature and perfections of God, particularly his purity and holiness, as appears from the following verse.

Ver. 4. *For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, &c.*] Sin, ungodliness; it is contrary to his nature, who is holy, just, and good; and to his will revealed in his law, which is the same with his nature; and sin is a transgression of it. God is so far from taking pleasure in sin, that it is the abominable thing which his righteous soul hates; though this hinders not his voluntary permission of sin, or his decree of it, which he has willed, though he does not delight in it, in order to magnify the riches of his grace and mercy in the salvation of his people: nor is this contrary to the delight and pleasure which he takes in the persons of his elect in Christ, though they are sinners in themselves, and were so when he so loved them as to give his Son for them, and who died for them while they were yet sinners: and when he sends his Spirit to regenerate and sanctify them, and they are conscious guilty of many sins: for though he delights in their persons, he has no pleasure in their sins; nor is it consistent with the holiness of his nature to take pleasure in wickedness, let it be committed by whomsoever. *Neither shall evil dwell with thee*; that is, the evil man, who continues in a course of wickedness, and lives and dies in his sins. He has no communion with God here, nor shall he dwell with him hereafter; but shall be bid to depart from him, whether he be a profane sinner openly, or secretly a wicked professor of religion. The sense of the psalmist is, that since they were evil and wicked men, that were risen up against him, and gave him trouble, he entertained a strong confidence that God would hear him, for himself and his friends, whose cause was righteous; and appear against his enemies, who were wicked and ungodly men; and this he grounded upon the purity and holiness of God.

Ver. 5. *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight, &c.*] By the *foolish* are meant not such who are so in a natural, but in a moral sense; wicked and ungodly men. The Septuagint render the word, *transgressors of the law*; and the Vulgate Latin version, *the unrighteous*; and the Arabic version, *they that contradict thy precepts*. The word[e] used comes from a root which signifies *to praise*; and may design such as are praisers of themselves, proud boasters; who are elated with their own excellencies, with their wisdom, strength, honours, riches, and righteousness, and treat all others with contempt; for though they are unrighteous, yet they trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others, which betrays their folly; hence the Syriac version renders it, *the proud*; and the Chaldee paraphrase, *mockers*. And their not standing in the sight of God denotes his abhorrence and detestation of them, as when one man abhors

[a] בקר mane, Vatablus, Gejerus.
[b] אערך disponam, Montanus, Michaelis; comparabo, Pagninus, Musculus; ordinabo, Piscator, Gejerus.
[c] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.
[d] ואצפה speculabor, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Michaelis; speculabimur, Junius & Tremellius.
[e] הוללים jactantes, Gejerus; insanos gloriosos, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

another he cannot endure to look upon him, or bear to have him in his presence: and it shews that such shall receive no favour from him; for though, like proud Haman, they may think themselves his favourites, and they are the persons the king will delight to honour; yet to their great mortification they will find, that a poor Mordecai, a mean despicable believer, will be preferred unto them. Nor shall they stand in acceptance and confidence before him at the day of judgment: they will not be able to stand themselves, but will call to the rocks and mountains to cover them; and they will not be suffered to stand, but will be driven from the presence of the Lord into everlasting burnings. *Thou hatest all workers of iniquity*; not all that have sin in them or do sin, for there are none without it; but such who give themselves up to work wickedness, who make it the business of their lives, and are slaves unto it, living in a continued series and course of impiety; and this character does not only belong to openly profane sinners, but to some professors of religion; see Matt. vii. 22, 23. and these are the objects of God's hatred. Which does not so much intend any past act of his, the preterition or passing them by, when he chose others in his eternal purposes; in which sense the word is used in Rom. ix. 13. as his continued aversion to them, denying them his grace and favour, and rejecting them from all nearness to him and communion with him; and may include the everlasting punishment of them, by which his displicency and hatred will be made manifest: and he is impartial in it, without any respect to persons, high or low, rich or poor; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, will come upon every soul of man that does evil. God's love to his own people was antecedent to sin, and was placed upon them in Christ, in whom their persons are always well-pleasing to him; and though they sinned in Adam, and became actual transgressors of his law, yet such was his love to their persons, that he saves them from their sins by the blood and righteousness of his son.

Ver. 6. *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing, &c.*] Or *a lie*[i]; whether in matters of religion; as false doctrines, errors, and heresies, are lies; and so all that deny the deity, sonship, and Messiahship of Christ, are liars; and the followers of the man of sin speak lies in hypocrisy: or in common conversation; such are like to Satan, and are abominable in the sight of God; and he will destroy them, either with a temporal destruction, with bodily diseases, as Gehazi was smitten with a leprosy; and with corporeal death, as Ananias and Sapphira; or with eternal destruction, the destruction of body and soul in hell; for all liars have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. *The Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man*: or *the man of blood and deceit*[k]; that thirsts after blood; who sheds innocent blood, as the Targum paraphrases it. He shewed his resentment against Cain, the first of this sort, in a way that was intolerable to him. He very early established a law, requiring that he who shed man's blood, by man should his blood be shed; and he will give the whore of Rome, who has been drunk with the blood of his saints, blood to drink, because she is worthy. And all such who flatter with their tongue, and speak with a double heart, and lie in wait to deceive their neighbour, whether in things temporal or spiritual, are the objects of his abhorrence and indignation; see Psal. lv. 23. Now David's enemies being such sort of persons, foolish wicked men, proud and haughty, workers of iniquity, liars, bloody and deceitful men, men that God had an abhorrence of, he therefore hoped and was confident that God would hear his prayers against them, and for himself.

Ver. 7. *But as for me, I will come into thy house, &c.*] The tabernacle of Moses, sometimes called the house of God, 1 Chron. ix. 23. for as yet the temple was not built. Here David had been used to go in times past; and though he was now in a kind of exile from it, he was confident he should again enter into it, and determined so to do whenever he had an opportunity, and that in the following manner: *in the multitude of thy mercy*: grace or goodness. God is rich in mercy, abundant in goodness and truth; there is a multitude of mercy, love, and grace in his heart, and which is stored up in his covenant, and displayed in his son, and in the provision of him as a Saviour of lost sinners; abundant mercy is shewn in regeneration, in adoption, and in the forgiveness of sins, and in every spiritual blessing, and in the gift of eternal life. And now, not relying on his own merits, strength, and righteousness, or leaning to his own understanding, but trusting in the mercy, grace, and goodness of God in Christ, and in hope of finding more grace and mercy to help in time of need; with thankfulness for what he had received, he determines, by divine leave and assistance, to enter into the house of the Lord: and whatever other persons did, whom he had before described, it was his resolution to serve the Lord, under a sense of his mercy and goodness to him; which laid him under an obligation so to do, and is the true principle from which all service should proceed. And *in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple*; either heaven, the habitation of God's holiness, towards which, and to God there, the psalmist would lift up his eyes, his hands, and heart; or the tabernacle, at the door of which the worship of God was performed, the sacrifices were brought, and God met his people; and therefore he says he would worship towards the temple or tabernacle, Levit. i. 3. Exod. xxix. 42, 43. And it may be that David has reference to the Messiah, the medium of divine worship; whose human nature was typified by the tabernacle and temple, in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells: the psalmist therefore purposes to worship God in Christ, and to perform all acts of worship, as prayer, praise, hearing the word, offering sacrifice, &c. in the name and faith of Christ; looking towards him for the presentation of his services by him, and for the acceptance of them with God through him: and this he desired to do in the *fear* of God; not with a slavish fear, but with reverence and godly fear; with a fear influenced by the multitude of God's mercy, grace, and goodness, in an

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[i] כזב mendacium, V. L.

[k] איש דמים ומרמה vir sanguinum & doli, vel fraudis, Montanus, Cocceius, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

humble modest manner, not trusting to, or depending upon, any service done by him.

Ver. 8. *Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness,* &c.] Not in *mine,* but *thine;* in the righteousness of God, which is revealed in the Gospel, from faith to faith, and is imputed by God, and received by faith; in this righteousness the psalmist desired to be led into the house of God, and appear before him; nor is there any other righteousness in which man can stand before God and worship. Or else the sense is, that God would lead him in the way of righteousness, in his righteous statutes, judgments, and ordinances; in which way the Lord does lead his people, Psal. xxiii. 3. Prov. viii. 20. Or that he would lead him for his righteousness-sake; because of his faithfulness to his promises, that he would direct, uphold, and never leave nor forsake him. David was very sensible that the way of man is not in himself, and that he could not direct his own steps; and therefore desired to be guided by the Lord, and to be led by the right hand of his righteousness, and to be upheld by it in his ways: *because of mine enemies:* or, *those that observe me*[l]: that lie in wait and watch for my halting, as Jeremiah's enemies did; and would rejoice at my fall, and insult me, and blaspheme thy name; therefore lead, guide, and uphold me. *Make thy way straight before my face:* thy way of providence, thy way of grace, thy way of worship and duty; let it appear plain and manifest, that I may know in which way I should walk; and let all obstructions be removed out of the way, that I may walk straight on, without any difficulty or hinderance. He seems to have respect to his enemies, who lay in his way, that God would remove them; see ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 9. *For there is no faithfulness in their mouth,* &c.] In the mouth of the ungodly, as the Chaldee paraphrase; in the mouth of every one of them, as Aben Ezra interprets it: that is, in the mouth of every wicked, bloody, and deceitful man; of every one of David's enemies, as Saul, or the conspirators with Absalom his son. There was no steadfastness in them; nothing right, sure, or firm said by them; nothing that could be depended upon; there was *no truth* in them, as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it. And as this was true of David's, so of Christ's enemies; of Herod, and of the Herodians, and of the Scribes and Pharisees; see Matt. ii. 8. and xxii. 16. and of the enemies of Christ's Gospel; of all false teachers, who speak not the word faithfully; tell dreams, use the hidden things of dishonesty, walk in craftiness, handle the word of God deceitfully, and speak lies in hypocrisy: there is no certainty in them, nor is any thing they say to be trusted to. And this is the character of wicked men in common: they are an assembly of treacherous men; there is none upright among them; nor is any confidence to be placed in them: the people of God are in danger of being imposed upon and misled by them to their hurt; and therefore the psalmist prays, that the Lord would lead him in his righteousness. *Their inward part is very wickedness;* their heart, which is desperately wicked, exceeding sinful; not only wicked, and very wicked, but wickedness itself. This is the root and fountain of all wickedness, and the reason why there is no faithfulness in their mouth: the word[m] is sometimes rendered, *their inward thought,* Psal. xlix. 11. and lxiv. 6. which is the inmost of man, the nearest to him; and which, and even the imagination of it, is evil, and that continually: the word[n] translated *wickedness* signifies woes, calamities, and mischiefs; and such the wicked hearts of men are full of, and are continually devising against the people of God, and his righteous cause. And this is the just character of ungodly men, even though they may profess to know God, have a form of godliness, and be outwardly righteous before men; as these were David was concerned with. *Their throat is an open sepulchre;* or as one, as the Targum paraphrases it; to which the throat of wicked men may be compared for its voracity and insatiableness; the grave being one of those three or four things, which never has enough or is satisfied. And this is true of the throat, whether it be considered as an instrument of speech, and throws out devouring words to the prejudice of the characters and reputations of others; or as an instrument of swallowing meat and drink, and where the pleasure of appetite is; and so may be expressive of the eager desire of the wicked after sin, who drink up iniquity like water; and of their delight in it, and their fulness of it, and yet still greedy, insatiable, and not to be satisfied: and their throat may be compared to an open grave for the nauseous stench it emits; corrupt communication, filthiness, and foolish talking, proceeding out of it; and horrible oaths, curses, imprecations, and blasphemies, being belched out through it; and for the danger which is by it, since into it men may fall unawares; and so the evil communications of wicked men corrupt good manners, and do great mischief to those who fall into company with them. *They flatter with their tongue;* or, *make it smooth*[o]; use oily expressions, soft language: or, *part* or *divide*[p] their tongue; are double-tongued and double-hearted; and so deceive persons, as the apostle interprets it in Rom. iii. 13. They flatter God himself, drawing nigh to him in an hypocritical way; they flatter men, their neighbours, and impose upon them; they flatter princes, and such sycophants were about David. And such are false teachers, who prophesy smooth things, and with good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple; on which account there is great reason to pray to be led and directed by the Lord.

Ver. 10. *Destroy thou them, O God,* &c.] Or *make them guilty*[q]; that is, make them appear to be guilty, either to themselves, that they may acknowledge their offences, confess their guilt, and ask for pardon; or to others, pronounce them guilty, pass the sentence of condemnation on them: and the Chaldee paraphrase and the Syriac version render it by חייב, condemn them, or hold them guilty; and the Septuagint, Vulgate La-

[l] שוררי observatores meos, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Michaelis; so Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Ben Melech, & Ainsworth.
[m] קרבם viscera, Sept. cor, V. L. i. e. cogitatio, Muis.
[n] הוות aerumnae, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus; calamitates, Cocceius; so Ainsworth.

[o] חליקון levigant, seu emolliunt, Piscator, Gejerus.
[p] Divident vel dispertient, Mariana.
[q] האשימם reos fac istos, Junius & Tremellius; so Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt, Michaelis, Kimchi, and Ainsworth.

tin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, *judge* them; treat them as guilty persons, punish them, destroy them, soul and body, with an everlasting destruction. *Let them fall by their own counsels*: into the pit they have dug for others; as Haman fell by his counsels, and was hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai. And so sometimes a man's own counsel casts him down, and is the cause of his ruin, Job xviii. 7. Or, *because of their own counsels*[r]; which they have taken against the Lord and his Anointed, against his cause and interest, and against his righteous ones, particularly David: meaning their wicked counsels, in which they walked; see Hos. xi. 6. Or *from their counsels*[s]; as the Targum and most versions render it: that is, let their counsels be turned into foolishness, become brutish, be carried headlong, and come to nought. Which had its accomplishment in Ahithophel. *Cast them out*; either out of their own country, and carry them into captivity; or from the presence of the Lord, from his tabernacle and worship; which David's enemies now enjoyed, and gloried in: or into outer darkness, into a furnace of fire, where there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. *In the multitude of their transgressions*: when God deals with men in a way of grace, he turns away ungodliness from them, or them from their ungodliness; but when in a way of judgment he suffers them to die in their sins, and so perish: or *for the multitude of their transgressions*[t]. The sins of transgressors are many; and because of them they are cast out of the sight of God, and will be bid to depart from him hereafter. *For they have rebelled against thee*: all sin is a rebellion against God; hence sinners are called rebellious ones. The rebellion of David's subjects against him was a rebellion against God; because it was an attempt to dethrone him, whom God had made king of Israel. The word[u] signifies to imbitter, exasperate, and provoke: and such is the nature of sin, it is a bitter thing in itself, and it provokes the eyes of God's glory. Now these several expressions are to be considered, not so much petitions, as prophecies; and not as imprecations, but as predictions of what would be the portion of wicked men.

Ver. 11. *But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice*, &c.] Who trust not in themselves, in their own hearts, in their righteousness, or riches, or strength; but in the name, righteousness, and strength of the Lord: who betake themselves to him, and put all their confidence in him: let them rejoice in the salvation of the Lord, and in hope of eternal glory and happiness. *Let them even shout for joy*: not only rejoice inwardly, but express their joy externally, with their voices, and in the loudest manner; and that always, the matter and foundation of a believer's joy always continues; and so does the grace itself: though it is not always in exercise, yet it is an everlasting joy; and with it the redeemed of the Lord will come to Zion, and no man will be able to take away their joy. Which distinguishes it from the triumphing of the wicked, and the joy of the hypocrite, which is but for a moment. *Because thou defendest them*, or *coverest them*[w]; with the feathers of divine protection, under the shadow of his wings, and with the hollow of his hand: so God preserves his people, keeps them by his power, as the apple of his eye, and is a wall of fire round about them. Which is a good reason why they should rejoice, and shout for joy. *Let them also that love thy name*; as all that put their trust in the Lord do; they love the Lord himself, because of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands, and for what he has done for them: they love all they know of him; they love him in all his persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; and every name of his, by which he has made himself known. They love, admire, and adore all his attributes and perfections, as they are displayed in the works of creation and providence; and especially in redemption by Jesus Christ, where they all gloriously meet together; and in whom God has proclaimed his name gracious and merciful. They love his word, his Gospel, by which he is made known; and they love his people, on whom his name is called, and who call upon his name. And let such, says the psalmist, *be joyful in thee*: not rejoice in their boasting of their wisdom, strength, riches, and righteousness; all such rejoicing is evil: but in the Lord, in his grace, righteousness, and salvation. He is the only true proper object of spiritual joy; and there is good reason for it, from what follows.

Ver. 12. *For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous*.] As he has blessed him with a righteousness, even the righteousness of God imputed to him, by which he is denominated righteous, and with the forgiveness of his sins; so he will bless him with peace and prosperity, with all spiritual blessings, with the blessings of grace here, and glory hereafter. Hence he has just reason to rejoice and be glad. *With favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield*: by which is meant the free favour, love, and grace of God in Christ, which springs from his sovereign will and pleasure; is his good will to men, and the exceeding riches of his grace, shewn in his kindness towards them in Christ Jesus: and the compassing or crowning of the righteous with it, as the word[x] signifies, is expressive of the abundance of it, in the application of it to them in conversion, and in every instance and blessing of grace; for such are crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies; the grace of the Lord is exceeding abundant towards them, it flows and overflows; it surrounds them on all sides, and covers them all over: it is as a shield unto them from all their enemies, Psal. xl. 11. and which being held in the hand of faith, quenches the fiery darts of Satan; and is the saints' security from every enemy, and from all hurt and danger, here or hereafter; see Zeph. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 38, 39. and is a crown of glory upon them, which makes them glorious, lovely, and amiable. Some interpret this of Christ the righteous One; so Nebiensis.

[s] ממועצותיהם propter consilia sua, Piscator; so Tigurine version and Michaelis.

[t] ברב propter multitudinem, Musculus, Pagninus, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[u] מרו irritaverunt, V. L. see Ainsworth.

[w] ותסך עלימו & operies super eos, Vatablus; operies & proteges eos, Michaelis.

[x] תעטרנו (στεφανωσας) Sept. coronasti nos, V. L. Arab. Ethiop. coronabis eum, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.

PSALM VI.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith, a Psalm of David.

WHAT is designed by *the chief musician*, and what is meant by *neginoth*, have been observed in the title of Psalm iv. As for *sheminith*, it seems to be one particular sort of the *neginoth*, or stringed instrument, which this man had the care of: see the title of Psalm xii. which most of the Hebrew writers [y] understand of the harp of eight strings, to which this psalm was set; and which, from the number of its strings, was called *sheminith*, which signifies *the eighth*: and this receives confirmation from 1 Chron. xv. 21. The eighth string was added to the harp by Simonides, according to Pliny [z]: but if such an harp is here meant, this refutes it, for David lived long before Simonides. Though some [a] have thought it refers to a poem or song of eight notes, to the tune of which this psalm was sung; or to the eighth note, which was grave, and which we call the bass. As for the eighth day of circumcision, of which some Jewish writers mystically interpret it; or the eighth, that is, the first day, or Lord's day, to which some of the ancient Christian writers refer it, or the eighth age, or millennium, as Theodoret; these can by no means be admitted of. The occasion of it was either some bodily disease the psalmist laboured under, or some distress of soul, on account of sin; and the rather this seems to be the case, seeing the psalm begins with the same words as Psalm xxxviii. in which the psalmist so much bewails his iniquity. Some have thought it was drawn up for the use of any and every sick person; and others say it was written on the account of Israel in captivity, who were then as sick persons [b]: but rather the occasion of it was bodily sickness, inward guilt of conscience for sin, and distress by enemies; as appears from ver. 3, 4, 7, 8.

Ver. 1. *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger*, &c.] The Lord sometimes rebukes or reproves men by his spirit, and sometimes by his word and ministers, and sometimes by his providences, and that on account of sin; to bring to a sense and acknowledgment of it; and particularly for remissness in duty, or neglect of it; and for trusting in the creature, or in any outward enjoyment, boasting of it, and loving it too much; and these rebukes of his own people are always in love, and never in wrath, though they sometimes fear they are; see Psalm lxxxviii. 7, 16. Lam. iii. 1. and therefore deprecate them, as the psalmist here does; not the thing itself, but the manner in which it is apprehended it is done, or doing. *Neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure*: when God chastens his own people it is not in a way of vindictive wrath, or as a proper punishment for sin; for this would be contrary to Christ's suretyship-engagements and performances, and to the doctrine of his satisfaction for sin; it would draw a veil over it, and render it of none effect: it would be contrary to the justice of God to punish both surety and principal; and to the everlasting love of God to them, in which he always rests, and from which there can be no separation; nor would they be dealt with as children; and besides would be condemned with the world, and killed with the second death; whereas they will not, though chastened of God, it is the chastening of a father, is very instructive to them, and is always for their good, spiritual and eternal; is in measure, in judgment, and in love; and never in fury and hot displeasure; but this being feared, is deprecated.

Ver. 2. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord*, &c.] He knew he was a sinner, both by original sin and actual transgression, which he was always ready to own; he knew that what he had done deserved the wrath of God, even his hot displeasure; and that for such things it came upon the children of disobedience: he knew that there was mercy with God through Christ, and therefore he flees unto it, pleads for it, and entreats the manifestation of forgiving love: he pleads no merits of his own, nor makes any mention of former works of righteousness done by him, but throws himself upon the mercy of God in Christ; giving this as a reason, *for I am weak*; either in body, through some disease upon him; or in soul, being enfeebled by sin, and so without spiritual strength to do that which was good of himself; to exercise grace, and perform duty, and much less to keep the law of God, or make atonement for sin, or to bear the punishment of it. *O Lord, heal me*: meaning either his body, for God is the physician of the body, he wounds and he heals; so he healed Hezekiah and others; and he should be sought to in the first place by persons under bodily disorders: or else his soul, as in Psal. xli. 4. sin is the disease of the soul, and a very loathsome one it is, and is incurable but by the balm of Gilead, and the physician there; by the blood of Christ, and forgiveness through it; and the forgiveness of sin is the healing of the diseases of the soul, Psal. ciii. 3. *For my bones are vexed*: with strong pain; meaning his body, as Kimchi and Aben Ezra observe; because these are the foundation of the body, and the more principal parts of it: and this may be understood of his grief and trouble of heart for his sins and transgressions, which is sometimes expressed by the bones being broke, and by there being no rest in them, Psal. li. 8. and xxxviii. 3.

Ver. 3. *My soul is also sore vexed*, &c.] Or *exceedingly troubled* [c], and even frightened and thrown into a consternation with in-dwelling sin, and on account of actual transgressions, and by reason of the hidings of

[y] Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.
[z] Nat. Hist. l. 7. c. 56.
[a] In Aben Ezra in loc.
[b] Vid. Kimchi & Aben Ezra in loc.

[c] נבהלה מאד turbata est valde, V. L. conturbata, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; territa valde, Pagninus, Montanus; consternata valde, Cocceius.

God's face, and through the temptations of Satan, and because of the fear of death; to which Old-Testament saints were very incident. *But thou, O Lord, how long?* it is an abrupt expression, the whole he designed is not spoken, being hindered through the grief and sorrow with which his heart was overwhelmed; and is to be supplied after this manner, "shall I have refreshment?" as the Chaldee paraphrase; or "wilt thou look and not heal me?" as Jarchi; or "my soul be troubled?" as Aben Ezra; or "shall I be afflicted, and thou wilt not heal me?" as Kimchi; or "wilt thou afflict me, and not arise to my help?" see Psal. xiii. 1, 2.

Ver. 4. *Return, O Lord,* &c.] By this it seems that the Lord had withdrawn himself, and was departed from the psalmist, wherefore he entreats him to return unto him, and grant him his gracious presence. God is immense and omnipresent, he is everywhere: going away and returning cannot be properly ascribed to him; but he may be said to depart from his people, as to sensible communion with him, and enjoyment of him, when he hides his face, withdraws his gracious presence, and the comfortable discoveries and influences of his love; and he may be said to return when he visits them again, and manifests his love and favour to them: the Jewish writers * interpret it, "return from the fierceness of thine anger," as in Psalm lxxxv. 3. and though there is no such change in God, as from love to wrath, and from wrath to love; but inasmuch as there is a change in his dispensations towards his people, it is as if it was so; and thus it is apprehended by them. *Deliver my soul;* from the anxiety, distress, and sore vexation it was now in, for of all troubles soul-troubles are the worst; and from all enemies and workers of iniquity which were now about him, and gave him much grief and uneasiness; and from death itself, he was in fear of. *O, save me for thy mercy's sake:* out of all troubles of soul and body, and out of the hands of all enemies, inward and outward; and with temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation; not for his righteousness-sake, as Kimchi well observes; for salvation is according to the abundant mercy of God, and not through works of righteousness done by men, otherwise it would not be of grace.

Ver. 5. *For in death* there is *no remembrance of thee,* &c.] Of the goodness, truth, power, and faithfulness of God; no notice can be taken nor mention made either of the perfections or works of God, whether of nature or of grace, by a dead man to others; he is wholly useless to men on earth with respect to these things. *In the grave who shall give thee thanks?* for mercies temporal or spiritual; the dead cannot praise the Lord among men, only the living; see Psal. xxx. 9. and cxv. 17. Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19. wherefore the psalmist desires that he might live and praise the Lord: this argument is taken from the glory of God, which end cannot be answered among men by death, as by life. It does not follow from hence that the soul either dies or sleeps with the body, and is inactive until the resurrection-morn, neither of which are true; or that the souls of departed saints are unemployed in heaven; they are always before the throne, and serve the Lord day and night; they remember, with the utmost gratitude and thankfulness, all the goodness and grace of God unto them, and praise him for all his wondrous works: but the sense is, that when a saint is dead, he can no more serve and glorify God on earth among men.

Ver. 6. *I am weary with my groanings,* &c.] By reason of bodily illness, or in-dwelling sin, or the guilt of actual transgressions, or the hidings of God's face, or a sense of divine wrath, or the temptations of Satan, or afflictions and crosses of various kinds, or fears of death, or even earnest desires after heaven and eternal happiness, or the low estate of Zion; each of which at times occasion groaning in the saints, as in the psalmist, and is the common experience of all good men. The psalmist being weary of his disease, or of sin, groaned till he was weary with his groaning; inward groaning affects the body, wastes the animal spirits, consumes the flesh, and induces weariness and faintness; see Psal. cii. 5. Jer. xlv. 3. *All the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears;* these are hyperbolical phrases †, expressing more than is intended, and are not to be literally understood; for such a quantity of tears a man could never shed, as to water his couch and make his bed to swim with them, but they are used to denote the multitude of them, and the excessiveness of his sorrow; see Psal. cxix. 136. Lam. iii. 48, 49. and these tears were shed, not to atone and satisfy for sin, for nothing but the blood and sacrifice of Christ can do that; but to express the truth and reality, as well as the abundance of his grief; and this was done *all the night* long; see Job vii. 3, 4. when he had leisure to think and reflect upon his sins and transgressions, and when he was clear of all company, and no one could hear or see him, nor interrupt him in the vent of his sorrow, and when his disease might be heavier upon him, as some diseases increase in the night-season: this may also be mystically understood, of a night of spiritual darkness and desertion, when a soul is without the discoveries of the love of God, and the influences of his grace; and has lost sight of God and Christ, and interest in them, and does not enjoy communion with them; and throughout this night-season weeping endures, though joy comes in the morning. And it may be applicable to David's antitype, to the doleful night in which he was betrayed, when it was the hour and power of darkness, and when he had no other couch or bed but the ground itself; which was watered, not only with his tears, but with his sweat and blood, his sweat being as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground; so he is often said to sigh and groan in spirit, Mark vii. 34. and viii. 12. John xi. 33, 38.

Ver. 7. *Mine eye is consumed because of grief,* &c.] Either by reason of the affliction he laboured under, which could not be joyous, but grievous; or because of the sin that was in him, and those that he had committed, which were grieving to him; or through the sins of other professors of religion, or profane sinners,

* Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.

† See the latter in Homer. Odyss. 17. v. 110. Odyss. 19. prope finem.

whom he beheld with grief of heart and weeping eyes: the word[f] used signifies anger and indignation, and sorrow arising from thence, and may denote either indignation in himself at his enemies, who were rejoicing at his calamities; or the sense he had of the anger of God, and his hot displeasure, which he feared he was rebuking and chastening him with; and now his heart being filled with grief on one or other of these accounts, or all of them, vented itself in floods of tears, which hurt the visive faculty; for through much weeping the eye is weakened and becomes dim: and through a multitude of tears, and a long continuance of them, it fails; see Job xvii. 7. Psal. xxxi. 9. Lam. ii. 11. *It waxeth old because of all mine enemies;* saints have many enemies, sin, Satan, and the world; and these are very oppressive ones, as the word[g] here signifies; such as beset them about, straiten them on all hands, and press them sore; and they must be pressed down by them, were it not that he that is in them is greater than he that is in the world; and David's enemies gave him so much trouble, and caused him to shed such plenty of tears, that his eye waxed old, was shrunk up, and beset with wrinkles, the signs of old age; or it was removed out of its place, as the word is rendered in Job xviii. 4. or the sight was removed from that, it was gone from him, Psal. xxxviii. 10.

Ver. 8. *Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity,* &c.] The psalmist being fully assured that God had heard his prayer, that he should recover from his disorder, or be delivered out of his calamities, whether corporeal or spiritual, has on a sudden a spring of joy, faith, and comfort; as sometimes there is a quick transition from comfortable to uncomfortable frames; see Psalm xxx. 7. so on the contrary, there is as quick a passage from uncomfortable to comfortable ones; see Lam. iii. 18, 24. who may be called *workers of iniquity* may be seen in the note on Psal. v. 5. and these were either his open enemies, as Saul and his men, or Absalom and the conspirators with him, whom he bids to cease from following and pursuing after him; or his secret ones, hypocritical courtiers, that were about him, who were wishing and hoping for his death. It is the lot of God's people to be among the workers of iniquity; Lot was among the Sodomites, David was in Meshech and in the tents of Kedar, Isaiah was among men of unclean lips: Christ's lily is among thorns, and his sheep among goats; and though in some respects a civil conversation with wicked men cannot be avoided, for then good men must needs go out of the world; yet as little company should be kept with them as can be, and no fellowship should be had with them in sinful practices, nor in superstitious worship; and though there will not be a full and final separation from them in the present state of things, there will be hereafter, when these very words will be used by David's antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ; not only to profane sinners, but to carnal professors of religion, who have herded themselves with the people of God, Matt. xxv. 41. and vii. 23. Luke xiii. 25—28. The reason why the psalmist took heart and courage, and ordered his wicked persecutors, or sycophants, to be gone from him, was his assurance of being heard by the Lord. *For the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping;* referring to what is said ver. 6, 7. he had not only lifted up his voice in prayer, but he had wept and made supplication, as Jacob did, Hos. xii. 4. sometimes God brings his people to the throne of grace weeping, and with supplications leads them, Jer. xxxi. 9. and then hears their cry and answers them.

Ver. 9. *The Lord hath heard my supplication,* &c.] Which he had presented to him, ver. 1, 2, 4. in which he deprecates his anger and hot displeasure; entreats his free favour, grace, and mercy; desires healing for soul or body, or both; prays a return of his gracious presence; and deliverance and salvation out of all his troubles, from all his enemies, and from death itself. The word[h] used properly signifies petitions for grace and mercy, which the psalmist put up under the influence of the spirit of grace and supplication, and which were heard. *The Lord will receive my prayer;* instead of a burnt-offering, as Aben Ezra glosses it; as sweet incense, as what is grateful and delightful, coming up out of the hands of Christ the Mediator, perfumed with the sweet incense of his mediation: the word[i] signifies prayer made to God as the righteous Judge, as the God of his righteousness, who would vindicate his cause and right his wrongs; and a believer, through the blood and righteousness of Christ, can go to God as a righteous God, and plead with him even for pardon and cleansing, who is just and faithful to grant both unto him. The psalmist three times expresses his confidence of his prayers being heard and received, which may be either in reference to his having prayed so many times for help, as the Apostle Paul did, 2 Cor. xii. 8. and as Christ his antitype did, Matt. xxvi. 39, 42, 44. or to express the certainty of it, the strength of his faith in it, and the exuberance of his joy on account of it.

Ver. 10. *Let all mine enemies be ashamed,* &c.] Or *they shall be ashamed*[k]; and so the following clauses may be rendered, and be considered as prophecies of what would be; though if this be considered as an imprecation, it is wishing no ill; wicked men are not ashamed of their abominations committed by them, neither can they blush; it would be well if they were ashamed of them, and brought to true repentance for them; and if they are not ashamed now, they will be hereafter, when the Judge of quick and dead appears. *And sore vexed;* or *troubled*[l]; as his bones had been vexed, and his soul had been sore vexed by them; as he knew they would be through disappointment at his recovery, and at his deliverance from the distresses and calamities he was now in, when he should sing for joy of heart, and they should howl for vexation of spirit. *Let them return;* meaning either from him, from pursuing after him; or to him, to seek his favour, and be reconciled to him, and be at peace with him, as Aben

[f] מכעס præ ira, Pagninus; præ indignatione, Montanus, Musculus; ex indignatione, Piscator.

[g] צוררי angustiatores, Montanus; angustiis afficientes me, Vatablus; oppressores meos, Junius & Tremellius, Gejerus.

[h] תחנתי supplices pro gratia preces meas, Michaelis: so Ainsworth.

[i] תפלה est propria oratio habita ad juris & æqui arbitrum; Cocceius in Psal. iv. 2.

[k] יבשו pudore afficientur, Pagninus, Montanus; pudefient, Cocceius, Schmidt; so Ainsworth.

[l] יבהלו conturbantur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

Ezra and Kimchi explain it; unless this word should only signify *again*, as it sometimes does, and be read in connexion with what follows; *let them be again ashamed suddenly*[m]; intimating that his deliverance would be sudden, in a moment, in a very little time, and so would be their disappointment, shame, and confusion. Jarchi, from R. Jonathan and R. Samuel bar Nachmani, refers this to the shame of the wicked in the world to come.

PSALM VII.

Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the Lord, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.

THE name of this psalm, *Shiggaion*, either respects the music or the matter of the psalm. Some take it to be the name of the musical instrument to which the psalm was set[n]: so Habakkuk's prayer is said to be *upon shigionoth*; which is the same word with this, only of the plural number, Hab. iii. 1. Others say it was the first word of a song, to the tune of which this was sung[o]. And others understand it of a certain kind of a song[p]: and the Targum renders it, *the interpretation of the ode of David*: which Ainsworth renders, *David's interpretation of the law*; reading אוריתא instead of אודיתא, as does also the king of Spain's Bible. And certain it is that it is the name of a song; since it follows, *which he sang unto the Lord*; in his presence, before him, and to the glory of his name. But the question is, of what sort it is? and why it should be so called? since its root שגה signifies *to err* or *wander*: it is more generally rendered, *an erratic* or *wandering ode*; a song or pslam, which consisted of various kind of metre: it was sung with various notes, and all kind of music, which made it very pleasant. Hence some render it, *David's delight*, as R. Obadiah Gaon; and the verb from whence it is derived is translated *ravished* in Prov. v. 19. 20. and Ben Melech says, the word signifies שמחה ועריבות, *joy and pleasure*: and Aben Ezra observes that some interpret it תענוג, *delight*. But others are of opinion that this word regards the subject-matter of the psalm, and may be rendered, *David's ignorance* or *error*; his sin of ignorance; and respects his mistaken conduct with regard to his enemies, particularly Saul, in making imprecations upon them, Psal. vi. 10. in cursing them, and especially King Saul; when a king is not to be cursed, Eccl. x. 20. and in cutting off the skirt of his garment, for which his heart smote him, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4, 5. Some render it, *the care of David*, as Cocceius; which he wrote in deep meditation, when he had forgot himself, and was as it were in an ecstacy; setting forth *the sum of his cares*, as Ainsworth expresses it, when he was harassed and greatly afflicted by his enemies. The occasion of it is, *the words of Cush the Benjamite*; which some understand of Shimei the Benjamite, who came out and cursed David as he went along, when he fled from Absalom, 1 Sam. xvi. 5—11. Theodoret thinks Hushai is meant, who persuaded Absalom not to follow the counsel of Ahithophel; on which account David penned this psalm. Others interpret it of one of Saul's courtiers, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, and whose name was Cush[q]; and which is very likely, since it is evident that some of Saul's courtiers accused David to him, and charged him with seeking his hurt, not only to take away his crown and kingdom, but his life, 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. and xxvi. 19. Though the generality of the Jewish writers[r] interpret it of Saul himself, who is called Cush, in allusion to his father's name Kish, who was a man of Benjamin, 1 Sam. ix. 1. or else because Cush signifies *an Ethiopian*, to which he may be compared, as the children of Israel in Amos ix. 7. For as the Ethiopian is various in his skin, so was Saul in his actions, as Jarchi observes; or rather because, as Kimchi and Ben Melech express it, as the Ethiopian does not change his skin, Jer. xiii. 23. so Saul did not change his hatred to David. Though the same writers observe, that he may be called so by the rule of contraries, because he was a very goodly and beautiful man; the words referred to are supposed to be those in 1 Sam. xxii. 7, 8.

Ver. 1. *O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust*, &c.] The psalmist expresses his interest in God as his covenant-God, and his trust and confidence in him; and with these he sets out as the stay of his soul, and his bulwark against the fears of his enemies; and he does not say that he had trusted in God, or would for the future trust in him; but that he did trust in him, and continued to do so. And God is to be trusted in at all times; in times of affliction, temptation, and desertion; and these the psalmist premises to his petition, which follows, as an encouragement to him to hope for success, since God was his God, and none that ever trusted in him were confounded. *Save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me*; persecution is no new thing to the people of God; David had his persecutors, and many of them; the Church, in Jeremiah's time, had hers; the saints, in the times of the apostles, and in all ages since, have had theirs. Every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus must expect persecution in one shape or another; and there is none can save and deliver from it but God, and he can and will in his own time, 2 Cor. i. 10. David was sensible of this, and therefore applies to him, and him only; and not to an arm of flesh, to his friends, or to neighbouring princes and powers.

Ver. 2. *Lest he tear my soul like a lion*, &c.] That is, one of his persecutors, the chief of them; it may be Saul, whom the psalmist compares to a lion for his majesty and greatness, the lion being the king among

[m] ישבו יבושו iterum confundantur, Gejerus.
[n] Menachem in Jarchi in loc. So David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 204. 1.
[o] Aben Ezra in loc.
[p] Kimchi in loc.
[q] Aben Ezra & Obadiah Gaon in loc.
[r] Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, Arama, & Ben Melech in loc.

beasts: and for his authority, power, and might, and for his wrath and cruelty, which he feared; and which, should it be exerted on him, would tear his soul, or himself, in pieces; would rend his soul from his body, and dispatch his life; see Prov. xix. 12. So the Apostle Paul calls the Roman governor, before whom he was, and from whose hands he was delivered, a lion, for his power and fierceness, 2 Tim. iv. 17. And so our adversary the devil, the chief of all persecutors, and who instigates others against the saints, is by Peter said to go about like a roaring lion, 1 Pet. v. 8. *Rending it in pieces*, as the lion does his prey when hungry. So Homer[a] compares Polyphemus to a mountain-lion, which devours and leaves nothing, neither the intestines, nor flesh, nor bones; and represents[b] it first taking hold of the creature with its strong teeth, and breaking its neck, and drawing out its blood and all its inwards; see Isa. xxxviii. 13. *While there is none to deliver*; no saviour, no deliverer: for if God does not save and deliver his people out of the hands of their persecutors, none can; especially out of the hands of such an one as is here described tearing and rending in pieces. As there is no God besides the Lord, there is no saviour besides him: there is no temporal nor spiritual saviour but he: salvation is not to be expected from any other; and were it not for him, saints must fall a prey to their enemies.

Ver. 3. *O Lord my God, if I have done this.*] The crime which Saul and his courtiers charged him with, and which was made so public that every body knew it; and therefore it was needless particularly to mention it; namely, that he lay in wait for Saul, and sought his life to take it away, 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. The Targum interprets it of this psalm, paraphrasing it, *if I have made this song with an evil intention*; to give an ill character of any, and load them with false charges. *If there be iniquity in my hands*; not that he was without sin, he had it in his heart; nor that he lived without the actual commission of sin: but his sense is, that there was no iniquity, as not in his heart, purpose, and design, so not in his hand, nor attempted by him, of the kind he was accused of, 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. Otherwise, we often hear him complaining of the depravity of his nature, and acknowledging his sins and transgressions, Psal. xxxii. 5. and xxxviii. 3, 4. and li. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Ver. 4. *If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me, &c.*] That is, when Saul was at peace with him; when he lived at his court, and ate at his table. His meaning is, that he did not conspire against him, nor form schemes to deprive him of his crown nor of his life: or, as it may be rendered, *if I have rewarded to him that rewarded me evil*[c]; that is, as Jarchi explains it, if I rewarded him as he rewarded me, evil for evil. This David did not; and it is eminently true of Christ his antitype, 1 Pet. ii. 23. and in it he ought to be imitated by every believer, Rom. xii. 17. *Yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy*; meaning Saul, who persecuted David without any just reason, and whom David delivered without any obligation to do it; not for any benefit and kindness he had received from him; for the phrase *without cause* may be read in connexion either with the word *delivered*[d]; for the deliverance was wrought without any cause or merit on Saul's part, or profit to David; or with the word *enemy*, for Saul was David's enemy without any just cause on David's part: and the deliverance referred to was when he cut off Saul's skirt, in the cave at Engedi, and spared his life; and when he took away his spear from him, as he was sleeping in the trench, and did not destroy him, nor suffer those that would to do it, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4, 5, 7, 10, 17. and xxvi. 8, 11. The words may be rendered, *only I stripped him*[e]. The sense is, that he cut off the skirt of his coat, and took away his spear, and so in part stripped him both of his clothes and armour, at two different times; not to do him any hurt, but to let him know, as Jarchi observes, that he was delivered into his hands, and he could have slain him, but did not. The same Jewish writer interprets the word used of *stripping of garments*; and Aben Ezra observes, from R. Moses, that the *vau*, rendered *yea*, signifies *only*, as in Gen. xlii. 10.

Ver. 5. *Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it, &c.*] That is, if the above things he was charged with could be proved against him; then he was content that Saul his enemy should pursue after him, and apprehend him, and bring him to justice, by taking away his life from him. *Yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth*; with the utmost indignation and contempt, without shewing any mercy; as the lion treads down his prey, and tears it to pieces, Micah v. 8. or as the potter treads his clay under foot, Isa. xli. 25. *And lay mine honour in the dust. Selah*: meaning either his life and soul, as before; denominating himself from his better part, and which he elsewhere calls his glory, Psal. xvi. 9. and xxx. 12. and lvii. 8. see Gen. xlix. 6. or else his body, as R. Judah Ben Balaam, who is blamed for it by Jarchi; or rather his fame, credit, and reputation, that he had gained, both by his courage and valour in the field, and by his wise and prudent behaviour at court, 1 Sam. xviii. 7, 16. Should he appear to be guilty of the crimes he was accused of, he is willing to have his glorious name buried in the dust of oblivion, and his memory perish for ever. The words are to be considered as a strong assertion of his innocence, in an appeal to God, the searcher of hearts, and the trier of the reins of men; and as imprecating on himself the worst of evils, should it not appear: see Job xxxi. 21, 22. Aben Ezra renders *selah, in truth, let it be so*: and the Targum renders it, as usual, *for ever*: see the note on Psalm iii. 2.

Ver. 6. *Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, &c.*] This and the following phrase do not suppose local motion in God, to whom it cannot belong, being infinite and immense, but are spoken of him after the manner of men, who seems sometimes as though he had laid himself down, and was unconcerned about and took no notice of human affairs, of the insults of the wicked, and the oppressions of the righteous; wherefore the

[a] Odyss. 9. v. 292, 293.
[b] Iliad. 11. v. 175, 176. & Iliad. 17. v. 63.
[c] Si malum malo rependi, Castalio.

[d] ריקם absque emolumento ullo ad me inde redeunte, Gussetius.
[e] Verbum חלץ proprie extrahere, &c. significat, & de vestibus quae alicui exuuntur & eripiuntur proprie dicitur, De Dieu.

psalmist beseeches him to *arise*, which he may be said to do when he comes forth in his power in the defence of his people, and against their enemies; see Psal. xii. 5. Isa. xxvi. 21. and he also prays him to arise *in anger*, to shew himself displeased, and give some tokens of his resentment, by letting his enemies feel the lighting down of his arm with the indignation of his anger. *Lift up thyself, because of the rage of mine enemies*: ascend the throne of judgment, and there sit judging right; shew thyself to be the Judge of the earth, high and lifted up; let it appear that thou art above all mine enemies, higher and more powerful than they; stop their rage, break the force of their fury, lift up a standard against them, who, like a mighty flood, threaten to bear all before them: or *lift up thyself in rage*, or *fierce wrath, because of*, or *against mine enemies*[y]: and so the sense is the same as before; and this way go many of the Jewish interpreters[z]. *And awake for me to the judgment* that *thou hast commanded*: not that sleep falls upon God, for the keeper of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps; nor does it fall on any but corporeal beings, not upon angels, nor the souls of men, much less on God; but he sometimes in his providence seems to lie dormant and inactive, as if he disregarded what is done in this world; and therefore his people address him as if he was asleep, and call upon him to arise to their help and assistance; see Psal. xliv. 23, 26. and so David here, *awake for me*, that is, hasten to come to me and help me; suggesting that he was in great distress and danger, by reason of his enemies, should he delay coming to him. By *judgment* is either meant the vengeance which God had ordered him to execute upon his enemies, as Jarchi interprets it, and therefore he entreats him to arise and put him in a capacity of doing it; or else his innocence, and the vindication of it, which God had promised him, and then the petition is much the same with ver. 8. But the generality of Jewish [a] writers understand it of the kingdom which God had appointed for him, and for which he was anointed by Samuel; and who had told Saul that God had found a man after his own heart, whom he had *commanded* to be captain over his people, 1 Sam. xiii. 14. wherefore the psalmist prays that God would hasten the fulfilment of his purpose and promise, and set him on the throne, that so he might administer justice and judgment to the people.

Ver. 7. *So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about*, &c.] By *the congregation of the people* are meant the nation of the Jews, the twelve tribes of Israel, called an assembly of people, and a company of nations, Gen. xxviii. 3. and xxxv. 11. and this is to be understood not of their gathering together in an hostile manner about David to take him, which might be interpreted compassing God himself about, David being as dear to him as the apple of his eye, which is the sense of several Jewish commentators[b]; but rather of their encompassing and surrounding the altar of God with songs of deliverance, upon David's being rid of his enemies and advanced to the throne of the kingdom; see Psal. xxvi. 6, 7. unless it should have regard to the pure worship of God by David, which was greatly neglected in Saul's time; and then the sense is, that the psalmist prays that he might be established in his kingdom, as God had appointed and commanded, when he would fetch up the ark of God, and encourage the worship of God, and rectify all disorders in it; that so the several tribes might come up to Jerusalem and encompass the ark, the symbol of the divine Presence, and worship in his holy mountain. *For their sakes therefore return thou on high*; take the throne of justice, high and lifted up, vindicate the cause of the oppressed, deliver me from all my troubles, put me into the peaceable possession of my kingdom; if not for my sake, yet for the sake of thy church and people, and for the sake of thy worship and thy glory; the Targum paraphrases it, *return thou to the house of thy Shechinah*.

Ver. 8. *The Lord shall judge the people*, &c.] The inhabitants of the world in general; for God is the Judge of all the earth, and he judges the world in righteousness daily, and ministers judgment in uprightness, though it is not always manifest; or his own people in particular, whose cause he pleads, whose injuries and wrongs he avenges, whose persons he protects and defends; this the psalmist expresses with confidence, and therefore, suitable to his character as a Judge, he entreats him as follows: *judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness*; he speaks not of his justification before God, in whose sight he well knew no flesh living could be justified by their own righteousness, Psal. cxliii. 2. nor of the righteousness of his person, either imputed or inherent, but of the righteousness of his cause, Psal. xxxv. 27. not of his righteousness Godward, for he knew that he was a sinner with respect to him; but of his righteousness towards Saul, against whom he had not sinned, but had acted towards him in the most righteous and faithful manner, 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. and therefore desired to be judged, and was content to stand or fall according to his conduct and behaviour towards him. *And according to mine integrity* that is *in me*; who had always acted the sincere and upright part towards Saul, though he had pursued him with so much fury and violence; the psalmist's prayer was heard and answered, Psal. xviii. 20, 24.

Ver. 9. *Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end*, &c.] Which will not be till the measure of it is fully up, and that will not be till the wicked are no more; for, as long as they are in the world they will be committing wickedness, and like the troubled sea continually cast up the mire and dirt of sin; and they will remain to the end of the world, till the new Jerusalem church-state shall take place, when all the Lord's people will be righteous, and there will not be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts, nor a pricking brier or grieving thorn in all the land; for, in the new earth will no sinner be, but righteous persons only; and for this state the psalmist may be thought to pray; however by this petition and the following he expresses his hatred of sin and love of righteousness: some

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[y] בעברות צוררי in furore contra hostes meos, Mariana; gravissimo furore percitus in eos qui me opprimunt, Junius & Tremellius.

[z] Targum, Jarchi, & Kimchi, in loc.

[a] R. Moses in Aben Ezra in loc. R. Obadiah Gaon, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.

[b] Kimchi & Aben Ezra in loc.

choose to render the words [c], *let wickedness now consume the wicked*; as in the issue it will, unless the grace of God takes place; some sins consume the bodies, others the estates of wicked men, and some both; and all are the means of destroying both body and soul in hell, if grace prevent not; this may be considered as a declaration of what will be, being a prophetic petition [d]. *But establish the just*: or righteous one; meaning himself, and every other who is made righteous, not by his own righteousness, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; and who needs not to have his righteousness established, which is in itself stable, firm, and sure, and cannot be more so; it is an everlasting one, and cannot be abolished, but abides for ever, and will answer for him in a time to come; but his faith to be established more and more in its exercise on this righteousness: nor do the persons of the just need establishing, or can they be more stable than they are, as considered in Christ, as they are the objects of God's everlasting love, secured in the covenant of grace, and built on Christ the foundation; but the graces of faith, hope, and love, need daily establishing on their proper object, they being weak, fickle, and inconstant in their acts; and the saints need more and more establishing in the doctrines of the Gospel, and in their adherence to the cause of God and Christ and true religion; and it is God's work to establish them, to whom the psalmist applies; see 1 Pet. v. 10. *For the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins*: he is righteous himself in his nature, and in all his works, and he knows who are righteous and who are wicked; he knows the hearts, thoughts, affections, and inward principles of all men, and the springs of all their actions; he looks not at outward appearances, but at the heart; and as he can distinguish between the one and the other, he is capable of punishing the wicked and of confirming the righteous, consistent with the truth of his perfections.

Ver. 10. *My defence is of God*, &c.] Or *my shield is in or of God* [e]: God was his shield, his protector and defender; see Psal. iii. 3. or *my shield is with God*: that is, Christ, who was the shield his faith made use of against every spiritual enemy, was with God; he was with him as the Word and Son of God from all eternity, and as the living Redeemer of his people before his incarnation; and he is now with him as their intercessor and advocate, who pleads in defence of them, and opposes himself, his blood and righteousness, to all the charges and accusations of Satan. *Which saveth the upright in heart*: who have the truth of grace in them, wisdom in the hidden part; who are sincere in their affections, purposes, and designs, in their faith, hope, and love; and act from real principles of truth and love, in the integrity of their souls; for these light and gladness are sown, to them grace and glory are given, and no good thing is withheld from them; they are saved by God from sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell, and every enemy, with a spiritual and everlasting salvation.

Ver. 11. *God judgeth the righteous*, &c.] Not all that are thought to be righteous, or think themselves to be so, are such; nor is any man naturally righteous, or of himself, nor by virtue of his obedience to the law of works; but such only are righteous who are made so by the obedience of Christ; these God governs and protects, avenges their injuries and defends their persons; some render the words, *God is a righteous Judge* [f]; he is so now in the administrations of his government of the universe, and he will be so hereafter in the general judgment of the world. *And God is angry with the wicked every day*: wicked men are daily sinning, and God is always the same in his nature, and has the same aversion to sin continually; and though he is not always making men examples of his wrath, yet his wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness of men; and there are frequent instances of it; and when he is silent he is still angry, and in his own time will stir up all his wrath, and rebuke in his hot displeasure.

Ver. 12. *If he turn not*, &c.] Not God, but the enemy, or the wicked man, spoken of ver. 5, 9, 11. if he turn not from his wicked course of life, to the Lord to live to him, and according to his will; unless he is converted and repents of his sin, and there is a change wrought in him, in his heart and life; the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read, *if ye turn not*, or *are not converted*, an apostrophe to the wicked. *He will whet his sword*: God is a man of war, and he is sometimes represented as accoutred with military weapons; see Isa. lix. 17, 18. and among the rest with the sword of judgment, which he may be said to *whet*, when he prepares sharp and sore judgments for his enemies, Isa. xxvii. 1. Deut. xxxii. 41. *He hath bent his bow, and made it ready*; drawn his bow of vengeance, and put it on the full stretch, and made it ready with the arrows of his wrath, levelled against the wicked, with whom he is angry; which is expressive of their speedy and inevitable ruin, in case of impenitence; see Lam. ii. 4. and iii. 12, 13. or *trod his bow*, as is the usual phrase elsewhere; see Psal. xi. 2. Lam. ii. 4. and iii. 12. which was done by the feet, and was necessary when the bow was a strong one, as Jarchi on Psal. xi. 2. observes; and so the Arabs, as Suidas [g] relates, using arrows the length of a man, put their feet on the string of the bow instead of their hands.

Ver. 13. *He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death*, &c.] The weapons of his indignation, Isa. xiii. 5. which will issue both in the first and second death, corporeal and eternal; the instruments of the former are diseases of various kinds, and judgments, as famine, pestilence, &c. and of the latter not only the law is an instrument of it, that being the letter which kills, and is the ministration of condemnation and death, but even the Gospel itself to wicked men is the savour of death unto death; and devils will be the executioners of it. *He ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors*: the word for persecutors signi-

[c] יגמר נא רע רשעים consummat nunc vel quæso malum impios, Musculus, Vatablus, so Jarchi, Kimchi, & Ben Melech.

[d] Consummat nunc malum impios, Pagninus, Montanus, Hammond; so Obadiah Gaon.

[e] על אלהים in Deo, Musculus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Muis, Ainsworth; apud Deum, Lutherus, Piscator, Gejerus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[f] Vid. Aben Ezra & Abendana not. in Michol. Yophi in loc. אלהים שופט צדיק Deus judex justus, V. L. Munster, Musculus, Montanus, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis, so Ainsworth.

[g] In voce Ἄραβες.

fies *hot* or *burning* [h], and designs such persons who burn in malice and wrath, in rage and fury, against the saints, and hotly pursue after them, as Laban did after Jacob, Gen. xxxi. 36. for these more especially God has determined in his eternal purposes and decrees, and for these he has provided in his quiver, arrows of wrath and vengeance, fiery ones; and against these will he bring them forth, direct them, and shoot them at them, Psal. lxiv. 7. Some [i] understand all this not of God, but of the wicked man, and read *if he turn not*, but, on the contrary, instead of that, *will whet his sword, bend his bow*, &c. against the righteous; yet he shall be disappointed, he shall not accomplish his designs, as appears by the following verses; these phrases are used of wicked men, Psal. xi. 2. and xxxvii. 14, 15. and lxiv. 2, 3, 4. but the former sense seems best.

Ver. 14. *Behold, he travaileth with iniquity*, &c.] Is full of it, and big with it, as a woman with-child, and eagerly desires to bring it forth, and is in pain till he commits it. *And hath conceived mischief*: that which is injurious to God and the perfections of his nature, a transgression of his law, and an affront to his justice and holiness, is doing wrong to fellow-creatures, and hurt to themselves, either to their name and credit, or to their substance and estates, or to their bodies and souls, and it may be to them all; and yet this they *conceive*, they devise it in their hearts, and form schemes how to bring it to pass, and which they do with great freedom, deliberation, and pleasure. *And brought forth falsehood*; or *vanity* [k], or a vain thing, as the same word is rendered in Job xv. 35. no fruit at all, but wind, or stubble, Isa. xxvi. 17. and xxxiii. 11. that which deceives does not answer the expectation, but the contrary to it; the sense is, that wicked men having devised mischievous things against the saints, they are big with expectations of success, and strive to bring their purposes to bear, but are miserably disappointed, for it all ends in vanity and vexation of spirit to themselves.

Ver. 15. *He made a pit and digged it*, &c.] That is, he digged a pit, and made it very large and capacious, to answer his purposes. *And is fallen into the ditch which he made*; so it is said of the Heathen, Psal. ix. 15. and is exemplified in the case of Haman, who was hanged upon the gallows he had built for Mordecai. Kimchi explains this of Saul's falling upon his own sword, and dying by it, which he drew against David; the phrase is proverbial, Prov. xxvi. 27. Eccl. x. 8. and the sense of this and the above figurative expressions is literally and properly given in the next verse.

Ver. 16. *His mischief shall return upon his own head*, &c.] That which he conceived and devised in his mind, and attempted to bring upon others, shall fall upon himself, as a just judgment from heaven upon him. *And his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate*: referring to the violence with which Saul pursued David, which would be requited to him, and of which he prophesied, 1 Sam. xxvi. 10.

Ver. 17. *I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness*, &c.] Or on account of it, as it was displayed in vindicating the innocent, and punishing the wicked; so Pharaoh having ordered male infants of the Hebrews to be drowned, and he himself and his host in righteous judgment being drowned in the Red sea; Moses and the children of Israel sung a song, as the psalmist here. *And will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high*: whose name is Jehovah, and is the most High over all the earth; and who had now, according to the psalmist's request, ver. 6, 7. arose and lifted up himself, and returned on high, and had shewn himself to be above all David's enemies, and had sat on the throne judging right.

PSALM VIII.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, a Psalm of David.

SOME think this psalm was composed when the ark was brought to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite; and that it was delivered to him and his sons, as others were to Asaph, to Jeduthun, to the sons of Korah, &c. [l]. But against this lies a strong objection, that Obed-edom and his sons were porters, and not singers, 1 Chron. xxvi. 4, 15. and for the same reason *gittith* cannot be the name of a musical instrument which was kept in his family, and presided over by them [m]. Some are of opinion this word had its name from Gath; and that this psalm was wrote by David when he was there [r]; or that it is the name of a musical instrument invented and made there, and which was brought from thence [s]. And so the Targum paraphrases it; "upon the harp which was brought from "Gath." A word like this signifies *wine-presses*: and hence the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, render it *for the wine-presses*: which Theodoret interprets of churches, where Christ the true vine is gathered by believers, and they prepare the mystic wine. Some think [t] the psalms which bear this name were composed for the feast of tabernacles; when, having got in their vintage, they filled their presses, and squeezed their grapes, and therefore gave thanks; it was usual, even with the Heathens [u], to make use of the harp, and other instruments of music, at the gathering of the grapes to be squeezed and pressed. Some of the Jewish writers [w] apply it to the

[h] לדולקים ardentibus, V. L. in ardentes, Montanus; hot persecutors, Ainsworth.
[i] So Brentius & Clarius in Gejerus.
[k] שקר rem inanem, so some in Vatablus; vanitatem, Gejerus.
[l] Aben Ezra in loc.
[m] R. Moses apud ibid.

[r] Ben Melech in loc. vide Kimchi ibid.
[s] Jarchi in loc.
[t] Vide Godwin. Synops. Antiqu. Heb. l. 2. s. 1. c. 9.
[u] Phurnutus de Natura Deorum. p. 64.
[w] Rabbini apud Jarchium in loc.

times of Edom's destruction, who was to be trodden down as in a wine-press, foretold in Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3. and others interpret it of the times of Gog and Magog, when the prophecy in Joel iii. 13. shall be fulfilled [d]; and some have thought this psalm to be a song of praise, like one of those sung by them that tread in the wine-press; the time of vintage being a time of joy. The ancient Christian writers explain it of the sufferings of Christ, when he trod the wine-press of his father's wrath. But the word *gittith* is either the first word of some song, as Aben Ezra thinks; or the name of the tune, as Kimchi; or rather of the musical instrument to which this psalm was set and sung. Though the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, ch. ii. 6. citing some passages from this psalm, only says, *one in a certain place testified;* without mentioning either the number of the psalm, or the name of the writer; yet it is certain that David was the penman of it: and both from the testimony of that writer, and from a citation of Christ himself, it is evident that the subject of this psalm is the Messiah, and that it belongs to his times; see Heb. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9. Matt. xxi. 15, 16. So the Syriac scholiast; "the eighth psalm is concerning Christ our "Redeemer."

Ver. 1. *O Lord our God,* &c.] Jehovah, the one God, who is Lord of all angels and men, and in an especial manner Lord and King of saints. *How excellent is thy name in all the earth!* by the *name* of God is not meant any particular name of his, by which he is called; but either himself, his nature and perfections; or rather that by which he is made known, and particularly his Gospel; see John xvii. 6. Acts ix. 15. this is excellent in its nature, it being good news, and glad tidings of good things, which display the love, grace, mercy, and kindness of God to men, as well as his wisdom, power, truth, and faithfulness; and in the subject-matter of it, Christ and his righteousness, and life and salvation by him, the spiritual blessings of grace it publishes, and the exceeding great and precious promises it contains; and in its usefulness for the enlightening, quickening, and converting sinners, and for the comforting and reviving of drooping saints. It is the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, and excels the law in glory. It cannot well be said how glorious it is; it is marvellously excellent; and that *in all the earth,* being carried by the apostles, who were sent by Christ with it, into all the world; where it has shone out, and appeared gloriously to Gentiles as well as Jews. This clause shews that this is said by David prophetically of Gospel times; for not in his time, nor in any period under the Old Testament, was the name of the Lord glorious and excellent in all the earth. His name was great in Israel, but not in all the world. He shewed his word, and gave his statutes and ordinances to Jacob; but as for the Gentiles, they were without them, and were strangers to the covenants of promise, Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2. and cxlvii. 19, 20. Eph. ii. 12. but this was true of the first times of the Gospel; and will be still more fully accomplished when the prophecies in Mal. i. 11. and Zech. xiv. 9. shall be fulfilled. *Who hast set thy glory above the heavens:* meaning his son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the brightness of his glory; in whom is all the fulness of the Godhead, the glory of all the divine perfections; so called Psalm lxiii. 2. and lxxxv. 9. and the setting of him above the heavens designs the exaltation of him at the right hand of God; where angels, principalities, and powers, became subject to him, and he was made higher than the heavens, Heb. vii. 26. And it was in consequence, and by virtue of this, that the Gospel was spread throughout the earth; for upon Christ's exaltation the spirit was poured down upon the apostles, and they were endowed with gifts qualifying them to carry the Gospel into the several parts of the world.

Ver. 2. *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,* &c.] Not literally such, though the Jewish writers [e] generally so understand it; as do some Christian interpreters, who explain it of the wonderful formation, nourishment, and growth of infants; and of the marvellous care of God in providing the breast for them; in filling it with milk, and teaching them to suck; which, being observed by men, occasion praise to God, to the confusion of atheists and infidels. But this is no other than what is common to brute creatures: rather the words are to be understood in a figurative sense. So Jarchi applies them to the priests and Levites in the temple: but it is best to interpret them of the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel; and of such who received it and professed it; who were in their own eyes, and in the eyes of the world, as babes and sucklings, Matt. xi. 25. *Hast thou ordained strength:* by which is meant the Gospel, the rod of Christ's strength, and the power of God unto salvation; and which being made useful for the conversion of souls, is the cause of much praise and thanksgiving to God: this, by the mouths and means of the apostles and first ministers of the word, God ordained, or *founded* [f], settled and established in the world, notwithstanding all the opposition made unto it; so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, to root it out of the world; but it will continue the everlasting Gospel. *Because of thine enemies:* either for the sake of subduing them, and bringing them to the obedience of Christ, that is, the elect of God, who are before conversion enemies to God and Christ; or rather for the sake of confounding the implacable enemies of God and Christ, and of the cause and interest of religion. In order to which God has made choice of instruments the most mean and despicable, 1 Cor. i. 26, 27, 28. and God's end in this more particularly is expressed in the following clause. *That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger:* Satan, the enemy of mankind, the adversary of Christ personal and mystical, who is filled with envy, wrath, and malice, against Christ and his people; him, by the means of the Gospel and the ministry of it, God has *caused to cease* [g], as the word may be rendered; not as to his being, but as to his power and authority, in the Gentile world; out of which, to his great mortification, he was cast, by the mouth and ministry of babes

[d] Midrash Tillim apud Vicears. in loc.
[e] Aben Ezra & R. Moses in ibid. Kimchi, Obadiah Gaon, & Ben Melech in loc.

[f] יסדת fundasti, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, so the Targum; fundatam disposuisti, Junius & Tremellius, Rivetus.
[g] להשבית ad cessare faciendum, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator; ut facias cessare, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

and sucklings. These words are applied by Christ to the children in the temple, crying Hosanna to the son of David, out of whose mouths God perfected the praise of the Messiah; and by which, and Christ's defence of them, the Scribes and Pharisees, the mortal enemies of Christ, and who wanted to revenge themselves on him, were silenced and stilled, Matt. xxi. 15, 16.

Ver. 3. *When I consider thy heavens*, &c.] Where God dwells, and which he has made; the airy and starry heavens, which are to be seen with the bodily eye; and the heaven of heavens, which is to be beheld and considered by faith: *the work of thy fingers*; being curiously wrought by his power, and garnished by his spirit: for the finger of God is the spirit of God; see Matt. xii. 28. compared with Luke xi. 20. *The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained*, or *prepared* [a], for various uses to the earth, and the inhabitants of it. The sun is not mentioned, because it cannot be looked upon, as the moon and the stars may, nor be seen when they are. And it is generally thought that David composed this psalm in the night, when these celestial bodies were in view; and, it may be, whilst he was keeping his father's sheep, since, in the enumeration of the creatures subject to man, sheep are mentioned first, as being in sight, ver. 7. The heavenly bodies are very glorious creatures, and are worthy of the consideration and contemplation of man, and even of a saint; whereby he may be led to observe the wisdom, power, goodness, and greatness of God.

Ver. 4. *What is man, that thou art mindful of him?* &c.] That is, the psalmist, while he was considering the greatness and glory of the celestial bodies, thought this within himself, and so expressed it; which is to be understood, not of man in general, nor of Adam in a state of innocence; he could not be called Enosh, the word here used, which signifies a frail, weak, sickly mortal man; nor could he with any propriety be said to be the son of man, as in the following clause: nor of fallen man, or of Adam's posterity, descending from him by ordinary generation; for all things are not put in subjection to them, as is hereafter said of man: but this is to be understood of the man Christ Jesus, as it is interpreted in Heb. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9. or of that individual of human nature which Christ assumed. The name of Enosh well agrees with him, who was a man of no note and esteem among men, a worm and no man, a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs, encompassed with infirmities, and was subject to death, and did die. Now it was a marvellous thing that God should be mindful of that individual of human nature; that he should prepare it in his council and covenant; that among the vast numbers of individuals which it came up in his infinite mind to create, he should choose this, to exalt it, and appoint it to union with his own son, and take that delight in it he did; that when it was formed by his spirit, he should anoint it with the oil of gladness above his fellows; that he should take such providential care of it, and so often and so strongly express his affection for it; that he should regard it, and support it under sufferings; and when in the grave, did not leave it, nor suffer it to see corruption; but raised it from the dead, and gave it glory, and exalted it at his own right hand. *And the son of man, that thou visitest him?* The name of *the son of man* is the name of the Messiah, in Psalm lxxx. 17. Dan vii. 13. and is often given to Christ, and used by him of himself in the New Testament. And this visiting of him is not to be understood in a way of wrath, though he was so visited by God, when he bore the chastisements of his people; but in a way of favour, by bestowing upon him without measure the gifts and graces of his spirit; by affording him his gracious presence, and filling him with spiritual peace and joy.

Ver. 5. *For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels*, &c.] Than Elohim, *than God*, as this word usually signifies: and could it be interpreted of man, as made by God, it might be thought to refer to the creation of him in the image and likeness of God; but as it must be understood of the human nature of Christ, it may regard the wonderful union of it to the son of God, on account of which it is called by the same name, Luke i. 35. and so made but a little lower than God, being next unto him, and in so near an union with a divine Person; and which union is hypostatical or personal, the human nature being taken into a personal union with the son of God: and so these words give an instance of God's marvellous regard to it; and contain a reason, proving that he has been mindful of it, and visited it. Though rather this clause refers to the humiliation of Christ in his human nature, as it is interpreted in Heb. ii. 9. and so it removes an objection, as it is connected with the following clause, which might be made against what had been observed in the foregoing verse, on account of the low estate of Christ's human nature, when here on the earth; and the sense is, that God has been mindful of it, and visited it, notwithstanding its state of humiliation for a little while, seeing he has crowned it with glory and honour, *&c.* Christ was made low as to nature, place, estate, reputation, and life; he who was the most high God, in the form of God, and equal to him in the divine nature, was made frail mortal flesh, and was in the form of a servant in the human nature. He who dwelt on high, and lay in the bosom of his father, descended into the lower parts of the earth, was formed in the womb of a virgin, and when born was laid in a manger, and dwelt and conversed with sinful mortal men upon earth: he who was Lord of all, whose is the earth, and the fulness of it, had not where to lay his head: he whose glory was the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, became a worm and no man in the esteem of men, was despised and rejected of men, and was of no reputation: and he who was the Lord of life and glory was crucified and killed; becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Such is the nature of Christ's humiliation, expressed by being *made low*; the degree of it is, *lower than Elohim*, than God: he was equal to him in the divine nature, but inferior to him in the human nature, John xiv. 28. As Mediator he was the servant of God, and the servant is not greater than his master; nor as such so great: and he was in his low estate in such a condition as to need the help and assistance of God,

[a] כוננת præparasti, Pagninus, Montanus; parasti, Musculus, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis.

which he had in the day of salvation: and especially he was lower when he was deserted by him, Matt. xxvii. 46. Agreeably to which, some render the words, as they will bear to be rendered, *thou didst make him want God*, or *didst deprive*, or *bereave him of God*[1]; that is, of the gracious presence of God: and so Christ was made lower than God in nature, office, and condition. Sometimes the word Elohim is used for civil magistrates, as in Psal. lxxxii. 6. because they are in God's stead, and represent him; and, on account of their majesty, authority, and power, bear some resemblance to him. Now Christ was made lower than they, inasmuch as he not only taught obedience to them, but obeyed them himself, was a servant of rulers, paid tribute to them, and suffered himself to be examined, tried, judged, and condemned by them; but since the word is rendered *angels* by the Chaldee paraphrase, the Septuagint interpreters, the Jewish commentators, Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, and in the Arabic, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, and above all by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, it is best to interpret it of them: and Christ was made lower than they by assuming human nature, which is inferior to theirs, especially in the corporeal part of it; and more so, inasmuch as it was attended with infirmities, and subject to sorrows and griefs; and as it was sometimes reduced to great indigencies, and to want the comforts of life; and sometimes was in such distress as to need the assistance and ministration of angels, which it had, Matt. iv. 11. Luke xxii. 43. and particularly it was lower than they when deserted by God, whose face they always behold. To which may be added, that Christ was made under a law given by the disposition of angels, ordained by them, and is called *the word* spoken by them; some parts of which they are not subject to; but the particular instance the apostle observes is suffering of death, Heb. ii. 9. which angels are not liable to, they die not. The duration of this low estate was *a little while*: for so the Hebrew word מעט may be rendered, as it is in Psal. xxxvii. 10. and the Greek βραχυ τι, used by the Septuagint, and the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, as it is in Acts v. 34. which refers either to the time of suffering death, and lying under the power of that and the grave, which was but a little time; or at most to the days of his flesh, reaching from his incarnation to his resurrection; which was a course but of a few years, and may very well be expressed in this manner. And to this low estate was Christ brought by Jehovah the Father, who is the person spoken of throughout the psalm; he pre-ordained him to it, prepared a body for him, sent him in the fulness of time, made of a woman, made under the law, and had a very great hand in his sufferings and death: though all was with Christ's full consent, and with his free good will. *And hast crowned him with glory and honour*: by raising him from the dead, and setting him at his own right hand, committing all judgment to him; and requiring all creatures, angels and men, to give worship and adoration to him. And this being in consequence of his sufferings, after he had run the race, and endured a fight of afflictions; and because of the greatness of his glory and honour, with which he was as it were on all sides surrounded, he is said to be *crowned* with it; who a little before was crowned with thorns, and encompassed with the terrors of death and hell. This respects his mediatorial glory.

Ver. 6. *Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, &c.*] All power in heaven and in earth being given to him: when he was raised from the dead, and when he ascended on high, and was set down at the right hand of God, he was made or declared LORD and CHRIST; Lord of the hosts of heaven, of all the angels there, King of saints, King of kings, and Lord of lords. All things in heaven and earth, which God has made, are put into his hands, to subserve his cause and glory, and for the good of his people; for he is head over all things to the church. The Ethiopic version reads, *all the works of thy hands*; among whom are angels. This is a greater dominion than was given to the first man, Adam, Gen. i. 28. *Thou hast put all* things *under his feet*: or put them in subjection to him, as the phrase signifies, and as it is interpreted, Heb. ii. 8. Good angels are subject to him, as appears by their ministration to him, their dependence on him, and adoration of him, 1 Pet. iii. 22. devils are subject to him, whether they will or no; and so are wicked men, whose power and wrath he is able to restrain, and does; and the church is subject to Christ, as her head; and so all good men, willingly and heartily, and from a principle of love, obey his commands: yea, all creatures in the earth, air, and sea, are in subjection to him; an enumeration of which is given in the following verses.

Ver. 7. *All sheep and oxen, &c.*] The tame creatures, which are useful for food and cloathing: *yea, and the beasts of the field*; the wild beasts, which he can make use of to destroy and devour his enemies, and whom he can restrain from hurting his own people, Jer. xv. 3. Dan. vi. 22. Acts xxviii. 3, 4, 5.

Ver. 8. *The fowl of the air, &c.*] These he rained about the tents of the Israelites for their relief, Psal. lxxviii. 27. and can command them to feed his people, as the ravens did Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 4, 6. or to destroy his enemies, Jer. xv. 3. see Psal. l. 10, 11. *And the fish of the sea*: instances of Christ's power over them, and of their being at his command, and for his service, may be seen in Matt. xvii. 27. Luke v. 5, 6. John xxi. 3, 6. *And whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas*: some[k] understand this of ships, made by the wisdom and art of men, in which they pass through the paths of the sea, and fish in the midst of it. The Targum paraphrases it, *and leviathan, which passes through the paths of the sea.* Compare with this Isa. xxvii. 1. Some interpret all these things in a figurative and allegorical way; and some of the ancients by *sheep* understood believers among the Gentiles; by *oxen*, the Jews; by *the beasts of the field*, idolaters and profane persons; *by the fowls of the air*, angels; and by *the fish of the sea*, devils: but these are much better explained by Cocceius, who, by *sheep*, understands common members of the

[1] ותחסרהו מעט מאלהים & deficere facies (vel fecisti, Pagninus) eum paululum a Deo, Montanus; destitui quidem eum voluisti paululum a Deo, Michaelis; carere cum fecisti Deo parumper, Gejerus.

[k] Aben Ezra & Kimchi in loc.

churches; by *oxen*, those that labour in the word and doctrine; by *the beasts of the fild*, aliens from the city and kingdom of God; men fierce and cruel, Isa. xi. 6, 7, 8. and lxv. 25. by *the fowl of the air*, such as are lifted up with pride and vanity; and by *the fish of the sea*, such as are immersed in worldly pleasures. But it is best to interpret the whole literally; from whence may be observed, that what was lost by the first Adam is restored by the second; and that believers have a free use of all the creatures through Christ: and not only the things here mentioned are subject to him, but every thing else; there is nothing left that is not put under him, only he is excepted that put all things under him, Heb. ii. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 27.

Ver. 9. *O Lord our God, how excellent*, &c.] The psalm ends with the same words with which it begins; which shews that the sense of this, with which the psalmist was affected, continued with him, and doubtless increased, after such a confirmation of it, by the instances he was led to take notice of.

PSALM IX.

To the chief Musician upon Muth-labben, a Psalm of David.

SOME take *muth-labben* to be the name of the tune to which this psalm was sung, and to design the same note which we call the counter-tenor: others think, that *upon muth*, or *almuth*, are but one word, and the same as *alamoth*, Psal. xlv. title; and that it is the name of a musical instrument; and that *Ben* in *labben*, is the name of the chief musician, who was over that sort of instrument, to whom the psalm is inscribed [l]; and indeed R. Sol Jarchi says, that he had seen in the great Masorah these words as one; and so it seems the Septuagint interpreters read them, who render them, *for the hidden things of the son*; and the Arabic version, *concerning the mysteries of the son*: and Ben is a name, it is said, of one of the singers, whose kindred and companions were appointed with psalteries on *alamoth*, 1 Chron. xv. 18, 20. And so then the title runs thus; *to the chief musician on alamoth, even to Ben*. But others are of opinion that the subject-matter or occasion of the psalm is designed by this phrase; and that as *muth* signifies *death*, the death of some person is intended, on account of which this psalm was composed; some say Nabal, seeing the word לבן, *Laban*, inverted, or read backwards, is *Nabal* [m], whose death affected David; as appears from 1 Sam. xxv. 38, 39. Others, that it was one of the kings of the Gentiles, whose name was Labben, and is mentioned nowhere else, who fought with David, and whom he slew, and upon his death penned this psalm [n]. Others, Goliath the Philistine [o], who is called, 1 Sam. xvii. 4, 23. איש הבנים, which we render *champion* and dueller, one of two that fight together. But rather the reason of the name is, as given by the Jewish commentators [p], because he went and stood between the two camps of the Philistines and the Israelites; and so the Chaldee paraphrase renders the title of this psalm, "to praise, concerning the death "of the man who went out between the camps, a "song of David." And so the psalm itself, in the Targum, and by other Jewish writers, is interpreted of Goliath and the Philistines, and of the victory over them; and which does not seem amiss. Arama interprets it of the death of Saul. Others interpret Al-muth Labben *of the death of the son*; and understand it of the death of Absalom, the son of David [q]: but David's passion moved in another way, not in joy, but in grief, 2 Sam. xviii. 33. nor is there any thing in the psalm that can be referred unto it. Others, of the death of the son of God; but of that there is not the least hint in the psalm. Theodoret interprets it of Christ's victory over death by dying, which was a mystery or hidden thing. Rather, I should think, it might be interpreted of the death of the son of perdition, the man of sin and his followers; who may be typified by Goliath, and the Philistines: and so, as Ainsworth observes, as the former psalm was concerning the propagation of Christ's kingdom, this is of the destruction of antichrist. And Jerom long ago said, this whole psalm is sung by the prophet in the person of the church, concerning antichrist: and to this agrees the Syriac version; which makes the subject of the psalm to be, "concerning Christ, taking "the throne and kingdom, and routing the enemy." And also the Arabic version, according to which the argument of the psalm is, "concerning the mysteries "of the son, with respect to the glory of Christ, and "his resurrection and kingdom, and the destruction "of all the children of disobedience." To which may be added, that this psalm, according to R. Sol. Jarchi, belongs to the time to come, to the days of the Messiah, and the future redemption by him.

Ver. 1. *I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart*, &c.] This is what is called in the New Testament making melody in the heart, or singing with grace in the heart, Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. and yet does not signify mere mental singing, but vocal singing, the heart joining therein: for the word here used for praise signifies to confess, to speak out, to declare openly the praises of God in the public congregation, as David elsewhere determines to do, Psal. cxi. 1. and cxxxviii. 1, 2. the heart ought to be engaged in every part of divine service and worship, whether in preaching or in hearing, or in prayer, or in singing of praise; and the whole heart also: sometimes God has nothing of the heart in worship, it is removed far from him, and

[l] Kimchi & Abendana in Miclol Yophi in loc.
[m] So some in Jarchi & Aben Ezra in loc.
[n] Donesh Hallevi in ibid.
[o] Kimchi & Ben Melech in loc.
[p] Jarchi, Kimchi, Levi Ben Gersom, R. Isaiah, & Ben Melech in 1 Sam. xvii. 4.
[q] So some in Jarchi in loc.

gone after other objects; and sometimes it is divided between God and the creature; hence the psalmist prays that God would unite his heart to fear him, and then he should praise him with all his heart, with all that was within him, with all the powers and faculties of his soul; see Psal. lxxxvi. 11, 12. and ciii. 1. This phrase is not expressive of the perfection of this duty, or of performing it in such manner as that there would be no imperfection in it, or sin attending it; for good men fail in all their performances, and do nothing good without sin; hence provision is made for the iniquities of holy things; but of the heartiness and sincerity of it; and in such an undissembled and upright manner the psalmist determines, in the strength of divine grace, to praise the Lord. *I will shew forth all thy marvellous works:* such as the creation of all things out of nothing, and the bringing them into the form and order in which they are by the word of God; and in which there is such a display of the power and wisdom of God; and particularly the formation of man out of the dust of the earth, in the image, and after the likeness of God; the sustentation of the whole world of creatures in their being, the providential care of them all, the preservation of man and beast; and especially the work of redemption: it is marvellous that God should think of redeeming sinful men; that he should fix the scheme of it in the way he has; that he should pitch upon his own son to be the Redeemer; that ungodly men, sinners, the chief of sinners, and enemies, should be the persons redeemed; and that not all the individuals of human nature, but some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation: as also the work of grace, which is a new creation, and more marvellous than the old; a regeneration, or a being born again, which is astonishing to a natural man, who cannot conceive how this can be; a resurrection from the dead, or a causing dry bones to live; a call of men out of darkness into marvellous light; and it is as woudrous how this work is preserved amidst so many corruptions of the heart, temptations of Satan, and snares of the world, as that it is; to which may be added the wonderful works yet to be done, as the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, the destruction of antichrist, the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, and the eternal glory and happiness of the saints; and doubtless the psalmist may have respect to the many victories which he, through the divine power, obtained over his enemies; and particularly the marvellous one which was given him over Goliath with a stone and sling: these the psalmist determined to make the subject of his song, to dwell and enlarge upon, to shew forth unto others, and to point out the glories, beauties, and excellency of them: and when he says *all* of them, it must be understood of as many of them as were within the compass of his knowledge, and of as much of them as he was acquainted with; for otherwise the marvellous works of God are infinite and without number, Job v. 9. and ix. 10.

Ver. 2. *I will be glad and rejoice in thee,* &c.] Not in himself, in any attainments or works of his; not in his wisdom, riches, and strength, nor in his warlike exploits, but in the Lord; not in second causes, in horses and chariots, in armies, and in the courage and valour of men, but in God, as the author of deliverance, victory, and salvation; not in God only as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of all grace, and as his covenant God and Father; and because of the blessings of this covenant, as forgiveness of sin, a justifying righteousness, &c. for he rejoiced not in his own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ, as well as in his person, grace, and sacrifice; so the Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *I will be glad and rejoice* במימרך *in thy Word,* the Logos, the essential Word of God, of whom there were many types, promises, and prophecies in the former dispensation; two words being here used express the greatness of this joy, and especially the latter word denotes a very vehement joy, a joy unspeakable and full of glory; such as arises from a sight of Christ the object, and which the psalmist had now in view; and this was not a carnal and worldly joy, but joy in the Holy Ghost. *I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High;* that is, to the glory of his name, his being, and perfections, as displayed in his marvellous works, and in the revelation of his word, and especially in his son; and under the character of the *most high* God, the supreme Being over all creatures, angels and men; see Psal. vii. 17.

Ver. 3. *When mine enemies are turned back,* &c.] As the Philistines were, when Goliath their champion was dead; and as the men that came to apprehend Christ, David's antitype, went backwards and fell to the ground, through the superior power of Christ; and as sin, Satan, and the world, and at last antichrist, are made to retreat from the Lord's people, who are more than conquerors over them through Christ that has loved them. *They shall fall and perish at thy presence;* they shall stumble at one thing or another which divine Providence will throw in their way to hinder them from executing their designs, and so fall before them they meant to destroy, and perish at the presence of God as wax melteth before the fire; see Psal. xxvii. 2. and lxviii. 1, 2. so antichrist shall be consumed with the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming, 2 Thess. ii. 8. and this is the ground and foundation of the psalmist's joy, and rejoicing, and singing praise to God, as it will be the reason of the joy of saints in the latter day, Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2.

Ver. 4. *For thou hast maintained my right and my cause,* &c.] Or vindicated and established his righteous cause; God had pleaded and defended it, and by the flight, fall, and ruin of his enemies, had clearly made it appear that his cause was just and good. *Thou sattest in the throne judging right;* God has not only a throne of grace on which he sits, and from whence he distributes grace and mercy to his people, but he has a throne of judgment, and which is prepared for it, as in ver. 7. where he sits as the Judge of all the earth, and will do right; nor can he do otherwise, though his judgments are not always manifest in the present state of things; and the vindication of the psalmist's innocence and uprightness is another reason of his joy and gladness.

Ver. 5. *Thou hast rebuked the Heathen,* &c.] The

people of the Philistines, as the Targum and Kimchi explain it, though some Jewish writers[a] understand it of Amalek the chief of the Heathen nations; but it rather refers to Gospel times, and to the rebukes of the Heathen, by the preaching of the Gospel, for their idolatry and superstition; and especially to the latter day, and to the rebukes of the antichristian states, the Papists who are called Gentiles; which will be with flames of fire, and will issue in their utter extirpation, upon which a profound peace and prosperity will succeed in the Christian churches, according to Isa. ii. 4. which is a prophecy of those times. *Thou hast destroyed the wicked;* the wicked man; for it is in the singular number, *labben*, as Aben Ezra observes, or who is meant by him; Goliath, according to the Targum and Kimchi; or Esau, as other Jewish writers[b], that is, his posterity the Edomites; and each of these were figures of antichrist, the man of sin, the wicked one, whom Christ will slay with the breath of his lips, Isa. xi. 4. *thou hast put out their name for ever and ever;* that is, the glory and reputation of their name, a good and honourable one, which they sought to transmit to the latest posterity; for though the names of wicked men may continue, as Pharaoh, Judas, and others; yet they continue with a scandal and reproach upon them that shall never be wiped off, their names rot and stink; see Prov. x. 7. the whole of this denotes the utter ruin and shameful end of the enemies of Christ and his church, and which is matter of joy to the saints.

Ver. 6. *O thou enemy*, &c.] Which some understand of Goliath, though we do not read of any desolations made by him, nor of any cities destroyed by him; nor by the Israelites upon his death, and the flight of the Philistines on that account; Jarchi interprets it of Esau and his posterity, who shall be destroyed in future time, to which he applies, Ezek. xxxv. 9. other Jewish writers[c] think Amalek is intended, whose destruction they suppose will be in the days of the Messiah, and then will this Scripture be fulfilled: and as these all prefigured antichrist, as before observed, he seems to be designed, and not Satan, as some Christian interpreters have thought, that enemy of Christ, personal and mystical, of the church, and every true believer; and so is antichrist, he opposes himself to God, and all that is called God; he is one that is contrary to Christ, as his name signifies, to his person, offices, grace, and kingdom; who blasphemes the name of God, his tabernacle, and his saints. *Destructions are come to a perpetual end;* which may be understood either of the destructions and desolations made by antichrist, the havoc he has made in the world, treading under foot the holy city, the church, destroying the earth and the inhabitants of it, the bodies, souls, and estates of men; but now the psalmist prophetically declares the end of them to be come, his forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days or years, will be up, and he will go on no more desolating and destroying; see Rev. xi. 2, 3, 18. and xiii. 5, 7. or of the destructions and desolations made upon him by the pouring out of the seven vials upon the antichristian states, upon the seat of the beast, and upon both Pope and Turk, the eastern and western antichrist; when in the issue the beast, and the false prophet with him, will be taken and cast alive into a lake of fire; see Rev. xvi. and xix, xx. and so this phrase denotes that the destruction of antichrist will be consummate, his ruin will be complete, and there will be an utter end of him. Some, instead of *desolations*, by the change of a point read חרבות, *swords*, and Ben Labrat or R. Donesh says[d], that he found it so written in an ancient book; and so reads Jarchi, though he takes notice of the other reading also; and so read the Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; and then the sense is, swords shall fail, they shall be no more made use of to destroy men with, they shall be beaten into ploughshares; for upon the destruction of the man of sin there will be a profound peace in the world; see Isa. ii. 4. Some[e] read these words interrogatively, *are destructions come to a perpetual end?* that is, which the enemy antichrist designed to bring upon the people of God? no, they are not; he may imagine they are, when the two witnesses are slain; and may think he has then made an entire slaughter, and a complete destruction of the saints; but he will be mistaken, these witnesses will rise again, and ascend up to heaven in the sight of their enemies, and to the great terror of them, Rev. xi. 10, 11, 12. *And thou hast destroyed cities*, or *hast thou destroyed cities?* that is, as antichrist threatened and intended, namely, to destroy all the cities and churches of Christ; but, alas! he will never be able to do it, they are built on a rock against which the gates of hell can never prevail: but it is better to read the words affirmatively, and interpret them not of the enemy, but of God, and of him destroying the cities of the enemy; for, at the pouring out the seventh and last vial, the great city, the whole antichristian jurisdiction, will be divided into three parts, and utterly perish; and the cities of the Pagan and Mahometan nations will fall, and particularly Babylon the great city will come in remembrance before God, and be utterly destroyed, Rev. xvi. 19. *Their memorial is perished with them:* they shall not be returned or built any more, but shall be like a millstone cast into the sea, and be found no more at all, Ezek. xxxv. 9. Rev. xviii. 21. Some[f] read this clause by way of interrogation as the others, *is their memorial perished with them?* no, the righteous are in everlasting remembrance, even those churches which the Romish antichrist has made havoc of, as the Albigenses and Waldenses; the memory of them is still precious.

Ver. 7. *But the Lord shall endure for ever*, &c.] When antichrist is entirely ruined, his cities destroyed, and the memorial of them perished, then *shall the Lord sit for ever*[g], as the words may be rendered; that is, as a Jewish writer[h] paraphrases them, in rest and quiet. The words may be expressive of the unchange-

[a] Jarchi in loc. & Pesikta in ibid. in v. 1.
[b] Ibid.
[c] Midrash Tillim in loc. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 150. 2.
[d] Apud Aben Ezra in loc.
[e] So Piscator, Cocceius, Ainsworth.
[f] Sic Genevenses, Diodatus, Bucerus, Coccejus.
[g] ישב sedebit, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Coccejus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth; sedet, Vatablus, Musculus.
[h] R. Abraham Seba in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 150. 2.

ableness and eternity and power of God; the Chaldee paraphrase of them is, מימרא דיי, *the Word of the Lord is for ever; his habitation is in the highest heavens.* And they may very well be interpreted of Christ, the essential Word of God, who is the unchangeable, everlasting, and almighty God; and who sits King for ever, and must sit at God's right hand, in the highest heavens, until all his enemies are made his footstool; and to him most properly do the following things in this and the next verse belong: *he hath prepared his throne for judgment;* for the administration of judgment in this world, for the particular judgment after death, and for the general judgment after the resurrection of the dead; which seems by what follows to be chiefly meant, and which will come on after the destruction of antichrist; and all things are preparing for it; the day is appointed in which God will judge the world; Christ is ordained to be the Judge of quick and dead; devils and ungodly men are reserved to the judgment of the great day; the throne is ready, which will be a white one, Rev. xx. 11. denoting the purity, justice, and uprightness of the Judge, who himself is at the door.

Ver. 8. *And he shall judge the world in righteousness, &c.*] The word תבל, rendered *world*, is, as Ben Melech well observes, a general name for all the countries of the habitable world; and so shews that it is the universal judgment that is here spoken of; and which will be carried on and finished with the utmost righteousness, and according to the strictest rules of justice and equity; and is therefore called the righteous judgment of God, Rom. ii. 5. see Psal. xcvi. 13. and xcviii. 9. Acts xvii. 31. *He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness;* which signifies the same with the former clause, unless by the *world* there, should be meant the wicked of the world; and by the *people* here, the people of God; to whom the righteous Judge will give the crown of righteousness.

Ver. 9. *The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, &c.*] The poor and weak, such as have no might nor power, and are thrown down and trampled upon, as the word [1] signifies; and such are the people of God. They are oppressed with the burden of sin; they are bowed down with Satan and his temptations; and are sometimes pressed out of measure, and above their strength, with the persecutions of men; they are trodden underfoot by antichrist, or otherwise are bore down with a variety of sorrows and afflictions; but the Lord is a refuge for them. The Chaldee paraphrase renders it as before, *the Word of the Lord*, the eternal Logos, the Son of God: he is a refuge for poor sensible sinners, fleeing from wrath to come; being typified by the cities of refuge, whither the manslayer fled from the avenger of blood: he is the strong hold for the prisoners of hope to turn into; his name is a strong tower and place of defence for oppressed saints; he is a refuge when all others fail, and at all times, in the day of affliction, and in the hour of death, and at judgment. *A refuge in times of trouble;* of which the saints have many, as when God hides his face, when corruptions prevail, when grace is low in exercise, and temptations are strong, yet even then Christ is the refuge from the storm; the salvation of his people is of him, and he is their strength in every time of trouble; see Isa. xxv. 4. Psal. xxxvii. 39.

Ver. 10. *And they that know thy name, &c.*] As proclaimed in the Gospel, a God gracious and merciful, and forgiving sin; and as in Christ, in whom his name is, and in whom he is the God of love, grace, and mercy, though out of him a consuming fire; or the name of Christ himself, the Word of the Lord, who is the refuge of saints and sinners; his name Jesus, a Saviour: such who know him to be the able, willing, complete, all-sufficient, and everlasting Saviour; who know his power and faithfulness to keep what is committed to him; and who know him not merely notionally and speculatively, and in a professional way only, but affectionately, spiritually, and experimentally; such *will put their trust in thee;* as they have great reason to do; and the more they know of the grace and mercy of God in Christ, and of the ability and suitableness of Christ as a Saviour, the more strongly will they place their trust and confidence in him. *For thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee:* who are first sought out by God in effectual vocation, and then under the influence and direction of his grace and spirit seek him in Christ, where he is only to be found; and seek Christ and his righteousness above all things else, and with their whole hearts, and diligently; and seek to Christ alone for life and salvation, and continue seeking the Lord, by prayer and supplication, for whatever they stand in need of; these God does not forsake: he may sometimes hide his face from them, as he does from his own children, and did from his own son, yet he never forsakes them totally and finally; nor will he forsake the work of his own hands, which he has wrought in them, but will perfect it; he will never leave them so as that they shall perish by sin, Satan, or any enemy; he will not forsake them in life, nor at death, but will be the strength of their hearts, and their portion for ever.

Ver. 11. *Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion, &c.*] The psalmist having determined in the strength of grace to praise the Lord himself, and shew forth all his marvellous works, and given his reasons for it, both with respect to himself in particular, and with respect to the people of God in general, here calls upon others to engage in the same work; the Lord is not only to be praised, which may be done by celebrating the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands; by giving him thanks for mercies temporal and spiritual, and by living to his glory; but his praises are to be sung by a modulation of the voice in tuneful notes, as the word used signifies; see Cant. ii. 12. where the same word is used of the singing of birds; and this is to be done by the saints jointly, in concert together, as Paul and Silas in prison sang the praises of God; and there is great reason why they should join together in this work, since they share the blessings of divine grace in common together; and it is their duty to stir up one another to this service, as well as to other parts of worship: and this perfectly agrees with the exhortation to the saints, and the work they shall be employed in at the fall of Babylon, or de-

[1] דך attrito, Cocceius, Gejerus; contrito, Michaelis.

struction of antichrist, Rev. xiv. 1, 2, 3. and xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2. Jehovah, to whom praises are to be sung, is described as the inhabitant of Zion, the ark and tabernacle being there before the temple was built, which were symbols of the divine Presence. The Targum paraphrases it, *who causeth his Shechinah to dwell in Zion*; as many of the Jewish writers interpret this psalm of Goliath, a doubt arises here about it, since in the days of Saul, and at the time of Goliath's death, Zion was in the hands of the Jebusites, and the ark of God was not there till many years afterwards; to this it is replied, that David might compose this psalm upon that occasion not immediately at that time, but after he was king of Israel, and when the ark was brought to Zion; or that he said this by a prophetic spirit, foreseeing that God would dwell there; and Kimchi observes, that it was everywhere a received tradition among the people of Israel that the sanctuary would be built there; but however this be, certain it is that the church of God goes by the name of Zion frequently; see Psal. ii. 6. and l. 2. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xiv. 1. God by his essence and power is everywhere, he fills heaven and earth, and cannot be contained in either; his glorious presence is in heaven; his gracious presence is in his church and among his people; where they dwell he dwells, and where he dwells they dwell: hence the church is called by the same name as the Lord is here, the inhabitant of Zion, Isa. xii. 6. and this description of him points out the place where his praises are to be sung, in Zion; who are to sing them, the members of the church; and the reason why, because the Lord dwells in Zion; and is there a refuge for his people, and protects them. *Declare among the people his doings*: what God does for the souls of men is not only to be declared among the people of God, Psal. lxvi. 16. but also among the people of the world, when a suitable opportunity offers; and especially in the public ministry of the word; partly that the name of God may be exalted, his grace, goodness, and mercy be displayed; and partly that it might be the means of the conversion of God's chosen ones among them, Psal. xcvi. 2, 3. Isa. xii. 2, 3, 4. though it may be here his doings in providence are meant, his special providential care of his church and people, and his vengeance on their enemies, on Babylon; for upon the ruin of antichrist, the judgments of God, his providential dispensations towards his church and people, will be made manifest, and all nations will be called upon to fear and worship him; see Jer. l. 28. Rev. xv. 3, 4. the word[a] which is here used signifies such deeds and actions as are the effects of thought and counsel, and which are purposely and industriously done; and whatsoever is done by the Lord, whether in a way of grace or providence, is done after the counsel of his own will; as he thought so it is, as he purposes so it comes to pass, and all things are done well and wisely, and answer the ends and designs of them.

Ver. 12. *When he maketh inquisition for blood*, &c.] The Arabic version renders it, *he remembers him that seeks their blood*; that is, the wicked man, that lies in wait for innocent blood, and whose feet are swift to shed it; the man of sin, who is bloodthirsty; who drinks up the blood of the saints like water, and has been made drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, him will God remember, and take vengeance on, in his own time: but rather this is to be understood of God himself, seeking for the blood of his saints: he knows where it is, though ever so privily shed, as he did Abel's; yet, to shew his strict care and accurate notice of it, he is represented as searching for it, and finding it out by secret search, Jer. ii. 34. And it is the same phrase with *requiring* blood, and expresses a demand of satisfaction for it; and declares the vengeance that God will take on account of it: he requires the blood of every man at the hand of him by whom it is shed, Gen. ix. 5, 6. especially the blood of the righteous, Matt. xxiii. 35. particularly the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, shed by the Romish antichrist; he will make inquisition for that, and will find in Babylon the blood of the prophets and saints, and of all that are slain on earth; and will avenge the blood of his servants at her hand, and give her blood to drink, Rev. xviii. 24. and xix. 2. and xvi. 6. *He remembereth them*; either the *righteous*, as the Targum paraphrases it, whose blood has been shed; or else the wicked, who shed their blood: God will remember them and their sins; which, for some time, may seem not to have been taken notice of by him, and will pour out his wrath, and inflict just punishment on them; see Rev. xvi. 19. and xviii. 5, 6. *He forgetteth not the cry of the humble*: the Cetib, or writing of the text, is עניים, *afflicted*: the Keri, or marginal reading, is ענוים, *humble*; so the Masorah and Targum read: both may be taken into the sense: afflicted persons are generally humble, afflictions make them humble; God's people are an afflicted people; afflicted with sin, with Satan, with the world, with antichrist and his followers: and they are an humble people; grace makes them humble, and a sense of their sin and unworthiness keeps them so: and this is a proper character of the followers of Jesus. These in their distress cry to the Lord, as the Israelites did in Egypt under their bondage and pressures: yea, their blood cries after death, as Abel's did, and as the blood of the martyrs of Christ does, whose souls under the altar cry for vengeance, Rev. vi. 9. and God is not unmindful of their cry; however he may seem to be, he takes notice of it, and will in his own time avenge his elect, which cry unto him day and night.

Ver. 13. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord*, &c.] The psalmist proceeds to petitions on his own account in this verse: the ends he proposes by the fulfilling of them are mentioned in the next. A good man, a man called by the grace of God, though he has obtained mercy of the Lord, yet still stands in need of more, of fresh discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy, of merciful supplies, of merciful support, and merciful deliverances from enemies, inward and outward: and such an one flees to God, and not to the creature; and pleads, not his own dignity, righteousness, or merit, but the mercy of God. *Consider my trouble* which I suffer *of them that hate me; or see my affliction because of*

[a] עלילה significat tam machinationes, sive consilia, 1 Sam. ii. 3. quam consiliorum eventus, seu opera ipsa, quomodo, Jerem. xxxii. 19. Gejerus.

mine enemies[t]; look upon me under it with an eye of pity and compassion, and help and deliver me; and look upon mine enemies that give me this trouble, and take vengeance on them. *Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:* the house appointed for all living; that is, from the power of it, when just upon the brink of it; when near it, as a person is to an house, when he is at the gates of it; either through sickness, or some violent distemper of body, as Hezekiah was; or through some imminent danger in battle, as David was when engaged with Goliath; when every one thought, as Kimchi observes, that he should fall by his hand: or it may be this may have respect to his being raised up from the death of sin, and delivered from the power of darkness; to his being brought out of the horrible pit and miry clay of an unregenerate state, and set upon the rock of salvation; which is a lifting up indeed, an exaltation from a very low to a very high estate: and this the psalmist takes notice of to encourage his faith; and makes use of it as an argument with God, that as he had dealt so graciously and bountifully with him, he would still shew mercy to him, and look upon him under his affliction.

Ver. 14. *That I may shew forth all thy praise,* &c.] That is, all thy bounties and acts of goodness, deserving of praise; even as many of them as he had an experience of, and which came within his knowledge; and as much of them as he was capable of observing: for otherwise the instances of divine grace and goodness are so many, that they cannot be reckoned up in order, nor God be praised for them, in the present state of things, as he should; see the note on ver. 1. *In the gates of the daughter of Zion:* it was usual with the Hebrews to represent a chief city as a mother-city, and the towns and villages, and places adjacent, as daughters; and so, as Zion or Jerusalem signifies the church of God in general, or the mother-church, Gal. iv. 26. so *the daughter* of Zion may mean a particular church: the Targum renders it the congregation of Zion; and *the gates* of it are the public ordinances of divine worship in it; and the sense is, that the psalmist desired to shew forth the praises of God in the most public manner in the congregation and assembly of the saints. *I will rejoice in thy salvation,* or *that I may rejoice in thy salvation*[u]: meaning either temporal salvation and deliverance from enemies, wrought by God for him, which would be matter of joy to him; or spiritual salvation, which may be called God's salvation, because contrived by him in the council of peace, and secured by him in the covenant of grace, and wrought out by his Son in the fulness of time, and applied by his Spirit at conversion. And a gracious man rejoices in this salvation more because it is the Lord's than because it is his own; or he rejoices more because of the glory of God, which is displayed in it, than because of his own advantage and happiness by it.

Ver. 15. *The Heathen are sunk into the pit that they made,* &c.] The psalmist having determined to praise the Lord, and called upon others to join with him in it, here enters upon it: for, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, this is תהלה *the praise* he was desirous to shew forth, which is occasioned by the destruction of God's enemies, and the deliverance of his people: by *the Heathen* are meant not the Philistines, as Kimchi interprets it, who thought to cause Israel to fall, and fell themselves; but this is spoken prophetically of the nations of the earth, who have joined in the idolatry of antichrist, the Gentiles, by whom the holy city has been trodden under foot; even the several antichristian states, that will be destroyed by the pouring out of the seven vials, and especially the last, at the battle of Armageddon; and which will be brought on by themselves, with a design to destroy the whole kingdom and interest of Christ, but will issue in their utter ruin, which this phrase is expressive of; see Rev. xviii. 3. and xi. 2. and xvi. 13, 14, 16. and xix. 19—21. The metaphor is taken from hunters, who dig pits for the wild beasts to fall into, that they may the more easily take them, into which they fall themselves; see Psalm vii. 15. Wicked men are mischievous and crafty, but sometimes they are taken in their own craftiness. *In the net which they laid is their own foot taken:* which may signify the same thing as before, that the mischief they design for others falls upon themselves; only as the former phrase denotes their utter destruction like the sinking of a millstone in the sea, by which the irrecoverable ruin of Babylon is expressed, Rev. xviii. 21. this may design the restraint and hinderance of them from doing the evil they would; their feet are entangled, that they cannot run to shed blood; and their hands are held, that they cannot perform their enterprise; and their wrath is restrained and made to praise the Lord. The metaphor is taken from fowlers, who lay nets and snares for birds, and cover them that they may not be seen, but fall into them unawares; see Psal. cxxiv. 7.

Ver. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth,* &c.] The judgment which God will execute upon antichrist, and the antichristian powers, will be a means of making known his name, his glory, his perfections, in all the earth; as his wisdom, power, justice, and goodness; see Exod. ix. 16. Psal. lxxix. 10. Rev. xv. 3, 4. The destruction of antichrist will be the Lord's doing, and it will be a righteous one; it will be a just retaliation; as he has killed with the sword, multitudes of his followers shall be killed with the sword; as he has led captive, he shall be taken captive at the battle of Armageddon; as he has burnt many of the martyrs of Jesus, he shall be cast into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. Some read these words as two sentences, *The Lord is known; he hath executed judgment*[w]: the latter of these refers not to the ministration of justice in the providential government of the world, or at the last day in the general judgment; but to the judgment of the great whore, or antichrist, at which time the Lord will be known in his Gospel in all the world; the earth will be filled with the knowledge of him, and he, and he alone, will be exalted; his name will be great and glorious

[t] ראה עניי משנאי intuere afflictionem meam propter osores meos, Gejerus.

[u] אגילה exultem, Junius & Tremellius, Musculus; ut exultem, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis; gaudeam, Cocceius; so Ainsworth.

[w] נודע יהוה משפט עשה notus est Dominus; judicium fecit, Pagninus, Montanus, Gussetius; so Vatablus, Musculus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis, and Ainsworth.

throughout the earth; all shall know him, from the least to the greatest; and their knowledge of him will be very clear and comprehensive. *The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands;* not Goliath, as Kimchi thinks, who was slain by David with his own sword, though this was true of him in the letter and type; but the wicked one, the man of sin and son of perdition, antichrist, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all craftiness and wily stratagems, called the depths of Satan, Rev. ii. 24. but his own sins shall take him, and he shall be holden with the cords of his iniquities, and be rewarded double for all his sins; what is before figuratively expressed is here literally declared; or *he hath snared the wicked in or by the work of his hands* [x], that is, God. *Higgaion. Selah;* of the latter of these words see the note on Psal. iii. 2. the former signifies *meditation;* Jarchi paraphrases it נהגה, *let us meditate on this, selah;* Aben Ezra interprets it, *I will shew forth this in truth;* the Chaldee paraphrase is, *the righteous shall rejoice for ever;* the note of Kimchi and Ben Melech is, *this salvation is to us meditation and praise;* upon the whole the sense seems to be this, that God's judgments upon antichrist, and the antichristian states, and the deliverance of his people from their yoke and tyranny, are things worthy of the meditation of the saints, and afford just matter of joy, praise, and thanksgiving.

Ver. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into hell,* &c.] Some render it, *shall return to the grave* [y], to the earth, the original dust from whence they came; but this is common to all men, to the righteous as well as the wicked; rather שאול here signifies the place of torment, commonly called hell, where devils and damned spirits are; hither the souls of the wicked go immediately upon their departure from their bodies, Luke xvi. 23. and after the judgment is over, they will be remanded thither in soul and body; and their damnation is called the destruction of soul and body in hell; which will consist in an everlasting separation from God, and in a sense of his wrath and fiery indignation: and though this is true of all the wicked, yet here that wicked one, antichrist, and his wicked followers, are chiefly designed; even the beast and false prophet, who shall be cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone, Rev. xix. 20. and xx. 10. And *all the nations that forget God;* which is not to be understood of the Pagan nations, though they may be said to forget God, since he is to be known by the light of nature, and yet they worship idols, the works of their hands; but the Papal nations, who adore the pope of Rome as God on earth, worship angels and saints departed, and images of gold and silver, and wood and stone. It may be applied to every wicked man who forgets there is a God who sees and knows all things, and to whom men are accountable; see Psal. l. 22.

Ver. 18. *For the needy shall not always be forgotten,* &c.] The people of God are poor and needy for the most part; they are so in things temporal, and they are poor in spirit, or in things spiritual, of which they are sensible; their needs are many, and frequently return; but God has provided a throne of grace for them to come to for help in time of need, and he will supply all their wants out of the fulness of grace in Christ; nor is he unmindful of them, and of his covenant with them; strictly speaking, they are never forgotten by him, being engraven on his hands, and set as a seal on his heart; but they sometimes seem to be so both to themselves and others, Psal. xiii. 3, 10. and xliv. 24. and lxxvii. 9. Isa. xlix. 14. and they may continue so long; God may seem for a long time to take no notice of them, but suffer them to lie under affliction and persecution; the holy city is trodden under foot forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty days, that is, so many years; so long the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, so long the church is in the wilderness, and so long will be the reign of antichrist, Rev. xi. 2, 3. and xii. 6. and xiii. 5. but as great Babylon will come up in remembrance before God, and he will remember her sins, and render her double; the set time to favour his poor and needy will come, and he will arise and have mercy on them, and bring them into a glorious and comfortable state and condition. *The expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever;* the negative particle, though not in the original text, is rightly supplied from the preceding clause, as it is by the Targum, Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi, and as the sense requires; and the expectation of Christ's poor ones is not only a supply of grace here and eternal happiness hereafter; but they expect a glorious state of the church on earth, and that Christ will descend in person from heaven, and his tabernacle will be among men; and that they shall be kings and priests, and possess the kingdom, and reign with Christ a thousand years; and though these things may seem to be deferred, and their expectation put off to a length of time, yet it shall not perish for ever; there will be a performance of the things promised and expected.

Ver. 19. *Arise, O Lord,* &c.] To the destruction of thine enemies, and the salvation of thy people; see the note on Psal. vii. 6. *Let not man prevail;* the man of sin, antichrist, that is, let him not always prevail; he is the little horn that was to prevail against the saints, and has prevailed, Dan. vii. 21. Rev. xiii. 7. but he shall not always prevail; this petition will be heard and answered; for though he shall cast down many thousands, he shall not be *strengthened* by it, Dan. xi. 12. where the same word is used as here; the Lamb at last shall overcome him and his ten kings, his supporters, and all that shall aid and assist him, Rev. xvii. 14. and xix. 19—21. *Let the Heathen be judged in thy sight;* that is, the antichristian nations that adhere to the man of sin, let them be judged and punished in the sight of God, the Judge of all the earth, whose eyes are as a flame of fire; compare with this Joel iii. 12.

Ver. 20. *Put them in fear, O Lord,* &c.] Who are a bold, impudent, fearless generation of men; who, like the unjust judge, neither fear God nor regard men, therefore the psalmist prays that God would inject fear into them, who only can do it; and this will be done at Babylon's destruction, when the antichristian kings, merchants, and sea-faring men, will stand afar off for fear of her torment, Rev. xviii. 10, 15, 17. That *the*

[x] בפעל כפיו נוקש רשע illaqueavit iniquum per opus (vel in opere) manuum ipsius, Gussetius.

[y] ישובו לשאולה revertentur ad vel in sepulchrum, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

nations may know themselves to be but *men. Selah*: and not God, and have no power against him; see Isa. xxxi. 3. the sense is, that the antichristian nations, who oppose themselves to Christ and his people, may know that they are but frail, mortal, miserable men, as the word [s] signifies; and that he who is at the head of them, the man of sin, is no other, though he exalts himself above all that is called God, 2 Thess. ii. 4. or these words are a prayer for the conversion of many among the nations, and may be rendered, *put, O Lord, fear in them* [t]; that is, the true grace of fear, *that the nations may know* themselves, their sin and guilt and danger, and know God in Christ, and Christ, and the way of salvation by him; for at the word *know* should be a stop, concluding a proposition, since the accent *athnach* is there; and then follows another, *they are men. Selah*: destitute of the fear and grace of God, are capable of it, but cannot give it to themselves.

PSALM X.

THIS psalm in the Septuagint version, and those that follow it, is a part and continuation of the preceding psalm, and makes but one with it; hence in these versions the number of the following psalms differ from others, and what is the xith with others is the xth with them, and so on to the cxivth and cxvth, which also are put into one; but in order to make up the whole number of one hundred and fifty, the cxvith and cxlviith are both divided into two; and indeed the subject of this psalm is much the same with the former. Antichrist and antichristian times are very manifestly described; the impiety, blasphemy, and atheism of the man of sin; his pride, haughtiness, boasting of himself, and presumption of security; his persecution of the poor, and murder of innocents, are plainly pointed at; nor does the character of the man of the earth agree so well to any as to him: his times are times of trouble; but at the end of them the kingdom of Christ will appear in great glory, when the Gentiles, the antichristian nations, will perish out of his land, ver. 1—11, 16, 18.

Ver. 1. *Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?* &c.] This psalm begins with a complaint which proceeds on two general heads; the one is with respect to God, his distance from his people, and desertion of them in times of trouble, in this verse; and the other is with respect to the wicked in some following ones. God by his infinite essence and power is everywhere, and is never far off from any of his creatures; and though his glorious presence is in heaven, which, with respect to us on earth, is a land afar off, yet this hinders not but that there is often great nearness between God and his people; and when he stands afar off from them in their apprehensions, it is when he withdraws his gracious presence from them, and defers help and assistance to them, and does not immediately and directly come and visit them: this they cannot bear, they complain; they wonder that, seeing they are the objects of his love, this should be his manner of conduct towards them; they expostulate with him, and inquire for what end and upon what account he should so use them, and most earnestly desire that he would haste and come unto them and help them: see Psal. xxii. 1, 11, 18. Why *hidest thou* thyself *in times of trouble?* when God seems to take no notice of his people, does not look upon them, but turns a deaf ear to them, he is said to hide his face, his eyes and ears, from them: and this is sometimes the case of the best of saints, as it has been of Job, David, Heman, and others; and though this is done in a sovereign way by God, who comes and goes when he pleases; for sensible communion with him as much depends upon his sovereign pleasure as the gift of his grace itself does; yet, generally speaking, the denial or withdrawing of his gracious presence is by way of resentment for some disagreeable conduct and behaviour of his people; and is consistent with his everlasting and unchangeable love to them, but is what fills them with grief and sorrow; nor can they forbear making mournful complaints upon it; and this is aggravated when it is a time of trouble with them, either of soul-trouble, by reason of the prevalence of unbelief, and the force of Satan's temptations; or of bodily affliction; though times of trouble here seem to design times of persecution, as may be concluded from the connexion of these words with the following; and antichristian times are times of persecution: during the reign of antichrist, in which he is suffered to make war with the saints and overcome them; and during the church's being in the wilderness the space of one thousand two hundred and sixty days or years, God may seem to stand at a distance, and to hide himself from her.

Ver. 2. *The wicked in* his *pride doth persecute the poor*, &c.] The *poor* is the good and gracious man, who is commonly poor in this world's things, and is sensibly poor in spirit, or sensible of his spiritual poverty; or he is so called because *afflicted*, as the word signifies; and he is afflicted because he is poor: these two characters generally go together. The *wicked* man is the wicked one, the lawless one, the man of sin, and son of perdition, antichrist, the great persecutor of Christ's poor saints and faithful witnesses, more or less, ever since he has been in power; and which arises from the *pride* of his heart, not bearing that any should refuse to pay homage to him, contradict his will, or dissent from him. The word [u] signifies to follow after, to pursue, as Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret it; and *to pursue hotly*, as it is rendered in Gen. xxxi. 36. and denotes the vehemence and heat of his wrath and fury, with which antichrist persecutes the followers of the Lamb; hence persecution is compared to the heat of the sun, Matt. xiii. 6, 21. Some render the words, *through the pride of the wicked the poor is burned*, or *the poor burns* [w];

[s] אנוש המה mortales esse, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus; homines miseri, Cocceius, Michaelis; sorry men, Ainsworth.

[t] שיתה מורה להם pone timorem eis, so Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Ainsworth.

[u] ידלק ferride persequitur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; ferventer, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

[w] Incenditur, V. L. ardet, Tigurine version, Muis, Cocceius.

which may be understood either literally, of the burning of the martyrs of Jesus by antichrist, as here in Queen Mary's days; and which was foretold, that some of the saints should fall by flame, as well as by sword, captivity, and spoil; and to which that part of the description of Christ answers, whose feet are said to be like fine brass, as if it burned in a furnace; and which is prefaced to the epistle to the church at Thyatira, which is an emblem of the apostate church: see Dan. xi. 33. Rev. i. 15. and ii. 18. or figuratively, of the poor saints burning with grief at the pride and wickedness of the man of sin, and with zeal for the honour and glory of God; see 2 Cor. xi. 29. Cant. viii. 6. Psal. lxix. 9. *Let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined:* we read the words as a petition; and so the sense is, let the wicked persecutors be taken in the wicked and crafty schemes which they have devised for the hurt of others, as they are, or will be; see Psal. ix. 15, 16. But the psalmist is not yet come to petitions, nor does he until ver. 12. but is all along describing the wickedness of the wicked one. It seems better therefore to render the words as do the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, *they are taken in the devices that they have imagined:* and the meaning is, that the poor, who are persecuted by the wicked, are taken by their crafty schemes they lay for them, as Jarchi interprets it, and are put to death by them. So these words shew the issue and event of persecution: and this sense best agrees with the boasted success of the wicked man in the next verse.

Ver. 3. *For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire,* &c.] As antichrist does of his universal power over all bishops and princes, which his heart was long desiring after; of his being Christ's vicar, Peter's successor, and head of the church; and of having power in heaven, earth, and hell: he boasts of his wealth and riches, of the righteousness and merits of saints, of works of supererogation, a stock of which he pretends to have in his hands to dispense to others: he boasts of his own holiness and infallibility, and of miracles, signs, and lying wonders done by his creatures, and of his great success in destroying those that oppose him: see Rev. xviii. 7. 2 Thess. ii. 4. The words may be rendered, *the wicked praiseth himself for the desire of his heart*[u], so the Chaldee paraphrase; to which agrees Jarchi's gloss, "wicked Esau praiseth himself, because "he hath obtained the desire of his soul:" and thus it is usual for proud, haughty, wicked men, as the Assyrian monarch, Nebuchadnezzar, and so the man of sin, to ascribe whatsoever they have or do to their own power and prudence; see Isa. x. 12, 13. Dan. iv. 30. Or they may be rendered, *he praiseth the wicked for his heart's desire*[w]; or for his lusts, for his indulging them: for a wicked man not only delights in committing sin himself, but he also takes pleasure in those that do it; and some of the antichristian party have even wrote in commendation of the most unnatural lusts. *And blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth:* the covetous man is one that makes no use of what he has but for himself; and oftentimes withholds that which is meet from himself, as well as from others; and who makes use of unlawful ways to get, retain, and increase wealth, and is never satisfied: such an one God abhors, because he is an idolater, he has other gods before him; he worships his gold, he sets his affection on it, places his confidence in it, and expects protection and security from it, to a neglect of divine Providence; and yet the wicked man blesses him, calls his covetousness frugality and good husbandry; ascribes what he has to his diligence, care, and industry, and bestows gifts upon him. The words may be rendered, *the covetous man blesses himself*[x]; with the good things he has laid up for many years; he pronounces himself blessed, and promises himself a great deal of happiness, in futurity; and ascribes all he has to his own hands. Or, *the covetous man curses, he abhors the Lord*[y]; for the same word in the Hebrew language signifies to bless and curse, Job i. 5. and ii. 9. which Aben Ezra on the place observes; and it is applicable enough to antichrist, who opens his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven; see Rev. xiii. 6.

Ver. 4. *The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek,* &c.] We supply it, *after God;* as do the Targum and Kimchi on the place: the sense is, he will not seek to God for counsel or assistance, he will not pray unto him; which is the character of every unregenerate man, Rom. iii. 11. or, he will not inquire into the will of God, to know what is right or what is wrong, but will do what seems best in his own eyes: and this arises from the pride of his heart, which shews itself in his countenance, in his proud and haughty look. It is said of the little horn, who is antichrist, that he has a look more stout than his fellows, Dan. vii. 20. The words may be rendered, *the wicked inquireth not into the height of his anger;* so Ainsworth observes; that is, of God's anger; he is not concerned about it; he neither fears God nor regards men. Jarchi's sense of the words is, "all his thoughts say unto "him, God will not inquire into every thing that I "shall do, for there is no judgment." *God is not in all his thoughts:* nor in any of them, for they are evil continually; and if he does at any time think of him, his thoughts of him are wrong; he thinks he is altogether such an one as himself: or, *all his thoughts are, there is no God*[z]: though he does not choose to say so, he thinks so; at least, he wishes it may be so; and he works himself into such impiety and atheism as to deny the providence of God, and thinks that he does not govern the world, nor concern himself with what is done below; that he takes no notice of men's actions, nor will call them to an account for them; and that there will be no future state or judgment, in which secret as well as open things will be made manifest: or, as the Chaldee paraphrase glosses it, *that all his thoughts are not manifest before the Lord.*

Ver. 5. *His ways are always grievous,* &c.] To God

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[u] כי הלל רשע על תאות נפשו nam laudat improbus animam suam in desideria ipsius, Junius & Tremellius; so Michaelis.

[w] Quoniam laudat ipsum pro desiderio animi sui, Tigurine version.

[x] ובוצע ברך & avarus benedicit sibi, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

[y] Avarus maledicit sive blasphemat Jehovam, Tarnovius, Hammond; so some in Michaelis.

[z] אין אלהים כל מזמותיו non Deus, omnes cogitationes ejus, Montanus, Vatablus, Muis; nullum esse Deum hæ sunt omnes cogitationes ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Ainsworth.

and to his people; or, *his ways cause terror*[a], so Aben Ezra; make men fear; as antichrist has made the whole world tremble at him, Rev. xiii. 4. or, *his ways are defiled*, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin render it; for to him is nothing pure, his mind and conscience being defiled, Tit. i. 15. or, *his ways always remain*[b]; they are always the same, there is no change in them for the better: or they *prosper*[c], as Jarchi interprets it; and this is sometimes stumbling to the saints, Jer. xii. 1. Psal. lxxiii. 2, 3. *Thy judgments are far above, out of his sight:* meaning either the laws, statutes, and commandments of God, which are not taken notice of by him; but his own decrees or orders are set in the room of them; or the examples of punishment inflicted on wicked men, as on the old world, on Sodom and Gomorrah, the Egyptians, and other nations; these are not regarded, when they should be a terror to him. As for *all his enemies, he puffeth at them:* who are the poor saints, and are looked upon by antichrist as feeble creatures, and all their efforts against him and his kingdom are treated with contempt: he blows upon them, and suggests that he can cause them to fall with the breath of his mouth, or strike them down with a straw or a feather; see Psal. xii. 6.

Ver. 6. *He hath said in his heart,* &c.] To and within himself, he thought in his own mind; for the thought is the word or speech of the mind, λογος ενδιαθετος: *I shall not be moved;* from his prosperous and happy condition, abounding with riches and honours; from his seat of empire, over kings, princes, and the nations of the world; flattering himself that it would never be otherwise with him than it is: even *to generation and generation,* I shall not be moved; so the words may be rendered. *For I* shall *never* be *in adversity,* or *in evil*[d]: meaning either the evil of sin; so asserting his innocence, wiping himself clean of all iniquity, claiming to himself the title of *holiness* itself, and the character of infallibility; giving out that he is impeccable, and cannot err; when he is not only almost, but altogether, in all evil; and is ὁ ανομος, the lawless and wicked one, the man of sin, who is nothing but sin itself. The Targum paraphrases the whole thus; *I shall not be moved from generation to generation from doing evil;* and so it is a boast of impiety, and that none can restrain him from it, no one having a superior power over him; see Psal. xii. 4. Or the evil of affliction, or calamity; wherefore we render it *adversity,* so Jarchi and Aben Ezra understand it: the note of the former is, "evil shall not come "upon me in my generation," or for ever; and the latter compares it with Numb. xi. 15. Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it of long life. It is a vaunt of antichrist, promising himself a continuance of his grandeur, ease, peace, and prosperity; in which he will be wretchedly disappointed. The language and sense are much the same with that of the antichristian Babylon, Rev. xviii. 7, 8.

Ver. 7. *His mouth is full of cursing,* &c.] Or, *he has filled his mouth with cursing*[e] God and good men, his superiors, himself and others. The word signifies *an oath;* and may design either a profane oath, taking the name of God in vain; or an oath on a civil account, a false oath, taken with a design to defraud and deceive others, as follows, and intends perjury; and this, as applicable to antichrist, regards his mouth speaking great things and blasphemies against God, and uttering curses and anathemas against the saints, Rev. xiii. 5, 6. *And deceit and fraud:* such as flattery and lying, which are both used by him with an intention to impose upon and deceive. The apostle, in Rom. iii. 14. renders both these words by one, *bitterness;* which may be said of sin in general, which is a very bitter thing; though it is rolled as a sweet morsel in the mouth of a wicked man, yet in the issue it is bitterness to him: and it is applicable to sinful words, which are bitter in their effects to those against whom they are spoken, or who are deceived and imposed upon by them: and, as they refer to antichrist, may have respect to the lies in hypocrisy spoken by him, and to the deceitfulness of unrighteousness, by which he works upon those that perish, 1 Tim. iv. 2. 2 Thess. ii. 10. *Under his tongue* is *mischief and vanity;* alluding to serpents, who have little bags of poison under their teeth; see Psal. cxl. 3. Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, that the heart is under the tongue, being lower than it, and so denotes the wickedness which that is full of, and devises continually, and is latent in it until discovered; and is mischievous iniquity, injurious to God, and the honour of his law, and to fellow-creatures; and especially to the saints, whose persons, characters, and estates, are aimed at; but in the issue it is all vanity, and a fruitless attempt, being blasted by God, and overruled for good to him; see Isa. liv. 17.

Ver. 8. *He sitteth in the lurking-places of the villages,* &c.] Which were by the way-side, where thieves and robbers harboured, and out of which they came, and robbed passengers as they came by. The word[f] signifies *palaces* or *courts;* and so it is rendered by the Chaldee paraphrase and Syriac version; and so the allusion is not to mean thieves and robbers, but to persons of note and figure. Hence the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, render it, *he sitteth in lurking-places with the rich;* and may be fitly applied to the pope and his cardinals. Antichrist sits in the temple of God, and by his emissaries gets into the villages, the particular churches and congregations of saints, where they lie in ambush to do mischief, to corrupt their faith, worship, and manners; and like thieves and robbers enter in to steal, kill, and destroy. *In secret places doth he murder the innocent;* the harmless lambs and sheep of Christ; who, though they are not without sin in themselves, yet are innocent with respect to the cause and the things for which they suffer: these are the saints and prophets and martyrs of Jesus, whose blood is shed by antichrist; and the taking away of their lives is reckoned murder with God; and is so styled in the Scriptures, Rev. ix. 21. though the antichristian

[a] יחילו terrent, Cocceius.
[b] Permanent sive perdurant, Lutherus, Gejerus.
[c] Prosperantur, Musculus, Calvin, Ainsworth, Piscator.
[d] ברע in malo, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.
[e] אלה פיהו מלא
[f] חצרים αυλαις, Symmachus in Drusius; atriorum, Munster; so Hammond, Ainsworth, & Michaelis.

party call it doing God good service, and impute it to zeal for the good of holy church; and yet this they choose to do in secret, by private massacres, or by the inquisition; which having condemned men to death, delivers them over to the secular power to execute the sentence on them: just as the Jews delivered Christ to the Roman governor, to shift off the sin and blame from themselves; murder being what no one cares to be known in, or chargeable with. *His eyes are privily set against the poor:* the word חלכה, rendered *poor*, is used nowhere but in this psalm, in which it is used three times, here, and in ver. 1—4. and in the plural number in ver. 10. It is translated *poor* both in the Chaldee paraphrase and Septuagint version, and in those that follow them. In the Arabic language it signifies *black*[a], and may design such who are black by reason of persecution and affliction, who go mourning all the day long on account of sin, their own and others; and because of the distresses and calamities of the church and people of God. These the eyes of the wicked watch and observe, and are set against them to do them all the mischief they can; their eyes are full of envy and indignation at them, though it is all in a private and secret way. The allusion is to thieves and robbers, who hide themselves in some secret place, and from thence look out for them that pass by, and narrowly observe whether they are for their purpose, and when it will be proper to come out and seize upon them.

Ver. 9. *He lieth in wait secretly as a lion, &c.*] The first beast in Rev. xiii. 2. is said to have a mouth like a lion, and the second beast in ver. 11. spake like a dragon; and both design one and the same, antichrist, in his twofold capacity, civil and ecclesiastical; this metaphor of the lion lying in wait secretly for his prey denotes the insidious methods used by antichrist to destroy the faithful witnesses of Christ; who lies like a lion *in his den*, in the temple of God, now become a den of thieves. *He lieth in wait to catch the poor;* to snatch and carry them away captive as his prey; see Rev. xiii. 10. *He doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net;* this metaphor is taken from fowlers, who spread nets, into which they allure and draw the birds and catch them. The allurements, snares, and nets, which antichrist lays to catch the poor saints and people of God in, are the riches and honours of this world, great pretensions to holiness, devotion, and religion, and many lying signs and wonders.

Ver. 10. *He croucheth* and *humbleth himself, &c.*] As the lion before he leaps and seizes on his prey, and as the fowler creepeth upon the ground to draw the bird into his net and catch it; so the antichristian beast has two horns like a lamb; though he has the mouth of a lion, and speaks like a dragon, he would be thought to be like the Lamb of God, meek, and lowly, and humble, and therefore calls himself *servus servorum, the servant of servants;* but his end is, *that the poor may fall by his strong ones;* the word for *poor* is here used, as before observed on ver. 8, in the plural number, and is read by the Masorites as two words, though it is written as one, and is by them and other Jewish writers[b] interpreted a multitude, company, or army of poor ones, whose strength is worn out; these weak and feeble ones antichrist causes to fall by his strong ones; either by his strong decrees, cruel edicts, and severe punishments, as by sword, by flame, by captivity and by spoils, Dan. xi. 33. or by the kings of the earth and their armies, their mighty men of war, their soldiers, whom he instigates and influences to persecute their subjects, who will not receive his mark in their right hands or foreheads, Rev. xiii. 15, 16, 17. and xvii. 12, 13. It is very observable, that those persecuted by antichrist are so often in this prophetic psalm called *poor;* and it is also remarkable, that there were a set of men in the darkest times of Popery, and who were persecuted by the Papists, called the *poor* men of Lyons: the whole verse may be rendered and paraphrased thus, *he tears in pieces*, that is, the poor, whom he catches in his net; *he boweth himself*, as the lion does, as before observed; *that he may fall*, or rush upon; *with his strong ones*, his mighty armies, *upon the multitude of the poor*.

Ver. 11. *He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten, &c.*] Meaning either his own sins, because they are not immediately punished; wherefore he hopes to go on for ever with impunity, but will be mistaken, for God will remember the iniquities of Babylon, and render to her double, Rev. xviii. 5, 6. see Amos viii. 17. or else the poor ones he oppresses; for though they seem for a while to be forgotten by God, they are not, a book of remembrance is written for them. *He hideth his face;* that is, from his poor saints, which is true oftentimes; but then the use the wicked one makes of it is bad, namely, to insult them on that account, and to imagine that it is grateful to God, and doing him good service, to afflict and persecute them; and that God will never regard them, nor return to them more, as follows. *He will never see* it; or them; he will never more look upon the poor, he will no more regard them, and take notice of them and their afflictions; than which nothing is more false; for though he hides his face for a moment, yet with everlasting kindness will he gather them to himself; and he beholds all their oppressions and afflictions, and not as a bare spectator; he sympathizes with them, and delivers them out of them. Or *he will never see* the wickedness committed by the wicked; which is a very foolish thought, since what is done in the dark, and in the most secret manner, is seen by God, the darkness and the light are alike to him; he is all-seeing and ever-seeing, and everywhere seeing; and he it is that has made the eye, and shall not he see? Psal. xciv. 5—9. the sense of the whole in general is, that God takes no notice of good men or bad men, nor of what is done by either of them; he does not concern himself with the affairs of this world, which is an impious denial of divine Providence; see Ezek. ix. 9. Zeph. i. 12.

Ver. 12. *Arise, O Lord, &c.*] See Psal. iii. 7. and vii. 6. and ix. 19. *O God, lift up thine hand;* either on the behalf of his people, to help and deliver them; his hand may be said to be let down when their enemies prevail, and to be lifted up or exalted when it does valiantly, and works salvation for them; so when

[a] Chalac, valde niger fuit, Golius, col. 646.

[b] Jarchi, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.

Moses's hands were let down Amalek prevailed, and when his hands were lifted up Israel prevailed, Exod. xvii. 11. or against their enemies, to strike them, to inflict punishment upon them, as God's hand is said to be stretched out against the Egyptians, and to lie upon them, when he sent his plagues among them, Exod. vii. 4, 5. and a dreadful thing it is to fall both into and under the hand of the living God, and to feel the weight of the lighting down of his arm with indignation. The Targum understands it as a gesture of swearing: see Gen. xiv. 22. and paraphrases it, *confirm the oath of thine hand*; either sworn in wrath against his enemies, or in love to his people; either of which is sure and certain, and according to the immutable counsel of his will. *Forget not the humble*; the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, the Lamb of God, by which character the saints are distinguished from the antichristian party, Rev. xiv. 4. these are such who are made so by the spirit of God, who in conversion brings down the pride and haughtiness of man, that Christ and his grace may be alone exalted; these have the meanest thoughts of themselves, and the best of others; their motto is, "less than the least of all "saints, and the chief of sinners;" they envy not the gifts and graces of others, and ascribe all they have and are to the free grace of God; they are not easily provoked, they patiently bear injuries, and quietly submit to the adverse dispensations of Providence: the word in the original text is read *humble*, but written *afflicted*: both characters generally meet together in the people of God; see the note on Psal. ix. 12. this prayer for the humble is a prayer of faith; for though the humble may seem to be forgotten by God, they are not, they are precious in his sight; he dwells among them, he gives more grace unto them, he comforts them when disconsolate, he feeds them when they are hungry, he teaches and guides them when they want direction, he lifts them up when they are cast down, and beautifies them with salvation.

Ver. 13. *Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God?* &c.] God may be said to be contemned or despised, when his being, perfections, and providence are denied, or called in question, or abused, ver. 9. 11. when his word is derided, the great things of his law are counted as a strange thing, and the truths of his Gospel are reckoned foolishness; and instead of these, the decrees, doctrines, and traditions of men, are set up, as by antichrist; and when his ministers, and especially his son, are treated with disdain, Luke x. 16. *He hath said in his heart*, thou *wilt not require* it, or *seek* it[i]; or inquire after it, his iniquity; the sense is, that God will make no inquiry after sin, and bring it into judgment, unto account, and under examination; or will not make inquisition, that is, for blood, for the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, shed by antichrist; or will not require it at his hands, or recompence vengeance for it: all which is false and vain; the contrary to it will be found true.

Ver. 14. *Thou hast seen it*, &c.] Though the wicked say God will never see, ver. 11. he sees all things in general, all men and all their actions; all are manifest and open to him, and every thing in particular, especially the wickedness of men; even that which is said or thought in the heart. *For thou beholdest mischief and spite*; that mischief which arises from spite or malice in the heart; God beholds the inward principle from whence it proceeds, as well as that itself; the mischief devised in the heart, on the bed, and which lies under the tongue, designed against the people of God, either to the injury of their characters and estates, or to their bodies, and even to their souls, as much as in them lies, proceeding from implacable malice and enmity to them. *To requite it with thy hand*: of power, to retaliate it upon their own heads, to render tribulation to them that trouble the saints, which is but a righteous thing with God: or *to put it in thy hand*[k]; and the sense is, that God looks upon all the injuries the wicked out of spite devise to do to his people, and puts them in his hand, that they may be ever before him, and always in his sight, and he will take a proper opportunity of avenging them. The Targum interprets it of God's rewarding good men, as well as punishing the wicked, paraphrasing the whole thus, "it is manifest before thee that thou "wilt send sorrow and wrath upon the wicked; thou "lookest to render a good reward to the righteous "with thy hand." *The poor committeth himself unto thee*: his body, and the outward concerns of life, as to a faithful Creator; his soul, and the spiritual and eternal welfare of it, as to the only Saviour and Redeemer; he commits all his ways to him, as the God of providence and grace; and at last he commits his spirit to him at death, as to his covenant God and Father: the words may be rendered, *the poor leaveth upon thee*[l]; that is, he leaves himself and his upon the Lord; he leaves his burden on him, he casts all his care upon him, as he is advised and encouraged to do; he leaves his cause with him to plead it for him, who will plead it thoroughly and maintain it: the phrase is expressive of the poor's faith and hope in God; hence the Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *on thee will thy poor ones hope*; for the supply of their wants, and for help and assistance against their enemies. *Thou art the helper of the fatherless*: God is the Father of them, provides for them, supplies, supports, and defends them; nor will he in a spiritual sense leave his people orphans or comfortless, but will visit and help them; see Psal. lxviii. 5. John xiv. 18.

Ver. 15. *Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil* man, &c.] His power and strength, so that he shall not be able to hold the sword, to strike a blow, or do any hurt to the people of God; see Ezek. xxx. 21—25. This prayer is in some measure already fulfilled in antichrist, the man of sin, or pope of Rome; though his kingdom is not broke to pieces; as it will be when Christ's kingdom shall be more visibly set up, to which reference is had in the next verse; see Dan. ii. 44. yet his strength is weakened, his arm is broken, he has not the power he had, nor can he tyrannise and do the mischief he once did: *but as for the*

[i] לא תדרוש te non inquisiturum, Piscator, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[k] לתת בידך ut ponas in manibus tuis, Vatablus, Cocceius.

[l] עליך יעזב חלכה super te relinquit pauper, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Cocceius.

evil man[m], for so the words should be read, there being an *athnach* under the word *wicked*, which ends the proposition there: *seek out his wickedness* till *thou find none*; which designs a thorough search after sin, full punishment of it, and the entire ruin and destruction of the wicked: and the sense is, that God would make a strict inquiry into the wickedness of the man of sin, which he promised himself he would not, ver. 13. and that he would punish him and his followers to the uttermost for it, until there should not be one of the antichristian party found upon earth; with which sense agrees the following verse; see Psal. civ. 35.

Ver. 16. *The Lord is King for ever and ever*, &c.] Christ was King from e[illegible]nal; [illegible]ing, and during the Old-Testament dispensation [illegible] promised and prophesied of as King; and he had a kingdom when he was here on earth, though not of this world; nor was it with observation. At his ascension to heaven, and session at the right hand of God, he sat down upon the same throne with his father, and was made or declared Lord and Christ, and appeared more visibly in his kingly office; and in the latter day it will be yet more manifest that he is King of saints, and when indeed he will be King over all the earth, and his kingdom will be an everlasting one: he will have no successor in it, nor will any usurper obtain any more; the devil, beast, and false prophet, will be cast into the lake of fire; all antichristian states will be destroyed, and all authority, rule, and power, put down; nor can his kingdom ever be subverted, he must reign till all enemies are put under his feet; he will reign to the end of the present world, and with the saints a thousand years in the new heaven and earth, and in the ultimate glory to all eternity; nor will his government cease when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to the father, only the mode of the administration of it. Here begins the song of praise; the reign of Christ is matter of joy; see Psal. xcvii. 1. Isa. lii. 7. *The Heathen are perished out of his land*: not the seven nations which were driven out of the land of Canaan, to make way for the people of Israel, that was long ago; nor the wicked and degenerate Jews, called the Heathen, Psal. ii. 1. compared with Acts iv. 27. on whom, and on whose temple, city, and nation, Christ's native land, wrath is come to the uttermost; and they are perished out of it: nor hypocrites out of churches, which are Christ's property; but the antichristian party out of the world, which is Christ's land by creation, as God, and by the gift of his father to him, as Mediator. The followers of antichrist are called Gentiles, and the nations of the earth, Rev. xi. 2, 18. and xviii. 2, and these will be no more; they will be utterly destroyed, when the man of sin shall be consumed with the breath of Christ's mouth and the brightness of his coming. The seventh vial will clear the world of all the remains of Christ's enemies: this also is cause of rejoicing, Psal. cxxxii. 16—18. Rev. xviii. 20.

Ver. 17. *Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble*, &c.] See ver. 12. and Psal. ix. 12. for the coming of Christ's kingdom, and that the kingdoms of this world may become his; for the destruction of antichrist, and for the avenging the blood of the saints. The prayers of God's people sometimes lie in inward and secret desires of the soul, and are not expressed in words; and these desires are all before the Lord, and are well known unto him; yea, such prayers of the heart, and which come from it, are principally regarded by him; they being his own preparation, as is suggested in the next clause, and the breathings of his spirit: and especially the desires of humble souls are regarded, whose prayers he never despises, nor sends them away empty, but fills with his good things. *Thou wilt prepare their heart*; for prayer, by pouring a spirit of grace and supplication on them, impressing their minds with a sense of things to be prayed for, and drawing out the desires of their souls unto them, and making intercession for them with groanings according to the will of God, and so helping their infirmities; and it is God's work to prepare the heart for prayer, as well as to put words into the mouth, Prov. xvi. 1. or *thou wilt direct their heart*[n]; to the object of prayer, himself, and to the things to be prayed for, for they know not what to pray for, nor how as they should; and to what may encourage to it, as the love of God, the covenant of grace, the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ: or *confirm* or *establish their heart*[o]; strengthen and fix them, that they be not wavering and doubtful, but certain and assured of success, believing that their desires will be fulfilled in God's own time. *Thou wilt cause thine ear to hear*: God has an ear to hear the prayers of his people, nor is his ear heavy that it cannot hear; his ears are open to the cries of righteous ones; nor will he ever turn a deaf ear to them, but will give an answer in his own time and way; which is an instance of his sovereign grace and goodness. These words express the faith of the psalmist in God being a God hearing and answering prayer, particularly in things relating to the ruin of antichrist and his followers, and to the kingdom and glory of his son Jesus Christ.

Ver. 18. *To judge the fatherless and the oppressed*, &c.] That is, God will cause his ear to hear the cries of his people, so as to avenge the wrongs done to the fatherless, and them that are oppressed by the man of sin; see Rev. xi. 18. and xviii. 20. and xix. 2. *That the man of the earth may no more oppress*; or *terrify*[p], the dear children of God, and faithful witnesses of Christ, as he has done; for by *the man of the earth* is not meant carnal worldly men in general, *the wicked of the earth*, as the Targum renders it; who are so called because their original is from the earth, and they dwell in earthly tabernacles, and shall return to the earth again, and are earthly-minded men, and have much of this world's things; and are therefore sometimes called the men and children of this world, and who, generally speaking, are oppressors of the saints; and who shall cease to be so in the latter day, when the kingdom shall be given to the saints of

[m] ורע et improbum quod attinet, requiras, &c. Gejerus; so Michaelis.
[n] תכין לבם dirigis, Vatablus; diriges, Tigurine version.
[o] Confirmes, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis; confirmes, Cocceius; confirma, Junius & Tremellius.

[p] לערץ perterrefacere, Piscator; terrere, Musculus, Vatablus; so Ainsworth.

the most High; but particularly the man of sin, the Romish antichrist, seems intended, who is the beast that is risen up out of the earth, Rev. xiii. 11. and so the words may be rendered here, *the man out of the earth*[a]; whose kingdom and government is an earthly one, and is supported by the kings of the earth, and with earthly power and grandeur, and with earthly views and worldly ends: he has been the great oppressor and terrifier of the poor people of God; but when Christ comes to avenge them on him, he will no more oppress, he will be taken and cast alive into the lake of fire: see Rev. xiii. 10. and xix. 20. The words may be rendered according to the accents thus, *to judge the fatherless and the oppressed: he shall not add any more*; for there is an *athnach* which makes a proposition under עוד, *any more*; and the sense is, God shall so thoroughly avenge the injuries of the fatherless and the oppressed, that there will be no need to add thereunto or repeat the vengeance, it will be an utter destruction; and then follows another distinct end of causing his ear to hear, namely, *to shake terribly the man of the earth*, or *to shake terribly man from off the earth*[b], the man of sin, as before; see Isa. ii. 19, 21. or, as Jarchi interprets the words, *to beat and break in pieces*; that is, antichrist and his kingdom; so Montanus.

PSALM XI.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

THIS psalm has no name; it is neither called a psalm, nor hymn, nor song, nor prayer, only said to be David's[a]; and is inscribed and directed as others to the chief musician, or master of the song, to be used in public service; and seems to be written much upon the same subject with the two preceding psalms. According to Theodoret it was written when David was persecuted by Saul, and was advised by some to flee for his safety.

Ver. 1. *In the Lord put I my trust*, &c.] Not in himself, in his own heart, nor in his own righteousness and strength; nor in men, the greatest of men, the princes of the earth; nor in his armies, or any outward force; but in the Lord, as the God of providence and of grace; and in the Messiah, in his person and righteousness; so the Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *in the Word of the Lord do I hope*: and the phrase denotes a continued exercise of faith in the Lord; that he was always looking to him, staying himself on him, and committing himself and all his concerns to him; for he does not say, I *have*, or I *will*, but I *do*, put my trust in the Lord; at all times, even in the worst of times, and in the present one; wherefore he is displeased with his friends for endeavouring to intimidate him, persuading him to flee and provide for his safety, when he had betaken himself to the Lord, and was safe enough. *How say ye to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain?* they compare him to a little, fearful, trembling bird, wandering from its nest, moving through fear from place to place, whereas his heart was fixed, trusting in the Lord; and this gave him a disgust: they advise him to flee either *from* his mountain, so Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; that is, either from Judea, which was a mountainous country, especially some parts of it; or from Mount Zion, or rather from the mountain in the wilderness of Ziph, or the hill of Hachilah, where David sometimes was, 1 Sam. xxiii. 14. and xxvi. 1. or it may be rendered *to your mountain*, as we, so the Targum; that is, to the said place or places where he had sometimes hid himself; and this they said to his *soul*, which was very cutting and grieving to him; the word rendered *flee* in the Cetib, or writing of the text, is נודו, in the plural, *flee ye*; but is pointed for, and in the Keri, or marginal reading, is נודי, *flee thou*; the latter agrees with this being said to David's soul, the former with the phrase *your mountain*, and both are to be taken into the sense of the words; not as if the one respected David's soul only, and the other both soul and body, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; but the one regards David's person, and the other his companions, or the people with him; and contains an advice, both to him and them, to flee for their safety; the reasons follow.

Ver. 2. *For, lo, the wicked bend* their bow, &c.] Are devising mischief, and making preparations to accomplish it. *They make ready their arrow upon the string*; of the bow, and are just about to execute their wicked designs. *That they may privily shoot at the upright in heart*; such as David, and those that were with him, were; they were men whose hearts were upright before God, and were of upright conversations before men, and so became the butt of the malice and resentment of wicked men; against these they formed evil purposes, delivered out bitter words, which were like sharp arrows of the mighty; threatened them with ruin and destruction, and took methods to bring about their designs and make good their words, in the most private and secret manner. Hence some of David's friends thought it most advisable for him to make his escape; adding,

Ver. 3. *If the foundations be destroyed*, &c.] Or, *for the foundations are destroyed*[c]; all things are out of order and course both in church and state; the laws, which are the foundations of government, are despised and disregarded; judgment is perverted, and justice stands afar off; the doctrines and principles of religion are derided and subverted; so that there is no standing, either in a political or religious sense. Jarchi interprets this of the priests of the Lord, the righteous, who

[a] אנוש מן הארץ homines de terra, Pagninus, Montanus.
[a] So Jarchi from Aben Ezra.

[c] כי השתות יהרסון nam fundamenta destruuntur, Piscator, Michaelis; quoniam, Pagninus, Montanus; so Ainsworth.

are the foundations of the world, particularly the priests of Nob, slain by Doeg. Other Jewish writers, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, understand it of the purposes and counsels, nets and snares, laid by the wicked for the righteous, which are broken and destroyed; not by them, for what can they do? but by the Lord, who is in his holy temple. So it follows, *what can the righteous do?* or *what does the righteous one do*[*]? that is, the righteous Lord, he sits in the heavens, he beholds all the actions of the wicked, he distinguishes the righteous from them, and rains a violent storm of wrath upon them, as in the following verses: or *what has the righteous* man *done*[*]? what has David done, that the priests of Nob should be slain? nothing that was criminal; nor shall he bear the sin, but they, according to Jarchi's sense; or rather, what has he done that the wicked should bend their bow, prepare their arrow, and attempt to shoot privily at him, and to overturn the foundations of justice and equity? nothing that deserves such treatment: or if the fundamental doctrines of true religion and everlasting salvation be subverted, what can the righteous do? he can do nothing to obtain salvation, nor do any good works of himself; the Chaldee paraphrase is, *wherefore does he do good?* he can have no principle, motive, or end to do good, if fundamental truths are destroyed: or *what should he do*[*]? something the righteous ones may do, and should do, when men are attempting to undermine and sap the foundation-articles of religion: they should go to the throne of grace, to God in his holy temple, who knows what is doing, and plead with him to put a stop to the designs and attempts of such subverters of foundations; and they should endeavour to build one another up on their most holy faith, and constantly affirm it whilst others deny it; and should contend earnestly for it, and stand fast in it.

Ver. 4. *The Lord* is *in his holy temple*, &c.] Not in the temple at Jerusalem, which as yet was not built; nor in the temple of Christ's human nature; but rather in the church, where he dwells, which is an holy temple to the Lord; and which is an argument for trust in him, and a reason against the fears of men in the worst of times; see Psal. xlvi. 1—5. Though it may be best to understand it of heaven, the habitation of God's holiness, and which is the true sanctuary; and which the holy places made with hands were only a figure of; since it follows, *the Lord's throne* is *in heaven*; yea, the heaven is his throne; here he sits on a throne of grace, and here he has prepared his throne for judgment; and both this and the preceding clause are expressive of his glory and majesty; and are said to command awe and reverence of the Divine Being, and to inject terror into the wicked; and to shew that God is above the enemies of his people, and to encourage the saints' trust and confidence in him; and are mentioned as a reason why David put his trust in him; and are, with what follows in the next verse, opposed to the advice and reasonings of some of his friends in the preceding ones. *His eyes behold*; all men, and all their actions; he sees what the wicked are doing in the dark, what preparations for mischief they are making, and beholds them when they shoot privily at the upright in heart; he can turn the arrow another way, and cause it to miss the mark: his eyes run to and fro throughout the earth, in favour of those whose hearts are perfect and sincere. God's omniscience, which is denied by wicked men, who are therefore hardened in sin, and promise themselves impunity, is used by the saints as an argument to encourage their faith and trust in God, with respect to their preservation and deliverance. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, *his eyes look unto the poor*; but this is an addition to the text not suitable to the context. *His eyelids try the children of men*: he tries their reins, he searches into their very hearts, and into the inmost recesses of them, and takes cognizance of their thoughts, intentions, and designs; and confounds and disappoints them, so that they cannot perform their enterprises.

Ver. 5. *The Lord trieth the righteous*, &c.] As gold is tried in the fire, by afflictive providences; hereby he tries their graces, their faith, and patience, their hope, and love, and fear; and, by so doing, expresses his love to them, since this is all for their good: and therefore, when he suffers the wicked to go great lengths in persecuting and distressing them, this should not weaken their confidence in him; he still loves them, and loves when he rebukes and chastises them. *But the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth*: that is, such who live in a course of sin and wickedness, and who not only do injury to the persons, characters, and properties of men, but love it, and delight therein, and also take pleasure in them that do the same: these God has a continued and inward aversion to; sin and wickedness being the abominable thing his righteous soul hates: and he shews his hatred to them, by not chastising them now, as he does his own people, but reserving everlasting punishment for them hereafter; see Prov. xiii. 24.

Ver. 6. *Upon the wicked*, &c.] The wicked one, the man of sin, antichrist, and upon all that worship the beast and his image, on all persecutors, and upon all wicked men in general: *he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest*: this will be in hell, as Jarchi observes. The allusion is to the Lord's raining fire and brimstone from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah, which was an example and emblem of eternal fire; see Gen. xix. 24. Jude 7. For the beast and the false prophet, and all the antichristian party, and all wicked men, will have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. The phrases used express the dreadfulness and horribleness of their punishment; the suddenness, violence, and force, with which it will come; and the rise of it, it will be from heaven; God himself will rain this shower of wrath upon them, Job xx. 23. nor will there be any escaping it, it will be inevitable; therefore *snares* are said to be *rained*; the wicked will be snared in the works of their own hands; they will be taken and held in the cords of their own sins; and full and deserved punishment

[*] צדיק מה פעל justus quid operatus est? Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus; quid facit? Syr. Arab.

[*] Justus quid fecit? V. L. Munster, Tigurine version, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

[*] Quid fuerit operatus justus? Junius & Tremellius; quid fecerit? Schmidt.

will be inflicted on them, which will be very severe and terrible. All that is dreadful in a storm is here expressed, even in a storm of fire. The word rendered *snares* is by some thought to be the same with פחמים, *burning coals*; and may signify burning stones, hot thunderbolts; see Psal. xviii. 13, 14. *fire* may signify lightning, with its dreadful flashes, and which burn and consume in an instant; and *brimstone* the nauseous scent and smell, which always attend lightning and thunder, as naturalists observe[y]: and the words for *an horrible tempest* signify a burning wind: so that they all serve to convey horrible ideas of the punishment of the wicked in hell. The Targum calls them *showers of vengeance*. This shall be *the portion of their cup*: which will be measured out to them in proportion to their sins, and which God, in righteous judgment, has appointed for them; and which they shall all drink of, and wring out the very dregs of it.

Ver. 7. *For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, &c.*] The Lord is righteous in himself, and in all his ways and works; and therefore righteousness, as it lies both in punishing the wicked, and in maintaining the righteous cause of his people, must be loved by him, it being agreeable to his nature: he loves to exercise righteousness in the earth, to administer it to and among men; this he delights in. He is well pleased with the righteousness of his son, it being satisfactory to his justice, and that by which his law is magnified and made honourable; and he is well pleased with his people, as they are clothed with it: and he approves of their righteous actions, as they are done in obedience to his righteous law, in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to his glory; these are acceptable to him in Christ. *His countenance doth behold the upright*; whom wicked men privily shoot at, ver. 2. God looks with pleasure upon them, and takes delight in them, and takes care of them, protects and defends them, and at last saves them; and which, with all that goes before, was an encouragement to David to trust in the Lord; see Psal. vii. 10. and moreover, the Lord lifts up the light of his countenance on such, and indulges them with his gracious presence, than which nothing is more comfortable and desirable. Some choose to render the word, *their countenance*[z], meaning the trinity of Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, who all have a gracious regard to such: others render the clause thus, *the upright shall see his face*, the face of God; so the Chaldee paraphrase and the Arabic version; see Psal. xvii. 15.]

PSALM XII.

To the chief Musician upon Sheminith, a Psalm of David.

THE word *sheminith* is used in the title of Psalm vi. and signifies *eighth*; and intends either the eighth note, to which the psalm was sung, or rather the harp of eight chords, to which it was set, as the Targum and Jarchi interpret it. Some Jewish writers[a] understand it of the times of the Messiah; and the Syriac version entitles the psalm, "an accusation of the wicked, and "a prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah:" and the Arabic version says, it is concerning the end of the world, which shall be in the eighth day; and concerning the coming of the Messiah: but Arnobius interprets it of the Lord's day.

Ver. 1. *Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, &c.*] A godly man, according to the notation of the word[b], is one that has received grace and mercy of the Lord; as pardoning mercy, justifying and adopting grace; and who has principles of grace, goodness, and holiness, wrought in him; who fears the Lord, and serves him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, and sorrows for sin, after a godly sort; who loves the Lord, and hopes and believes in him; who is regenerated and sanctified by the spirit of God, and is a true worshipper of God, and lives in all holy conversation and godliness; and, particularly, is *beneficent, kind,* and *merciful*[c] unto men: such may be said to *cease* when there are but few of them; when their number is greatly reduced[d], either by death, or when such who have seemed, and have been thought to be so, prove otherwise: in a view of which, the psalmist prays for help and salvation; *help*, or *save*[e], *Lord*: meaning himself, being destitute of the company, counsel, and assistance of good and gracious men; or the cause and interest of religion, which he feared would sink by the ceasing of godly men. When all friends and refuge fail, saints betake themselves to God, and their salvation is of him; and he is their present help in a time of trouble; and he saves and reserves for himself a number in the worst of times; as he did in Elijah's time, who thought there was no godly man left but himself; see Rom. xi. 1—5. *For the faithful fail from among the children of men*; so that there are none left among them but carnal, unregenerate, ungodly, and unfaithful men. The *faithful* are such who are upright in heart and conversation; who trust in the Lord, and believe in the Messiah; who abide by the truths and ordinances of God; and are faithful in what is committed to their trust, whether they be gifts of nature, Providence, or grace; and to their fellow-Christians, in advising, reproving, &c. when needful: these may fail in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty, but not so as to perish eternally. The words design the paucity of them, and the sad degeneracy of the times to which

[y] Seneca Nat. Quæst. l. 2. c. 21, 53. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 35. c. 15.

[z] פנימו facies eorum, Genebrardus, Vatablus, Gussetius; so R. Jephet in Aben Ezra, who compares it with Genesis xx. 13.

[a] Sepher Lekach Shechachah apud Capitor, fol. 64. 1. & Caseph Misnah in Maimon. Hilch. Teshuvah, c. 9.

[b] חסיד passive pro beneficiario, sive alterius beneficiis gratiosis cumulato, Gejerus.

[c] Misericors, Pagninus, Mariana; beneficus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[d] Rari quippe boni, &c. Juvenal. Satyr. 13. v. 26.

[e] הושיעה serva, Pagninus, Cocceius; da salutem, Junius & Tremellius.

they refer: and they may belong either to the times of David, when Saul's courtiers flattered him, and spoke evil of David; when the men of Keilah intended to have delivered him up; when the Ziphites discovered him to Saul, and invited him to come and take him; or when Absalom rose up in rebellion against him, and so many of the people fell off from him: or else to the times of Christ; the people of the Jews in his age were a wicked and faithless generation; and even among his own disciples there was great want of fidelity: one betrayed him, another denied him, and all forsook him and fled; after his death, some doubted his being the Redeemer, and one of them could not believe he was risen from the dead, when he was. And these words may be applied to the antichristian times, the times of the grand apostacy, and falling away from the faith, upon the revealing of the man of sin; since which the holy city is trodden under foot; the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth; and the church is in the wilderness, and is hid there. Yea, to the second coming of Christ, when there will be great carnality and security, and little faith found in the earth. A like complaint with this see in Isa. lvii. 1. Mic. vii. 2.

Ver. 2. *They speak vanity every one with his neighbour*, &c.] That which is false and a lie, either doctrinal or practical; what was not according to the word of God, and was vain and empty, frothy, filthy, and corrupt; and which no godly and faithful man would do. And this being done in common, by the generality of men, one with another, shews the degeneracy of the age, and supports the complaint before made. They speak even with *flattering lips*; as Cain did to Abel, Joab to Amasa, the Herodians to Christ, Judas to his Master, false teachers to those that are simple, hypocrites to God himself, when they draw nigh to him only with their lips, and all formal professors to the churches of Christ, when they profess themselves to be what they are not. And this is a further proof of the justness of the above complaint. And *with a double heart do they speak*; or *with an heart and an heart*[d]; such are double-minded men, who say one thing, and mean another; their words are not to be depended upon; there is no faithfulness in them. The Chinese[e] reckon a man of *two hearts*, as they call him, a very wicked man, and none more remote from honesty.

Ver. 3. *The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips*, &c.] This is either a prophecy or a prayer, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe; that God either would or should cut off such who used flattery with their lips, by inflicting some judgment in this life, or everlasting punishment hereafter; by taking them away by death *out of the world*, as the Targum paraphrases it; or by casting them into hell, where all liars and deceitful persons will have their portion; see Job xxxii. 21, 22. And *the tongue that speaketh proud things*, or *great things*[f], as the little horn, Dan. vii. 20, 25. and the beast, or Romish antichrist, who is designed by both, Rev. xiii. 5, 6. and which will be accomplished when Christ shall destroy him with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming; and indeed every tongue that riseth up against God, Christ, and his people, will be condemned; when ungodly sinners will be convinced of all their hard speeches, Isa. liv. 17. Jude 15. Perhaps some regard may be had to the tongue of Doeg the Edomite; see Psal. lii. 3, 4, 5.

Ver. 4. *Who have said, with our tongue will we prevail*, &c.] Either through the eloquence of them, or the outward force and power with which they are backed. The sense is, as we say, so shall it be; our words are laws, and shall be obeyed, there is no standing against them; our edicts and decrees shall everywhere be regarded: or *we will make one to prevail, or have the dominion*[g]; meaning antichrist, the man of sin; for all this is true of the tongues of the antichristian party, and of their laws, edicts, and decrees; and which have obtained everywhere, and by which the wicked one has been established in his tyrannical power and authority. *Our lips are our own*, or *with us*[h]; we will say what we please, and make what laws and decrees we think fit, and impose them upon men; and so change times and laws without control, Dan. vii. 25. *Who is Lord over us?* which is the very language and conduct of antichrist, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, 2 Thess. ii. 4. and is indeed the language of the hearts and lives of all wicked and ungodly men, sons of Belial, men without any yoke or restraint; who walk, and are resolved to walk, after the imagination of their own evil hearts; not knowing the Lord, and being unwilling to obey him, or to be restrained by him; see Exod. v. 2.

Ver. 5. *For the oppression of the poor*, &c.] The servants and people of God, who, for the most part, are poor in a temporal sense, and are all of them, and always, so in a spiritual sense, standing continually in need of fresh supplies of grace; and being often afflicted, as the word signifies, are mean and despicable in the eyes of the men of this world, and so oppressed by them, as the poor generally are by the rich; and as the people of Israel were oppressed by the Egyptians, so are the people of God by antichrist, and by his tyrannical laws and edicts, and by such haughty and insolent persons as before described. *For the sighing of the needy*; who groan under their oppressions; being stripped of all good things, their friends, and worldly substance, they sigh inwardly, and cry unto the Lord, who sees their oppressions, hears their groans; and though he cannot be moved, as men are, by any thing without himself, yet, according to his abundant mercy and sovereign will, he appears and exerts himself on the behalf of his people, and for their relief and assistance. *Now will I arise, saith the Lord*; to have mercy on the poor and needy, and to avenge them on their oppressors, and free them from them. And this the Lord promises to do *now*, speedily, immediately; God arises in the most seasonable time, when his people are in the greatest straits, and in the utmost distress;

[d] בלב ולב in corde & corde, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus.
[e] Martin. Sinic. Hist. p. 144. a heart having [illegible], a double meaning, as Pittacus says, Laert. in Vit. Pittac. l. 1. p. 53.
[f] גדלות magna, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis; grandia, Cocceius.

[g] נגביר prevalere ac dominare, faciemus, scil. aliquem regem, dominum, Cocceius.
[h] אתנו nobiscum, Musculus, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Ainsworth.

and herein displays his wisdom, power, and goodness. This is an answer to the petition of the psalmist in ver. 1. *I will set* him *in safety* from him that *puffeth at him*; or *in salvation* [i]; in Christ the Saviour. All God's people are put into the hands of Christ, and are preserved in him; there they are in safety, for out of his hands none can pluck them; and being built on him, the Rock, they are safe, notwithstanding the waves and winds of temptation, persecution, *&c.* come with ever so much force upon them. Here it seems to signify, that God would deliver his poor and needy from their oppressions, and put them into a comfortable, prosperous, safe, and happy situation, in which they will be out of the reach of their enemies; as will be the witnesses, when they shall ascend to heaven, Rev. xi. 11, 12. even out of the reach of him that *puffeth at* them, despises them, and treats them with the utmost scorn and contempt; see Psalm x. 5. Or that *breathes*, or *let him breathe* [k] threatenings and slaughters; as Saul did against the disciples of Christ, Acts ix. 1. or that *lays snares for him* [l], as the wicked do for the righteous; or that *speaks unto him* in such haughty and insolent language as before expressed. Some make this clause a proposition of itself, *he puffeth at him*: meaning either that he that is set in safety puffs at his enemy, despises him, as he has been despised by him; or God, who breathes upon him, and whose breath is as a stream of brimstone, which kindles in him a fire of divine wrath, which is unquenchable; or else the sense is, God will *speak to himself*, or *to him* [m]; in which sense the word is used Hab. ii. 4. that is, good and comfortable words to the poor; or *he will give him refreshment*, or *rest*; which he will determine in himself to speak to him: or *he shall have breathing*, or *let him breathe* [n]; he shall have times of refreshing from the Lord, and rest from adversity, from the oppositions and persecutions of his enemies.

Ver. 6. *The words of the Lord* are *pure words*, &c.] This observation the psalmist makes in reference to what is just now said in the preceding verse, and in opposition to the words of wicked men in ver. 2, 4. which are deceitful, sinful, and impure. The Scriptures are the words of God; and they are pure and holy, free from all human mixtures, and from all fraud and deceit; they are the Scriptures of truth. The promises are the words of God, and they are firm and stable, and always to be depended on, and are ever fulfilled, being yea and amen in Christ Jesus. The Gospel, and the doctrines of it, are the words of God; that is the sincere milk of the word, pure and uncorrupt; as it is in itself, and as it is dispensed by the faithful ministers of it; and they are all according to godliness, and tend to encourage and promote purity and holiness of heart and life; see Prov. xxx. 5. *As silver tried in a furnace of earth*; they are as *silver* for worth and value; yea, they are more valuable than silver or gold, Psal. xix. 10. and cxix. 72. Prov. viii. 10, 11. The Bible is a mine of rich treasure, and to be searched into as for it; the promises in it are exceeding precious; they are like apples of gold in pictures of silver, and yield more joy than the finding a great spoil. The doctrines of the Gospel are comparable to gold and silver and precious stones, and to be bought at any rate, but to be sold at none: and they are as silver *tried*, which is pure, and free from dross. The words of men, of false teachers, are as dross and reprobate silver; but the words of the Lord are tried, and are pure, and free from all the dross of error and falsehood, Psal. xviii. 30. And they are as silver tried *in a furnace of earth*, which some render *by the Lord of the earth*; but the word rather signifies a furnace, or an operatory, in which metal is melted and purified; and may be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ in human nature, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and who came full fraught with the doctrines of the Gospel; and in whom they have been *tried*, by his sufferings and death, and are found to be pure, solid, and substantial: or to the ministers of the Gospel, who have this treasure in earthen vessels, whose works and words and ministry are tried by many fiery trials, and abide: or to all the people of God in general, who dwell in earthly tabernacles; and who, in the midst of various afflictions, have a comfortable and confirming evidence of the purity and truth of the words of God, of the promises of his covenant, and the doctrines of the Gospel. *Purified seven times*: that is, many times, Prov. xxiv. 16. and so completely and perfectly pure, and clear of all dross whatsoever, as silver so many times tried must needs be: and so the words of God are not only pure, but very pure, exceeding pure, Psal. cxix. 140.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt keep them, O Lord*, &c.] Not the words before mentioned, as Aben Ezra explains it, for the affix is masculine and not feminine; not but God has wonderfully kept and preserved the sacred writings; and he keeps every word of promise which he has made; and the doctrines of the Gospel will always continue from one generation to another; but the sense is, that God will keep the poor and needy, and such as he sets in safety, as Kimchi rightly observes: they are not their own keepers, but God is the keeper of them; he keeps them by his power, and in his son, in whose hands they are, and who is able to keep them from falling; they are kept by him from a total and final falling away; from the dominion and damning power of sin, and from being devoured by Satan, and from the evil of the world: and this the psalmist had good reason to believe, because of the love of God to them, his covenant with them, and the promises of safety and salvation he has made unto them. *Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever*; or *thou shalt preserve him* [p]; that is, every one of the poor and needy, from the wicked generation of men in which they live, from being corrupted or intimidated by them; and who are described in the beginning of the psalm. Some take these words to be a prayer, *keep thou them, O Lord, and preserve them*, &c. [q]; and so the following

[i] בישע in salute, Pagninus, Montanus, Marinus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

[k] יפיח לו spiret vel spirabit sibi, De Dieu.

[l] Qui ponit ei laqueum, Munster; qui laqueum injicit illis, Heb. illi, Mois; so Kimchi.

[m] Loquetur sibi vel ei, Vatablus.

[n] Respirationem dabit illi, Cloppenburgius; so Ainsworth, and some in Michaelis.

[o] Vid. Jarchi, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc. so some in David de Pomis, Lexic. fol. 11. 1. taking ב in בעליל to be radical, and ב doubled as if it was בבל.

[p] תצרנו custodies eum, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[q] Custodi eum, Tigurine version, Vatablus, custodito eorum quemque, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

words may be thought to be a reason or argument enforcing the request.

Ver. 8. *The wicked walk on every side,* &c.] Of the poor and needy, or the righteous ones, to watch them, lay snares for them, and hurt them; therefore, Lord, keep and preserve them: the wicked are everywhere in great numbers, the whole world lies in wickedness; and the men of it are like their father the devil, they go about to do all the mischief they can to the saints; wherefore they stand in need continually of divine preservation. *When the vilest men are exalted;* either to great dignities and high offices, to be magistrates and rulers; see Prov. xxix. 2. or are highly esteemed and caressed; which shews the sad degeneracy and badness of the times, and the unsafe and dangerous condition the people of God are in, unless kept by him; see Mal. iii. 15, 16. or else these words may be considered as expressive of the judgment of God upon wicked men, and so confirm what the psalmist had said of God's regard to and preservation of his own people; and the sense be, that the wicked shall walk up and down here and there, as outcasts and vagabonds, in a most desolate, destitute, and miserable condition; and as the latter clause may be rendered, *according to* their *exaltation* shall be *the vileness,* depression, or humiliation *of the children of men*[r]; they shall be brought as low as they have been made high; by how much the more highly they have been exalted, by so much the more deeply they shall be humbled; or else the meaning is, they shall walk about here and there fretting and vexing, when they shall see such who in their opinion are the meanest and basest of men, of low degree, and of a mean extract, exalted to the highest posts of honour and dignity; as David, who was taken from the sheepfold, and placed on the throne of Israel; so Jarchi, who observes that the Haggadah explains it of the Israelites, who will be exalted in time to come.

PSALM XIII.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

ACCORDING to Theodoret this psalm was written by David, not when he fled from Saul, but from Absalom; and gives this reason for it, what happened to him from Saul was before his sin, and therefore he could speak with great boldness; but what befell him from Absalom was after it, and therefore mourning and groans were mixed with his words.

Ver. 1. *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever?* &c.] When God does not immediately deliver his people from their enemies, or help them out of an affliction; when he does not discover his love, communicate his grace, apply the blessings and promises of his covenant as usual; and when he does not visit them in his wonted manner, and so frequently as he has formerly done, they are ready to conclude he has forgotten them; and sometimes this continues long, and then they fear they are forgotten for ever; and this they cannot bear, and therefore expostulate with God in a querulous manner, as the psalmist does here; but this is to be understood not in reality, but in their own apprehension, and in the opinion of their enemies; for God never does nor can forget his people; oblivion does not fall upon him with respect to common persons and things; and much less with respect to his own dear children, for whom a special book of remembrance is written; see the note on Psal. ix. 18. *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* his love, and the manifestation of it, from his person; his gracious presence, the light of his smiling countenance, which sometimes God hides or withdraws from his people by way of resentment of their unbecoming carriage to him; and which is very distressing to them, for they are apt to imagine it is in wrath and hot displeasure, when he still loves them, and will with everlasting kindness have mercy on them; see Isa. viii. 17. and lix. 2. and liv. 7—10. The Targum renders it, *the glory of thy face.*

Ver. 2. *How long shall I take counsel in my soul,* &c.] Or *put it*[s]; to take counsel of good men and faithful friends, in matters of moment and difficulty, is safe and right; and it is best of all to take counsel of God, who is wonderful in it, and guides his people with it; but nothing is worse than for a man to take counsel of his own heart, or only to consult himself; for such counsel often casts a man down, and he is ashamed of it sooner or later: but this seems not to be the sense here; the phrase denotes the distressing circumstances and anxiety of mind the psalmist was in; he was at his wits' end, and cast about in his mind, and had various devises and counsels formed there; and yet knew not what way to take, what course to steer. Having *sorrow in my heart daily;* by reason of God's hiding his face from him; on account of sin that dwelt in him, or was committed by him; because of his distance from the house of God, and the worship and ordinances of it; and by reason of his many enemies that surrounded him on every side: this sorrow was an heart-sorrow, and what continually attended him day by day; or was in the day-time, when men are generally amused with business or diversions, as well as in the night, as Kimchi observes. *How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?* even the vilest of men, Psal. xii. 8. this may be understood either of temporal enemies, and was true of David when he was obliged not only to quit his own house and family, but the land of Judea, and flee to the Philistines; and when he fled from Absalom his son, lest he should be taken and slain by him; or of spiritual enemies, and is true of saints when sin prevails and leads captive, and when the temptations of Satan succeed; as when he prevailed upon David to

[r] כרם זלות secundum superelevationem, vilitas (erit vel est), Cocceius.

[s] אשית ponam, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus.

number the people, Peter to deny his master, &c. The Jewish writers[x] observe that here are four *how longs*, answerable to the four monarchies, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, and their captivities under them.

Ver. 3. *Consider* and *hear me, O Lord my God*, &c.] The psalmist amidst all his distresses rightly applies to God by prayer, claims his interest in him as his covenant-God, which still continued notwithstanding all his darkness, desertions, and afflictions; and entreats him to *consider* his affliction and trouble, and deliver him out of it; to consider his enemies, how many and mighty they were; and his own weakness, his frame, that he was but dust, and unable to stand against them: or to *look*[y] upon his affliction, and upon him under it, with an eye of pity and compassion; to have respect to him and to his prayers, and to turn unto him, and lift up the light of his countenance upon him: and so this petition is opposed to the complaint in ver. 1. and he further requests that he would *hear* him; that is, so as to answer him, and that immediately, and thereby shew that he had not forgotten him, but was mindful of him, of his love to him, and covenant with him. *Lighten mine eyes*: meaning either the eyes of his body, which might be dim and dull through a failure of the animal spirits, by reason of inward grief, outward afflictions, or for want of bodily food; which when obtained refreshes nature, cheers the animal spirits, enlightens or gives a briskness to the eyes; see 1 Sam. xiv. 27, 29. or else the eyes of his understanding, Eph. i. 18. that he might behold wondrous things in the law of God, know the things which were freely given to him of God, see more clearly his interest in him, and in the covenant of his grace, and have his soul refreshed and comforted with the light of God's countenance; and he be better able to discern his enemies, and guard against them; and be directed to take the best method to be delivered and secured from them. The people of God are sometimes in the dark, and see no light; especially when benighted, and in sleepy frames; and it is God's work to enlighten and quicken them. *Lest I sleep* the sleep *of death*; a natural death[z], which is comparable to sleep, and often expressed by it; and which sense agrees with lightening the eyes of his body, as before explained; or rather the sense is, lift up the light of thy countenance, revive thy work in the midst of the years; let me see thy goodness in the land of the living, that I may not faint and sink and die away. Or it may be an eternal death is designed; for though true believers shall never die this death, yet they may be in such circumstances, as through unbelief to fear they shall. The Targum paraphrases the word thus: "enlighten mine eyes in thy law, lest I sin, and "sleep with those who are guilty of death."

Ver. 4. *Lest mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him*, &c.] Which is an argument God takes notice of; and for which reason he does not give up his people into the hands of their enemies; see Deut. xxxii. 27. The Chaldee paraphrase interprets this of the evil imagination or corruption of nature, and represents it as a person, as the Apostle Paul does in Rom. vii. and which may be said to prevail, when it pushes on to sin, and hinders doing good, and carries captive; and it may be applied to Satan, the great enemy of God's people, who triumphs over them, when he succeeds in his temptations. And *those that trouble me rejoice when I am moved*; meaning from his house and family, from his country and kingdom, from a prosperous state and condition to a distressed one; at which the troublers of David's peace would rejoice. They that trouble the saints are sin, Satan, and the world; and the two last rejoice when they are in an uncomfortable and afflicted condition; and especially Satan rejoices when he gains his point, if it is but to move them from any degree of steadfastness, of faith and hope, or from the ways of God in any respect; the Targum adds, *from thy ways*; for to be moved so as to perish eternally they cannot, being built upon the Rock of ages, and surrounded by the power and grace of God.

Ver. 5. *But I have trusted in thy mercy*, &c.] The faith, hope, and comfort of the psalmist grew and increased by prayer; from complaining he goes to praying, from praying to believing; he trusted not in himself, not in his own heart, nor in his own righteousness and merits, but in the mercy of God; and not in the bare absolute mercy of God, but in the grace and goodness of God, as the word[a] here used signifies, as it is displayed in the plenteous redemption which is by Christ; which is a sufficient ground of faith and hope; see Psal. cxxx. 7. *My heart shall rejoice in thy salvation*; which God is the contriver, author, and giver of, and in which the glory of his perfections is so greatly displayed; and a true believer rejoices more on account that God is glorified by it than because of his own interest in it; and this joy is an inward one, it is joy in the heart, and is real and unfeigned, and is what continues, and will be felt and expressed both here and hereafter.

Ver. 6. *I will sing unto the Lord*, &c.] In prayer faith is encouraged, through believing the heart is filled with joy; and this joy is expressed by the lips, in songs of praise to the Lord, ascribing the glory of salvation to him, and giving him thanks for every mercy and blessing of life. *Because he hath dealt bountifully with me*; both in a way of providence and grace, granting life and preserving it, and supporting with the comforts of it; blessing with spiritual blessings, and crowning with loving-kindness and tender mercies; all which is generous and bountiful dealing, and affords a just occasion of praise and thanksgiving; see Psal. cxvi. 7. and ciii. 1—5.

[x] Jarchi, Midrash in Kimchi, & Abendana in Miclol Yophi in loc.
[y] הביטה intuere, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; aspice, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius.

[z] Χαλκεον υπνον, Homer. Iliad. 11. v. 241. ferreus somnus, Virgil. Æneid. 10. v. 745, & 12. v. 309.
[a] בחסדך in bonitate tua, Vatablus; in benignitate tua, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; in benignissima voluntate tua, Gejerus.

PSALM XIV.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

THE argument of this psalm, according to Theodoret, is Sennacherib's invasion of Judea, when he sent Rabshakeh to Hezekiah, with menaces and curses; upon which Hezekiah implored divine help, and obtained it, and the Assyrian army was destroyed by an angel; of all which he thinks this psalm was prophetic.

Ver. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart, &c.*] This is to be understood not of a single individual person, as Nabal, which is the word here used; nor of some Gentile king, as Sennacherib, or Rabshakeh his general, as Theodoret; nor of Nebuchadnezzar, nor of Titus, as some Jewish writers [y] interpret it, making one to be here intended, and the other in Psal. liii. the same with this; but of a body, a set of men, who justly bear this character; and design not such who are ideots, persons void of common sense and understanding; but such who are fools in their morals, without understanding in spiritual things; wicked profligate wretches, apostates from God, alienated from the life of God; and whose hearts are full of blindness and ignorance, and whose conversations are vile and impure, and they enemies of righteousness, though full of all wicked subtlety and mischief: these say in their hearts, which are desperately wicked, and out of which evil thoughts proceed, pregnant with atheism and impiety; these endeavour to work themselves into such a belief, and inwardly to conclude, at least to wish, there is *no God*; though they do not express it with their mouths, yet they would fain persuade their hearts to deny the being of God; that so having no superior to whom they are accountable, they may go on in sin with impunity; however, to consider him as altogether such an one as themselves, and to remove such perfections from him, as may render him unworthy to be regarded by them; such as omniscience, omnipresence, &c. and to conceive of him as entirely negligent of and unconcerned about affairs of this lower world, having nothing to do with the government of it: and thus to deny his perfections and providence, is all one as to deny his existence, or that there is a God: accordingly the Targum paraphrases it, "there is no שולטנא, *government* of God in "the earth;" so Kimchi interprets it, "there is no "governor, nor judge in the world, to render to man "according to his works." *They are corrupt;* that is, every one of these fools; and it is owing to the corruption of their hearts they say such things: they are corrupt in themselves; they have corrupt natures, they are born in sin, and of the flesh, and must be carnal and corrupt: or *they do corrupt*, or *have corrupted* [z]: they corrupt themselves by their atheistical thoughts and wicked practices, Jude 10. or their works, as the Chaldee paraphrase adds; or their ways, their manner and course of life, Gen. vi. 12. and they corrupt others with their evil communications, their bad principles and practices, their ill examples and wicked lives. *They have done abominable works:* every sinful action is abominable in the sight of God; but there are some sins more abominable than others; there are abominable idolatries, and abominable lusts, such as were committed in Sodom; and it may be these are pointed at here, and which are usually committed by such who like not to retain God in their knowledge; see Rom. i. 24, 28. There is *none that doeth good;* any one good work in a spiritual manner; not in faith, from love, in the name and strength of Christ, and with a view to the glory of God: nor can any man do a good work without the grace of God, and strength from Christ, and the assistance of the Spirit of God: hence, whatsoever a wicked man does, whether in a civil or in a religious way, is sin; see Prov. xxi. 4, 27. Arama takes these to be the words of the fool, or atheist, saying, there is no God that does good, like those in Zeph. i. 12.

Ver. 2. *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, &c.*] As he did when all flesh had corrupted its way, and before he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly, Gen. vi. 12. This is said in direct opposition to the atheistical thoughts and reasonings of wicked men, in the preceding verse. There is a God, and he takes notice of the children of men, and of what is done by them; though his throne is in the heavens, and his dwelling there, yet he looks down from thence, and takes cognizance of all human affairs. This must be understood consistent with the omniscience and omnipresence of God; it is an anthropopathy, or a speaking after the manner of men; and denotes the exact notice which God takes, and distinct observation he makes, and the perfect and accurate knowledge he has of men and their actions; see Gen. xi. 5. and xviii. 20, 21. Psal. xxxiii. 13—15. *To see if there were any that did understand:* not things natural, civil, and moral, but things spiritual, as the Apostle Paul interprets the words, Rom. iii. 11. For though man has not lost the natural faculty of his understanding, and may have an understanding of the things of nature, yet not of the things of God, until a supernatural light is put into him; not any spiritual experimental knowledge of God in Christ, nor of the way of salvation by Christ, nor of the work of the Spirit of God upon the heart, nor of the doctrines of the Gospel, nor any true sight and sense of his own state and condition. And *seek God;* that is, *after God:* as the apostle in the same place explains it; after the knowledge of him and his ways, and communion with him; after the things of God, his interest and his glory: they do not seek after him in prayer, or by an attendance on his worship and ordinances; at least with their whole hearts, earnestly, diligently, con-

[y] Vid. Jarchi, Kimchi & Ben Melech in loc.

[z] השחיתו corruperunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus; corrumpunt, Junius & Tremellius; corrumpunt se, Piscator.

stantly, and in the first place; nor do they seek after him in Christ, where he is only to be found; nor under the influence, and with the assistance of the blessed Spirit.

Ver. 3. *They are all gone aside*, &c.] As bankrupts, having run out their whole stock, and into debt, and have nothing to pay, nor make composition with, and are obliged to abscond, as Adam, Gen. iii. 8, 24. The words in Psalm liii. 3. are, *every one of them is gone back*; from God; have revolted from him, and turned their backs upon him, and have gone back from his commandment, despised his law, and cast away his word. The Apostle Paul interprets it, *they are all gone out of the way*; out of God's way, into their own way; out of the path of truth, righteousness, and holiness, into the way of sin, error, darkness, and death; and with this agrees the interpretation of Aben Ezra, who adds, *out of the right way*; and of Kimchi and Ben Melech, whose gloss is, *out of the good way*: which is God's way, or the way of his commandments. *They are* all *together become filthy*, or *stinking* *, like putrid and corrupt flesh; see Psal. xxxviii. 5. Isa. i. 6. and so *unprofitable*, useless, and good for nothing, as the apostle renders it, Rom. iii. 12. Mankind are universally filthy and unclean; they are all of them defiled with sin, both in soul and body, in all the faculties of their souls and members of their bodies; and they are originally and naturally so; nor can any thing cleanse them from their pollution but the blood of Christ. There is *none that doeth good, no, not one*: this is repeated partly to asseverate more strongly the depravity of mankind, and partly to express the universality of it; that there is no exception to it in any that descend from Adam by ordinary generation. Here follow in the Septuagint version, according to the Vatican copy, all those passages quoted by the apostle, Rom. iii. 13—18. which have been generally supposed to have been taken from different parts of Scripture; so the Syriac scholiast says, in some ancient Greek copies are found eight more verses, and these are they, *Their throat*, &c.

Ver. 4. *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?* &c.] Of the being of God, of the nature of sin, and of the punishment due unto it? This question is put either by way of admiration, as Kimchi and Aben Ezra observe; the psalmist, or rather God speaking after the manner of men, wondering that there should be such ignorance and stupidity among men, as before expressed; or rather, as denying this to be the case, and affirming that they have knowledge, notwithstanding they think, and say, and do, as before related, as in Rom. ix. 21. Do not they know that there is a God? that sin is the transgression of the law of God? and that they are accountable to him for their actions? Verily they do: for this is said, not of sinners of the Gentiles; though even they, by the light of nature, know there is a God, and shew the work of the law written in their hearts; and have a consciousness in them of good and evil; but of sinners in Zion, of the profligate part of mankind among the Jews, who had a divine revelation, by which they knew the one God of Israel; and a law, by which was the knowledge of sin, and whose sanctions were rewards and punishments. And it seems to design the chief among them, who had power over others, to eat them up and devour them; even their political and ecclesiastical governors; see Mic. iii. 1, 2, 3. Ezek. xxxiv. 2. who, though they had no spiritual understanding, nor experimental knowledge of things, yet had a theoretical and speculative one; so that their sins were attended with this aggravation, that they were against light and knowledge; particularly what follows: *who eat up my people as they eat bread*: not David's people, but the Lord's people: see ver. 2. whom he chose for his people, who were his covenant-people, and who professed his name, and were called by it; these the workers of iniquity ate up, devoured, and consumed; see Jer. x. 25. by reproaching and persecuting them, doing injury to their persons, property, and character: they devoured their persons, by using them cruelly and putting them to death; they devoured their substance, by spoiling them of it, and converting it to their own use, as the Pharisees are said to devour widows' houses; and they destroyed their good names and characters with their devouring words: and this they did with as much ease, delight, and pleasure, and without any remorse of conscience, and as constantly, as a man eats his bread. Or the words may be rendered, *they eat up my people, they eat bread*; that is, though they act such a wicked and cruel part, yet they have bread to eat, and fulness of it; they are not in straits, nor afflicted and punished; and because they are not, they are hardened in their impiety and iniquity: or *they eat bread*, after they have persecuted and devoured the Lord's people, with peace of mind, without remorse of conscience, as if they had done no iniquity, like the adulterous woman in Prov. xxx. 20. *And call not upon the Lord*; or pray to him, or serve and worship him; for invocation includes the whole worship of God; and this they do not, though they know him, and are daily supplied by him, and eat his bread. Some read this clause with the former, *they eat bread, and call not on the Lord*; as if their sin was, that when they eat bread, they did not ask a blessing upon it, nor return thanks to God for it, which ought to be done; but the accent *athnach* under לחם, *bread*, will not admit of this sense, though it seems to be countenanced by the Targum.

Ver. 5. *There were they in great fear*, &c.] This shews that they had some knowledge of God, and consciousness of guilt, which they endeavoured to banish out of their minds by their fears of punishment; and these fears men of the most atheistical principles cannot get rid of. In Psal. liii. 5. it is added, *where no fear was*; that is, any cause or reason for it: such men are often frighted at their own shadows, afraid to be in the dark alone, as Hobbes the atheist was. The wicked flee when no man pursues, and are chased by the sound of a shaken leaf; see Prov. xxviii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 36. or where there was no fear of God before their eyes, nor on their hearts, as well as no regard to men; or where before there were perfect peace and security, and no apprehension or dread of any calamity, ruin,

* נאלחו; fœtuerunt, putruerunt, Pagninus; aut putruerunt, Vatablus; putidi vel fœtidi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis.

and destruction. *For God is in the generation of the righteous*, or *of the righteous One*[b]; which some understood of Jesus Christ the righteous: and though the age or generation in which he lived was a very wicked one, yet God was with him; as was seen by the doctrines he taught, and the miracles he wrought; and which filled the Jews with panic fears, lest the Romans should come and take away their place and nation: but rather this is to be understood of the generation of the saints, who are righteous through the righteousness of Christ, and have the new man in them, which is created in righteousness and true holiness, and live soberly and righteously; these are sometimes called the generation of the upright, and of the children of God, and of them that seek him, Psal. cxii. 2. and lxxiii. 15. and xxiv. 6. in the midst of these God is, among them he affords his gracious presence, and is with them, for their help and assistance against their enemies: and as this makes them fearless of them, it fills their enemies with dread and terror; see Josh. ii. 9—11. The Targum renders it, "the Word of the "Lord is in the generation of the righteous."

Ver. 6. *You have shamed the counsel of the poor*, &c.] The poor saints, the Lord's people, the generation of the righteous, who are generally the poor of this world; poor in spirit, and an afflicted people: and the counsel of them intends not the counsel which they give to others, but the counsel which they receive from the Lord, from the Spirit of counsel, which rests upon them, and with which they are guided; and this is to trust in the Lord, and to make him their refuge; and which is good advice, the best of counsel. Happy and safe are they that take it! But this is derided by wicked and ungodly men; they mock at the poor saints for it, and endeavour to shame them out of it; but hope makes not ashamed; see Psal. xxii. 7, 8. *Because the Lord is his refuge*: he betakes himself to him when all others fail; and finds him to be a refuge from the storm of impending calamities, and from all enemies.

Ver. 7. *O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion*, &c.] By whom is meant the Messiah, the Saviour of Israel, of all the elect of God, whether Jews or Gentiles; and who is so called, because the salvation of them was put into his hands, and he undertook it; and because he is the Captain and Author of it, and it is in him, and in no other. He was to come out of Zion, out of Judea, from among the Jews; Zion being, as Kimchi observes, the head of the kingdom of Israel; see Rom. xi. 26. Accordingly Christ did come of the Jews, and salvation was of them, Rom. ix. 4, 5. John iv. 22. and for his coming from hence, or for his incarnation, the psalmist most earnestly wishes: he was one of those kings, prophets, and righteous men, that desired to see the days of the Messiah, Matt. xiii. 17. Luke x. 24. And what might move him so vehemently to wish for it, at this time, might be the sad corruption and depravity of mankind he had been describing, and the afflicted and distressed state of the saints. *When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people*. The people of God are, in their unregeneracy, in a state of captivity to sin, Satan, and the law; the work of the Messiah, when he came, was to proclaim liberty to the captives, to set them free, to deliver them from their spiritual bondage: and this Christ has done; he has redeemed his people from all their sins, and from the curse of the law, and from the power of Satan, and has led captivity captive; and which has justly occasioned great joy in the redeemed ones, according to this prophecy: *Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad*; that is, the posterity of Jacob and Israel; not his natural, but spiritual seed, such who are the true sons of Jacob, Israelites indeed; these having faith and hope in the plenteous redemption of Christ, rejoice in the view of their interest in it; they sing the song of redeeming love now, and these ransomed ones will hereafter come to Zion with joy, and everlasting joy upon their heads. The Jews refer this to the times of the Messiah[c].

PSALM XV.

A Psalm of David.

AS in the preceding psalm, according to Theodoret, the salvation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem is foretold, and the liberty of the captives; so in this advice is given to them, and the life they ought to live proposed, who should share in such benefits.

Ver. 1. *Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?* &c.] This question, with the following, is put by the psalmist in a view of the sad corruption and degeneracy of mankind described in the preceding psalm, which renders the sons of men unfit for the presence of God, and communion with him; and it is put to the Lord himself, the founder of Zion, who has set his King over this holy hill of his; who has enacted laws for the good of it, and brings his people thither, making them meet for it, and so is most proper to give the qualifications of such as are admitted here; for by the tabernacle is meant not the human nature of Christ, as in Heb. viii. 2. and ix. 11. as some interpret it, and apply all the characters in the following verses to Christ; nor heaven itself, of which the holy place made with hands in the tabernacle and temple were a figure, Heb. 9. 24. for to *sojourn*[d], or *lodge*, as in an inn, as the word rendered *abide* signifies, will not suit with that state and place which is fixed and immovable; but the church of God on earth, called a *tabernacle*, in allusion to the tabernacle of Moses, where God granted his presence, sacrifices were offered up with acceptance, and the holy vessels were put; and which was mean without, but rich and glorious within: so God affords his gracious presence in his

[b] צדיק justi, Montanus, Gejerus.
[c] Baal Hatturim in Numb. 25. 12. & Midrash Tillim in loc.

[d] יגור peregrinabitur, Pagninus, Montanus; diversabitur, Muis; so Ainsworth; vel hospitabitur, Cocceius.

church, accepts the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise offered to him there; and here are the vessels of mercy placed, which are sanctified and meet for the master's use; and though it is mean and despicable in its outward appearance, in the eyes of men, it is all glorious within; see Cant. i. 6. and this is the tabernacle of God, being of his building and preserving, and the place of his residence. *Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?* the same is here intended as in the preceding clause; the allusion is to Mount Zion, whither the ark of the Lord was brought in David's time, and on one part of which the temple was afterwards built: and the church may be compared to this hill, for its eminence and visibility in the world; for the holiness which God has put upon it, and for the immovableness of it; for though like a tabernacle it may be carried from place to place, yet it is like an hill that can never be removed out of the world; it is built on a sure foundation, the Rock of ages. Now the purport of these questions is, who is a proper person to be an inhabitant of Zion? or to be a member of the church of God? the answer is in the following verses.

Ver. 2. *He that walketh uprightly*, &c.] Or *perfectly*[*]; see Gen. xvii. 1. not so as to be without sin entirely, but as not to be chargeable with any notorious crime, and living in it; moreover, perfection and uprightness often signify sincerity, and the phrase here may design an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile; whose faith is unfeigned, whose love is without dissimulation, whose hope is without hypocrisy, and his whole conduct without fraud and deceit; likewise such an one may be said to walk uprightly who walks according to the truth of the Gospel, and by faith on Christ and in Christ, as he has received him; and such an one is fit to be a member of a Gospel church. *And worketh righteousness;* not in order to his justification before God; for not such an one, but he that trusts in the Lord for righteousness, shall inherit his holy mountain, Isa. lvii. 12, 13. but he that works the work of faith, and believes in the righteousness of Christ; who looks to it and receives it; that lays hold on it and pleads it as his justifying righteousness; he that does righteousness in this sense, is righteous as Christ is righteous, 1 John iii. 7. and such an one is a proper person to dwell in his house; and who also by faith does works of righteousness, and whose life is a series and course of righteousness, as a fruit of his faith, and in consequence of his having laid hold on the righteousness of Christ. *And speaketh the truth in his heart;* receives Christ who is the truth, and the Gospel the word of truth into his heart, and makes an hearty profession of the same before men; and both speaks according to his light in the Scriptures of truth, whenever he speaks of divine things; and in common conversation speaks truth from his heart to his neighbour, and does not speak with a double heart, or say one thing with his mouth, and intend another in his heart; see Psal. xii. 2. or endeavour to deceive persons, and impose a falsehood on them, or tell them lies; for as such a person is not fit to dwell in a private house, or to be in a civil society, much less is he a proper person to be in the house of God.

Ver. 3. *He that backbiteth not with his tongue*, &c.] Is not a slanderer, a defamer, a tale-bearer; a backbiter is one who privately, secretly, behind a man's back speaks evil of him, devours and destroys his credit and reputation: the word here used comes from רגל, which signifies the *foot*, and denotes such a person who goes about from house to house, speaking things he should not, 1 Tim. v. 13. and a word from this root signifies *spies;* and the phrase here may point at such persons who creep into houses, pry into the secrets of families, and divulge them, and oftentimes represent them in a false light. Such are ranked amongst the worst of men, and are very unfit to be in the society of the saints, or in a church of Christ; see Rom. i. 30. 2 Cor. xii. 20. *Nor doeth evil to his neighbour;* to any man whatever, good or bad, friend or foe, whether in a natural, civil, or spiritual relation, either by words or deeds, to his person, property, or good name. *Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour;* does not raise any scandalous report on him himself, nor will he bear to hear one from another, much less will he spread one; nor will he suffer one to lie upon his neighbour, but will do all he can to vindicate him, and clear his character.

Ver. 4. *In whose eyes a vile person is contemned*, &c.] A *vile* man is a very wicked, profligate, and abandoned creature, one that is to every good work reprobate; and such sometimes are in high places, Psal. xii. 8. Dan. xi. 21. and are greatly caressed and esteemed by the men of the world; but then, as they are an abomination to God, they should be despised by his people, let them be what they will as to their riches, honours, and wisdom among men; as Haman was by Mordecai, Esth. iii. 2. and Ahab by Elisha, 2 Kings iii. 14. and such who keep company with, and express a delight and pleasure in such sort of persons, ought by no means to have a place in the house of God. Some understand this of a good man being *despised in his own eyes*, as it may be rendered[f]; on account of his vileness, and the imperfection of his obedience, and as expressive of his great humility, esteeming others better than himself; and who renounces himself, and is rejected by himself, having a very mean opinion of himself; which is the sense of the Targum, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi; and which is no bad sense, though the former is countenanced by what follows. *But he honoureth them that fear the Lord;* who have the covenant-grace of fear, wrought in their hearts, and serve the Lord with reverence and godly fear; that is, who are truly religious and godly persons; these such who are fit members of the church of Christ love heartily, esteem of highly, and honour them by thinking and speaking well of them, and behaving with great respect and decency to them; see Rom. xii. 10. He that *sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not;* having taken a solemn oath, so sacred is it with him, and such a regard has he to the name of God, by whom he swears, that though it is to his civil loss and detriment, yet he will not break it and depart from it, but punctually ob-

[*] תמים perfectus, Montanus, Gejerus.

[f] נבזה בעיניו qui despicit se in oculis suis, so some in Vatablus; ille est despectus in propriis oculis, reprobatus, Gussetius, p. 433.

serve it: some render it, *he that swears to his neighbour, and changeth not*[g]; he that is just to his word, faithful to his promises, that exactly fulfils all the obligations he lays himself under unto others; he that is honest and upright in all his dealings. The Jewish writers interpret this clause of a man's vowing and swearing to afflict himself by fasting, which, though it is to the emaciating of his body, yet he strictly observes his vow or oath; but this is foreign from the scope of the place: it might be rendered, *he that swears to do evil, and does not recompence or perform*[h], it being better to break through such an oath than to keep it; see Lev. v. 4.

Ver. 5. He that *putteth not out his money to usury*, &c.] To the poor, in an extravagant and exorbitant way, by which he bites, devours, and destroys his little substance, and sadly afflicts and distresses him; see Exod. xxii. 25. otherwise, to lend money on moderate interest, and according to the laws, customs, and usages of nations, and to take interest for it, is no more unlawful than to take interest for houses and land; yea, it is according to the law of common justice and equity, that if one man lends money to another to trade with, and gain by, that he should have a proportionate share in the gain of such a trade; but the design of this passage, and the law on which it is founded, is, to forbid all exactions and oppressions of the poor, and all avaritious practices, and to encourage liberality and beneficence; and such who are covetous, and bite and oppress the poor, are not fit for church-communion; see 1 Cor. v. 11. Eph. v. 5. *Nor taketh reward against the innocent*: either to swear falsely against him, or to pass a wrong sentence on him; see 1 Sam. xii. 3. *He that doeth these things shall never be moved*; from the tabernacle of God, and his holy hill; he is fit to be a member of the church of God, and an inhabitant of Zion; and he shall dwell and abide there, he shall be a pillar which shall never go out, Rev. iii. 12. he shall finally persevere, through the grace of God; he shall hold on and out unto the end: and though he may fall through infirmity and temptation into sin, and that many times, yet he shall not finally and totally fall, 2 Pet. i. 10. but shall be as Mount Zion which can never be removed, Psal. cxxv. 1, 2. The words should be rendered, since the accent *athnach* is on אלה, *these things*, thus; *he that doeth these things*, not only what is mentioned in this verse, but in the foregoing, *he*, I say, *shall never be moved*.

PSALM XVI.

Michtam of David.

THIS is a new title, not met with before, though it afterwards is prefixed to *five* psalms running, Psal. lvi. lvii. lviii. lix. lx. Some take the word *mictam* to be the name of a musical instrument, as Kimchi on Psal. iv. 1. others the name of one of the tunes, as Jarchi; and others the tune of a song which began with this word, as Aben Ezra observes, to which this psalm was sung; the Septuagint translate it *stelography*, or an inscription upon a pillar; such an one as is erected by conquerors, as Theodoret observes, having writing on it declaring the victory obtained; suggesting that the psalm, or the subject of it, the death and resurrection of Christ, was worthy to be inscribed on a pillar of marble; and the Targum renders it, *a right engraving*, that deserves to be engraven in a monument of brass: but what seems to be the best sense of the word is, that it signifies a work of gold, and may be rendered, *a golden* psalm *of David*; so called, either because it was a dear and favourite song of his; or from the subject-matter, which is more valuable and precious than the most fine gold: the title of it in the Syriac and Arabic versions is, "concerning the election of the church, and the resurrection of Christ;" and certain it is from ver. 10, the resurrection of Christ is spoken of in it, as is clear from the testimonies of two apostles, Peter and Paul, who cite it in proof of it, Acts ii. 25—31. and xiii. 35, 36, 37. and since there is but one person speaking throughout the psalm, and Christ is he that speaks in ver. 10, and which cannot be understood of David, nor of any other person but Christ, the whole of the psalm must be interpreted of him.

Ver. 1. *Preserve me, O God*, &c.] Prayer is proper to Christ as man; he offered up many prayers and supplications to God, even his Father, and his God, and as the strong and mighty God, as the word[i] here used is commonly rendered by interpreters; with whom all things are possible, and who is able to save; see Heb. v. 7. Luke vi. 12. Matt. xxvi. 39, 42, 44. John xvii. 1. and this petition for preservation was suitable to him and his case, and was heard and answered by God; he was very remarkably preserved in his infancy from the rage and fury of Herod; and very wonderfully was his body preserved and supported in the wilderness under a fast of forty days and forty nights together, and from being torn to pieces by the wild beasts among which he was, and from the temptations of Satan, with which he was there assaulted; and throughout the whole of his ministry he was preserved from being hindered in the execution of his office, either by the flatteries, or menaces, or false charges of his enemies; and though his life was often attempted they could not take it away before his time: and whereas Christ is in this psalm represented as in the view of death and the grave, this petition may be of the same kind with those in John xii. 27. Matt. xxvi. 39, 42. and put up with the same submission to the will of God; and at least may intend divine help and support in his sufferings and death, preservation from corruption in the grave, and the resurrection of him

[g] להרע τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ, Sept. proximo suo, V. L. Sic. Syr. Ar. Æthiop.

[h] So Ainsworth.

[i] אל Deus fortis seu potens, Mais; Deus omnipotens, Cocceius, Michaelis.

from the dead; and it may also include his concern for the preservation of his church, his other self, and the members of it, his apostles, disciples, and all that did or should believe in his name, for whom he prayed after this manner a little before his death: see Luke xxii. 31, 32. John xvii. 11, 15, 20, 24. *For in thee do I put my trust*: or *have hoped*[k]; the graces of faith and hope were implanted in the heart of Christ, as man, who had the gifts and graces of the spirit without measure bestowed on him, and these very early appeared in him, and shewed themselves in a very lively exercise, Psal. xxii. 7. Luke ii. 49. and were in a very eminent manner exercised by him a little before his death, in the view of it, and when he was under his sufferings, and hung upon the cross, Isa. l. 6—9. Matt. xxvii. 46. Psal. xvi. 9, 10. and xxii. 8. and this his trust and confidence in God alone, and not in any other, is used as a reason or argument for his preservation and safety.

Ver. 2. O my soul, *thou hast said unto the Lord*, &c.] Some take these to be the words of David speaking to the church, who had owned the Lord to be her Lord, and had declared what follows; others think they are the words of God the Father to his Son, suggesting to him what he had said; but they are rather an apostrophe, or an address of Christ to his own soul; and the phrase, *O my soul*, though not in the original text, is rightly supplied by our translators, and which is confirmed by the Targum, and by the Jewish commentators, Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi. *Thou art my Lord*: Christ, as man, is a creature made by God; his human nature is the true tabernacle which God pitched and not man, and on this consideration he is his Lord, being his Creator; and as Mediator Christ is his servant, and was made under the law to him, obeyed him, and submitted to his will in all things; so that he not only in words said he was his Lord, but by deeds declared him to be so. *My goodness* extendeth *not to thee*; such who suppose that David here speaks in his own person, or in the person of other believers, or that the church here speaks, differently interpret these words: some render them, *my goodness is not above thee*[l]; it is far inferior to thine, it is not to be mentioned with it, it is nothing in comparison of it; all my goodness, happiness, and felicity lies, in thee, Psal. lxxiii. 25. others, *I have no goodness without thee*; the sense is the same as if it was *I have said*, as read the Greek, Vulgate Latin, and Oriental versions, and so Apollinarius; I have none but what comes from thee; what I have is given me by thee, which is the sense of the Targum; see James i. 17. others, *my goodness is not upon thee*[m]; does not lie upon thee, or thou art not obliged to bestow the blessings of goodness on me; they are not due to me, they spring from thy free grace and favour; to this sense incline Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi; see Luke xvii. 10. Rom. xi. 35. others, *thou hast no need of my goodness*; nor will it profit thee, so R. Joseph Kimchi; see Job xxii. 2, 3, and xxxv. 7, 8. or the words may be rendered, *O my goodness*, or *thou art my good, nothing is above thee*[n]; no goodness in any superior to God. But they are the words of Christ, and to be understood of his goodness; not of his essential goodness as God, nor of his providential goodness, the same with his Father's; but of his special goodness, and the effect of it to his church and people; and denotes his love, grace, and good will towards them, shewn in his incarnation, sufferings, and death; and the blessings of goodness which come thereby; such as a justifying righteousness, forgiveness of sin, peace, and reconciliation, redemption, salvation, and eternal life. Now though God is glorified by Christ in his incarnation, sufferings, and death, and in the work of man's redemption, yet he stood in no need of the obedience and sufferings of his son; he could have glorified his justice another way, as he did in not sparing the angels that sinned, in drowning the old world, and in burning Sodom and Gomorrah, and in other instances of his vengeance; though there is glory to God in the highest in the affair of salvation by Christ, yet the good will is to men; though the debt of obedience and sufferings was paid to the justice of God, whereby that is satisfied and glorified, yet the kindness in paying the debt was not to God but to men, described in the next verse.

Ver. 3. But *to the saints that* are *in the earth*, &c.] Who are sanctified or set apart by God the Father in election; whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ in redemption, and who are sanctified or made holy by the spirit of God in effectual vocation; and who live a holy life and conversation: these are said to be *in the earth*, not to distinguish them from the saints in heaven, to whom the goodness of Christ extends as to them, unless it be to distinguish them from the angels in heaven, who are called saints, Deut. xxxiii. 2. as Aben Ezra observes; but to point out the place of their abode, scattered up and down in the earth; and to shew that love, grace, goodness, and kindness of Christ reaches to them in the present state of things, notwithstanding all their meanness and imperfection in themselves, and their despicableness in the eyes of others; see John xiii. 1. *And to the excellent*; the same with the saints, who though reckoned by men the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things, are in high esteem with Christ; they are *nobles*[o] in his account, as the word is rendered in Jer. xxx. 21. they are princes in all the earth, and these princes are kings; they are made kings and priests unto God by Christ; they wear and live like kings, and have the attendance, power, riches, and glory of kings; they are guarded by angels, they have power with God, they are rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom. *In whom is all my delight*; Christ's delights were with these sons of men before the world was, and have always continued with them; they are his *Hephzi-bah* and *Beulah*, as in Isa. lxii. 4. hence he became incarnate, and suffered and died for them, and makes application of all the blessings of his grace and goodness to them.

Ver. 4. *Their sorrows shall be multiplied*, &c.] Not the sorrows of the saints and excellent ones, by seeing

[k] חסיתי בך speravi in te, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.
[l] טובתי בל עליך bonum meum non est supra te, Gejerus.
[m] Bonum meum non est super te, Montanus, Cocceius.
[n] So Gussetius, p. 299.

[o] אדירי magnificis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Riveius; nobilibus delectationis meæ, Gejerus; ducibus eorum, Cocceius; so Michaelis.

the idolatry of men, as Aben Ezra interprets it; but the sorrows of such that *hasten* after *another* god; a false god, an idol, to serve and worship it; for, generally speaking, idolaters are more forward, eager, and hasty to attend a false worship, than the worshippers of the true God are to attend his service: now their sorrows are many, even in their worship, by cutting their bodies with knives and lancets, as the worshippers of Baal did; and by sacrificing their own children, which, notwithstanding their rash and precipitate zeal, could not fail of giving them pain and uneasiness; and, besides temporal punishments inflicted on them for their idolatry by God, and stings of conscience, which must sometimes attend them, the wrath of God lies upon them, and they will have their portion in the lake of fire, and the smoke of their torment will ascend for ever and ever. Some render the words, *their idols are multiplied;* and so the Chaldee paraphrase, " they multiply their idols, and after that " hasten to offer their sacrifices;" when men leave the true God, they know not where to stop; the Heathens had not less than thirty thousand gods, and the Jews when they fell into idolatry ran in the same way, Jer. ii. 28. and xi. 13. Hos. viii. 11. The word *God* is not in the original text, though the supplement is countenanced by the Jewish writers[y], who interpret it in this way; but I rather think the text is to be understood not of Heathen idolaters, but of unbelieving Jews, who, rejecting the true Messiah, hasten after another Messiah, king, and saviour; when Jesus the true Messiah came they received him not; but when another came in his own name they were eager to embrace him, John v. 43. and to this day they are hastening after another; and in their daily prayers pray that the coming of the Messiah might be במהרה, *in haste,* in their days[z]; and the sense of the passage is, that the sorrows of the Jews, rejecting the Messiah and hastening after another, would come thick and fast upon them, until wrath came upon them to the uttermost, Matt. xxiv. 6—8. 1 Thess. ii. 16. and it holds good of all, whether Jews or Gentiles, that hasten after another Saviour; that say to the works of their hands, that they are their gods, or go about to establish a righteousness of their own, or seek for life and salvation by their own doings; these, sooner or later, will lie down in sorrow, Isa. l. 11. *Their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer:* meaning not the libations of the Gentiles, which were not wine, according to the law, Numb. xv. 10. but blood, even sometimes human blood; but the sacrifices of the Jews, which were either got by blood, murders and robberies, and on that account were hateful to God, Isa. lxi. 8. or rather the sacrifices of bloodthirsty persons, whose hands were full of blood, Isa. i. 11—15. and such were the offerings of the priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, in Christ's time, who were the children of them that killed the prophets, and sought after the blood of Christ. Or it may be rendered, *I will not offer their drink-offerings because of blood*[a]; meaning his own blood shed for the remission of sins, which being obtained, there remains no more offering for sin; and so the words may express the abolition of all legal sacrifices, and the causing of them to cease through the blood and sacrifice of Christ. This shews the person speaking to be a priest, and therefore could not be David, but must be the Messiah, who is a priest after the order of Melchizedek; and who had a better sacrifice to offer up than any of the offerings of the Jews, even his own self, by which he has put away sin for ever. He adds, *nor take up their names into my lips;* not the names of idol-deities, nor of their worshippers, but of the Jews that rejected him as the Messiah, for whom he would not pray,, John xvii. 9. and so as he refused to offer their sacrifices, he would not perform the other part of his priestly office for them in intercession; though this may also have respect to the rejection of the Jewish nation as the people of God; writing a *lo-ammi* upon them, declaring them to be no longer the children of the living God; leaving their names for a curse, a taunt, and a proverb in every place; expressing the utmost abhorrence of them, and shewing the utmost indignation at them, as persons whose names were not worthy or fit to be mentioned, Eph. v. 3.

Ver. 5. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup,* &c.] This is said by Christ as a priest, and in allusion to the Levitical priests, who had no inheritance in the land of Canaan with their brethren, but the Lord was their part and portion, and their inheritance, Numb. xviii. 20. Deut. xviii. 1, 2. and it expresses the strong love and affection Christ had for the Lord as his God, the delight and pleasure he had in him, and the satisfaction he had in the enjoyment of him and communion with him, and that it was his meat and drink to serve him, and to do his will; and though his goodness did not extend to him, yet his goodness and happiness as man lay in him: unless the sense should be, " the Lord is he who gives me " the portion of mine inheritance;" meaning his church and people, all the elect of God, who are Christ's portion and inheritance, given him by the father; see Deut. xxxii. 9. Psal. ii. 8. And assigns to me my cup, as of blessings, so of sorrows and sufferings, which being measured out, filled up, and put into his hand by his father, he freely took it, John xviii. 11. *Thou maintainest my lot:* that is, either his interest in God himself, as his covenant-God, which always continued; or the lot of goods, of grace and glory, put into his hands for his people, which always remains; or rather the saints themselves, who, as they are Christ's portion and inheritance, so they are his lot; in allusion to the land of Canaan, which was divided by lot: these Jehovah took hold of, kept, preserved, and upheld, as the word[b] signifies; so that they shall never totally and finally fall and perish; and this sense is countenanced by what follows.

Ver. 6. *The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places,* &c.] The allusion is to the measuring of land by lines, and appropriating each part to the proper owners; and lines design the land that is measured out by them, and here the church and people of God, the

[y] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Ben Melech, & Abendana in loc.
[z] Seder Tephillot, fol. 120. 2.
[a] מדם propter sanguinem, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[b] תומיך sustentans, Musculus, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth; sustentans, Montanus, Michaelis; tenuisti, Cocceius; tenendo quasi sustentans, Gejerus.

chosen ones who are given to Christ, as his portion and inheritance; and the sense is, that Christ's portion lies among or in pleasant persons; such as were so to him, as he saw them in his father's purposes and decrees; and as they are clothed in his righteousness, and washed in his blood; and as they are adorned with the graces of his spirit; and as they will be as a bride adorned for him in the New-Jerusalem state, for rather persons than places are here meant: though as the bounds of the saints' habitations are set, and they are known to Christ, so they were pleasant to him, and he took delight and rejoiced in the very spots of ground where he knew they would dwell, Prov. viii. 31. and the word *places* is supplied by Aben Ezra and Kimchi: but the former sense seems best, and agrees with what follows. *Yea, I have a goodly heritage:* so the Lord's people are called, 1 Pet. v. 3. these are Christ's heritage, his peculiar treasure, his jewels, with whom he is greatly delighted and well pleased; more than men are with their gold and silver, houses and land, and their greatest wealth and substance: these persons are the inheritance with which he is contented and fully satisfied.

Ver. 7. *I will bless the Lord*, &c.] As prayer, so thanksgiving belongs to Christ, as man and Mediator; see Matt. xi. 25, 26. John xi. 42. and here he determines to praise the Lord, and give thanks to him for counsel and instruction: *who hath given me counsel;* for though he himself is the Counsellor, with respect to his people, yet as man he received counsel from God, and the spirit of counsel rested on him, Isa. xi. 2. and fitted him for and directed him in the execution of his prophetic office; for the doctrine he taught was not his own, but his father's; and he said nothing of himself but what his father taught him, and instructed him to speak, John vii. 16. and viii. 28. and xii. 49, 50. And he also gave him counsel about the execution of his priestly office, or about his sufferings and death, and drinking of the cup, which he, with submission to the divine will, desired might pass from him; but having advice in this matter, most cheerfully and courageously yielded to take it, see Matt. xxvi. 39, 42, 44, 46, 50, 53, 54. *My reins also instruct me in the night-seasons:* when engaged in prayer to God, in which he sometimes continued a whole night together, Luke vi. 12. and xxi. 37. and especially in that dark and dismal night in which he was betrayed, when it was the hour and power of darkness with his enemies; then, his inward parts being influenced by the spirit of wisdom and counsel, directed him how to behave and conduct himself. Or *the reins* being the seat of the affections, and being put for them, may signify, that his strong affection for God, and love to his people, put him upon and moved him to take the steps he did, to deliver up himself into the hands of sinful men, in order to suffer and die for his friends, and obtain eternal salvation for them.

Ver. 8. *I have set the Lord always before me*, &c.] Not his fear only, or the book of the law, as Jarchi interprets it, but the Lord himself; or, *I foresaw the Lord always before my face*, Acts ii. 26. as Christ is set before men in the Gospel, to look unto as the object of faith and hope, to trust in and depend upon for life and salvation; so Jehovah the Father is the object which Christ set before him, and looked unto in the whole course of his life here on earth; he had always an eye to his glory, as the ultimate end of all his actions; and to his will, his orders, and commands, as the rule of them; and to his purposes, and counsel, and covenant, to accomplish them; and to his power, truth, and faithfulnes, to assist, support, and encourage him in all his difficulties and most distressed circumstances. *Because* he is *at my right hand;* to counsel and instruct, to help, protect, and defend: the phrase is expressive of the nearness of God to Christ, his presence with him, and readiness to assist and stand by him against all his enemies; see Psal. cix. 31. and cx. 5. and cxxi. 5. so the Targum paraphrases it, *because his Shechinah rests upon me. I shall not be moved;* as he was not from his place and nation, from the duty of his office, and the execution of it, by all the threats and menaces of men; nor from the fear, worship, and service of God, by all the temptations of Satan; nor from the cause of his people he had espoused, by all the terrors of death, the flaming sword of justice, and the wrath of God; but, in the midst and view of all, stood unshaken and unmoved; see Isa. xlii. 4. and l. 5—9.

Ver. 9. *Therefore my heart is glad*, &c.] Because he had the Lord always in view; he was at his right hand, for his support and assistance, as well as because of what is expressed in the next verses: this is the same with rejoicing in spirit, Luke x. 21. it denotes an inward joy, and fulness of it, because of the Lord's presence with him; see Acts ii. 28. *And my glory rejoiceth;* meaning either his soul, which is the most glorious and noble part of man, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech interpret it; or rather his tongue, as in Acts ii. 26. the faculty of speaking in man being what gives him a superior glory and excellency to other creatures, and is that whereby he glorifies God; and so the word is often used in this book; see Psal. xxx. 12. and lvii. 8. and cviii. 1. and here the phrase designs Christ's glorifying God, and singing his praise with joyful lips, among his disciples, a little before his sufferings and death. *My flesh also shall rest in hope;* in the grave, which, as it is a resting-place to the members of Christ, from all their sorrow, toil, and labour here; so it was to Christ their head, who rested in it on the Jewish sabbath, that day of rest, and that both *in safety*[t], as the word used may signify, and in hope of his resurrection from the dead, as follows.

Ver. 10. *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, &c.] Meaning, not in the place of the damned, where Christ never went, nor was; for at his death his soul was committed to his father, and was the same day in paradise: but rather, *sheol* here, as *hades* in the New Testament, signifies the state of the dead, the separate state of souls after death, the invisible world of souls, where Christ's soul was; though it was not left there, nor did it continue, but on the third day returned to its body again; though it seems best of all to interpret it of the grave, as the word is rendered in Gen. xlii. 38. Isa. xxxviii. 18. and then by *his soul*

[t] לבטח in tuto, Tigurine version; secure, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; in confidence, Ainsworth.

must be meant, not the more noble part of his human nature, the soul, in distinction from the body; for as it died not, but went to God, it was not laid in the grave; but either he himself, in which sense the word *soul* is sometimes used, even for a man's self, Psal. iii. 2. and xi. 1. For it might be truly said of him, God's holy One, that he was laid in the grave, though not left there; or rather his dead body, for so the word *nephesh* is rendered in Numb. ix. 6, 10. and xix. 11, 13. so *anima* is used in Latin authors[s]: this was laid in the grave; for Joseph having begged it of Pilate, took it down from the cross, and laid it in his own new tomb; though it was the will of God it should not be left there, but be raised from the dead, as it was on the third day, before it was corrupted, as follows: *neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption*; that is, to lie so long in the grave as to putrefy and be corrupted; wherefore he was raised from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures, before the time bodies begin to be corrupted; see John xi. 39. and this was owing not to the care of Joseph or Nicodemus, in providing spices to preserve it, but of God who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; and who would not suffer his body to be corrupted, because he was holy, and because he was his holy One; that so as there was no moral corruption in him, there should be no natural corruption in him; so the Jewish Midrash[w] interprets it, that "no worm "or maggot should have power over him;" which is not true of David, nor of any but the Messiah. This character of *holy One* eminently belongs to Christ above angels and men, yea, it is often used of the divine Being, and it agrees with Christ in his divine nature, and is true of him as man; he is the holy thing, the holy child Jesus; his nature is pure and spotless, free from the taint of original sin; his life and conversation were holy and harmless, he did no sin, nor knew any, nor could any be found in him by men or devils; his doctrines were holy, and tended to promote holiness of life; all his works are holy, and such is the work of redemption, which is wrought out in consistence with and to the glory of the holiness and righteousness of God; Christ is holy in all his offices, and is the fountain of holiness to his people; and he is God's holy One, he has property in him as his Son, and as Mediator, and even as an holy One; for he was sanctified and sent into the world by him, being anointed with the holy oil of his spirit without measure. The word may be rendered, a *merciful*[x] or *liberal* and *beneficent one*; for Christ is all this; he is a merciful as well as a faithful high-priest, and he generously distributes grace and glory to his people.

Ver. 11. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life*, &c.] Not the way of life and salvation for lost sinners, which is Christ himself; but the resurrection of the dead, which is a passing from death to life; and was shewn to Christ, not doctrinally, or by illuminating his mind, and leading him into the doctrine of it, for so he himself has brought it to light by the Gospel; but practically and experimentally, by raising him from the dead, or by causing him to pass from death to life; and he was the first to whom the path of life was shewn in this sense, or the first who ever trod in it, and so has led the way for others: hence he is called the first fruits of them that slept, the first-born and first-begotten from the dead; for though others were raised before, yet not to an immortal life, never to die more, as he was; now the view, the faith, and hope of this, of not being left in the grave so long as to see corruption, and of being raised from the dead to an immortal life, caused joy and gladness in Christ, at the time of his sufferings and death, as well as what follows. *In thy presence is fulness of joy*: Christ, being raised from the dead, ascended to heaven, and was received up into glory, into his father's presence, and is glorified with his own self, with his glorious presence, for which he prayed, John xvii. 5. and which fills his human nature with fulness of joy, with a joy unspeakable and full of glory; see Acts ii. 28. and as it is with the head it will be with the members in some measure; now the presence of God puts more joy and gladness into them than any thing else can do; but as yet their joy is not full, but it will be when they shall enter into the joy of their Lord, into the presence of God in the other world, then everlasting joy will be upon their heads. *At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*; Christ being entered into heaven is set down at the right hand of God in human nature, an honour which is not conferred on any of the angels, Heb. i. 13. where the man Christ Jesus is infinitely delighted with the presence of God, the never-fading joys of heaven, the company of angels and glorified saints; here he sits and sees of the travail of his soul; he prolongs his days and sees his seed, souls called by grace, and brought to glory one after another, until they are all brought in, in whom is all his delight; and which was the joy set before him at the time of his sufferings and death: or the words may be rendered, *in thy right hand are pleasant things for ever*[y], and may design those gifts and graces, which Christ, being exalted at the right hand of God, rec..ived from thence and gives to men, for the use and service of his church and people, in the several successive ages of time; and so Aben Ezra takes the words to be an allusion to a man's giving pleasant gifts to his friend with his right hand.

[s] —animamque sepulchro condimus— Virgil. Æneid. 3. v. 67.
[w] Apud Kimchi in v. 9.
[x] חסידך misericordem tuum, Pagnians, Montanus; beneficus tuus, Piscator.
[y] נעימות בימינך נצח amœnorum quæ sunt in dextera tua perpetuo, Cocceius; delectationes in dextera tua usque in seculum, Musculus.

PSALM XVII.

A Prayer of David.

THIS prayer was put up by David either in his own person, on his own account, praying to God for the vindication of his cause, and for salvation and deliverance from his enemies; or in the person of the Messiah, whose type he was, and of the whole church, so Jerom of old interpreted it; and the title of it in the Arabic version is, "a prayer in the person of a "perfect man, and of Christ himself, and of every "one that is redeemed by him;" in which preservation and protection are prayed for, and hope of eternal life is expressed. It was written, according to Theodoret, when David suffered persecution from Saul.

Ver. 1. *Hear the right, O Lord*, &c.] The psalmist appeals to the Lord as a Judge, sitting on the throne judging right, that he would hear his cause litigated between him and his adversaries, determine and give the decisive sentence about it; so Christ committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, 1 Pet. ii. 23. for by *right* may be meant his right and cause, or his righteous cause, as in Psal. ix. 4. unless rather his righteous prayer should be intended, so the Targum paraphrases it, *my prayer in righteousness;* not presented for the sake of his own righteousness, but on account of the righteousness of Christ, and for the vindication of his righteous cause before men: the Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions, render it *my righteousness*, meaning his righteous cause; but rather the word may be rendered *righteousness* *, or the *righteous one*, and may design the psalmist himself, who was a righteous person, and such the Lord hears; or Christ, whose name is the Lord our righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. and who, as an advocate or intercessor for himself and for his people, is Jesus Christ the righteous, 1 John ii. 1. The Septuagint version takes it to be an epithet of the Lord himself, translating it, *O Lord of my righteousness*, as in Psal. iv. 1. and so the Syriac version, *hear, O holy Lord:* and in this manner does Christ address his father in prayer, John xvii. 11, 25. and the consideration of the holiness and righteousness of God is of use in prayer to glorify God, and to command a proper awe and reverence of him. *Attend unto my cry;* the word for *cry* signifies both a noise made in a way of joy and grief; wherefore the Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *attend to my praise*, or hymn of praise, and which arises from sorrow and distress; and intends not mental prayer attended with groanings which cannot be uttered, but vocal prayer expressed in a loud and mournful manner, signifying the distress the person is in, and his earnestness and importunacy for help; and of this sort were some of Christ's prayers; see Heb. v. 7. *Give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips:* hypocritical and deceitful ones; but this went forth from his heart, which was lifted up with his hands to God, to whom he drew nigh with a true heart, and called upon him in the sincerity and uprightness of his soul; and of this sort were all Christ's prayers, in whose mouth there is no guile: the various expressions, *hear, attend, give ear*, which signify the same thing, shew the distress the supplicant was in, the fervency of his prayer, and his vehement and earnest desire to be heard and answered immediately; and since the accent *athnach* is upon the word תפלתי, *my prayer*, this last clause is not to be joined only to that, but refers to all that is said before; as that his *right* and his *cry*, as well as his prayer, were unfeigned.

Ver. 2. *Let my sentence come forth from thy presence*, &c.] Not of condemnation, such as came forth from God and passed on Adam and all his posterity, Rom. v. 12, 18. though such an one was executed on Christ, as he was the surety and representative of his people; but of justification, which came forth from God and passed on Christ, when he rose from the dead, and upon his people in him, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Rom. iv. 25. Here it chiefly designs the vindication of the innocence of the psalmist before men; and his request is, that as he was fully persuaded that he was clear of the things he was charged with in the sight of God, that he would openly and publicly make him appear so before men; that he would bring forth his righteousness as the light, and his judgment as the noon-day, Psal. xxxvii. 6. and of which he made no doubt but he would: so Christ, though he was traduced by men, knew he should be justified by his father, and by his children, Isa. l. 8. Matt. xi. 19. *Let thine eyes behold the things that are equal:* which is not to be understood barely of the eyes of his omniscience; for these behold things both equal and unequal, good and evil, things which agree and disagree with the law of God, the rule of righteousness and equity; but of his approbation of them, and that he would some way or other testify that approbation; for the petition intends the favouring of his just and equal cause, and making it to appear to be so.

Ver. 3. *Thou hast proved mine heart*, &c.] This properly belongs to God, who is the searcher of the heart and reins, and is desired by all good men; and though God has no need to make use of any means to know the heart, and what is in it; yet in order to know, or rather to make known, what is in the hearts of his people, he proves them sometimes by adversity, as he did Abraham and Job, and sometimes by prosperity, by mercies given forth in a wonderful way, as to the Israelites in the wilderness, Deut. viii. 2, 16. sometimes by suffering false prophets and false teachers to be among them, Deut. xiii. 3. and sometimes by leaving corruptions in them, and them to their corruptions, as he left the Canaanites in the land, and as he left Hezekiah to his own heart, Judg. ii. 22. and iii. 1. 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. In one or other or more of

* צדק justitiam, Vatablus, Cocceius, Gejerus; τὸ δίκαιον, Aquila in Drusius; justitiam, i. e. me qui sum justus, Piscator.

these ways God proved the heart of David, and found him to be a man after his own heart; and in the first of these ways he proved Christ, who was found faithful to him that appointed him, and was a man approved of God. *Thou hast visited me in the night;* God visited and redeemed his people in the night of Jewish darkness; he visits and calls them by his grace in the night of unregeneracy, and so he visits with his gracious presence in the night of desertion; and he often visits by granting counsel, comfort, and support, in the night of affliction, which seems to be intended here; thus he visited the human nature of Christ in the midst of his sorrows and sufferings, when it was the Jews' hour and power of darkness. Elsewhere God is said to visit every morning, Job vii. 18. *Thou hast tried me;* as silver and gold are tried in the furnace; thus the people of God, and their graces in them, are tried by afflictions; so David was tried, and in this manner Christ himself was tried; wherefore he is called the tried stone, Isa. xxviii. 16. And *shalt find nothing;* or *shalt not find;* which is variously supplied; some *thy desire,* or what is well-pleasing to thee, so Jarchi; or *thou hast not found me innocent,* as Kimchi; others supply it quite the reverse, *and iniquity is not found in me,* as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions; or *thou hast not found iniquity in me,* as the Syriac and Arabic versions; to which agrees the Chaldee paraphrase, *and thou hast not found corruption;* which must be understood, not as if there was no sin and corruption in David; for he often makes loud complaints and large confessions of his sins, and earnestly prays for the forgiveness of them; but either that there was no sin in his heart which he regarded, Psal. lxvi. 18. which he nourished and cherished, which he indulged and lived in; or rather there was no such crime found in him, which his enemies charged him with; see Psal. vii. 3, 4. This is true of Christ in the fullest sense; no iniquity was ever found in him by God, by men or devils, John xiv. 30. 1 Pet. ii. 22. and also of his people, as considered in him, being justified by his righteousness, and washed in his blood, Jer. l. 20. though otherwise, as considered in themselves, they themselves find sin and corruption abounding in them, Rom. vii. 18, 21. *I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress;* by murmuring against God, on account of his visitation and fiery trials, or by railing at men for their false charges and accusations; this resolution was taken up by the psalmist in the strength of divine grace, and was kept by him, Psal. xxxix. 9. so Christ submitted himself patiently to the will of God without repining, and when reviled by men reviled not again, Luke xxii. 42. 1 Pet. ii. 23. and from hence may be learned, that the laws of God may be transgressed by words as well as by works, and that the one as well as the other should be guarded against; see Psal. xxxix. 1.

Ver. 4. *Concerning the works of men, &c.*] Of wicked men, as to what respects and concerns them, or in the midst of them; in the midst of a wicked generation of men, and their filthy conversation; who appear to be so, *by the word of thy lips;* the law of God, the Scriptures of truth, the rule and standard of faith and practice, which shew what works are good and what are not; by the use, help, and benefit of this; *I have kept* me from *the paths of the destroyer;* such is the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning; antichrist, whose name is Abaddon and Apollyon, both which signify a destroyer; false teachers, and all wicked men: the *paths* of such are their wicked principles and practices, their damnable errors and heresies, their sins and lusts, which make up the broad road that leads to destruction: these the psalmist *kept* or *observed* *, for the words *me* and *from* are not in the original text; and the sense is, that he took notice of them, and avoided them, and, as a faithful prince and magistrate, forbad his subjects walking in them, and restrained them from them, making the word of God the rule of his conduct.

Ver. 5. *Hold up my goings in thy paths, &c.*] Which being spoken by David in his own person, and for himself, shews that he was conscious of his own weakness to keep himself in the ways of God, and to direct his steps therein; and that he was sensible of the need he stood in of divine power to uphold and support him in them. That *my footsteps slip not;* out of the paths of truth and duty, of faith and holiness; of which there is danger, should a man be left to himself, and destitute of divine direction and aid; see Psal. lxxiii. 2. Jer. x. 23. and though Christ had no moral weakness in him, and was in no danger of falling into sin, or slipping out of the ways of God; yet these words may be applied to him in a good sense, as considered in human nature, and attended with the sinless infirmities of it, he being God's servant, whom he upheld, and of whom he gave his angels charge to keep him in all his ways, Isa. xlii. 1. Psal. xci. 11.

Ver. 6. *I have called upon thee, &c.*] In prayer. This had been the constant practice of the psalmist, and he still continued in it. *For thou wilt hear me, O God;* God is a God hearing prayer; he is used to hear his people, and they have frequent experience of it, and they may be assured that whatsoever they ask according to his will, and in the name of Christ, he will hear; and such an assurance is a reason engaging the saints to a constant calling upon God, Psal. cxvi. 2. and such confidence of being always heard Christ had, John xi. 41, 42. *Incline thine ear unto me,* and *hear my speech;* meaning his prayer, which he now directed to him in full assurance of being heard, and is as follows.

Ver. 7. *Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, &c.*] Such is the loving-kindness of God to his people in Christ; which is sovereign, free, special, distinguishing, everlasting, and unchangeable; it is better than life, and passes knowledge; and which is set upon men and not angels, some and not all, and these many of them the worst and vilest of men, and all of them by nature children of wrath as others; and which has appeared in choosing them in Christ, putting them into his hand, and making a covenant with him for them; in sending him into the world to suffer and die for them; in regenerating, adopting, justifying, pardoning, and saving them with an everlasting salvation: all which is marvellous in their eyes, and will be the

* שמרתי custodivi, Pagninus, Montanus; observavi, Musculus, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus; so Ainsworth; vel prohibui, Mals.

wonder of men and angels to all eternity: this sometimes is hidden from the objects of it, as it might be from the psalmist, and therefore he desires a manifestation of it to him; or else his sense is, that God would shew to others in what a marvellous manner he loved him, by the help, deliverance, and salvation he would give him. Such a petition will agree with Christ, see Psal. xl. 10, 11. Some render the words[b], *separate thy loving-kindness*, or cause it to pass *from them that rise up on* or *against thy right hand*: but these were never the objects of it; and there is no separation of them from it, nor of that from them who are interested in it, Rom. viii. 38, 39. much better may it be rendered, *separate or distinguish thy loving-kindness*[c]; that is, let it appear that I have special interest in thy loving-kindness, distinct from others; distinguish me by thy loving-kindness, remember me with that which thou bearest to a peculiar people, Psal. cvi. 4. *O thou that savest by thy right hand*; either by his power, or by the man of his right hand, his own son. *Them which put their trust* in thee; not in men, not in an arm of flesh, not in themselves, in their own power, wisdom, riches, and righteousness; but in the Lord their God, who is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe, 1 Tim. iv. 10. for these he saves both in a temporal and in a spiritual manner. *From those that rise up* against them; from all their spiritual enemies, sin and Satan; and from all outward ones, from the men of the world, oppressors and violent persecutors, who are afterwards described: the phrase, *by thy right hand*, is by some, as Aben Ezra, connected with the word *trust*, and rendered, *them which trust in thy right hand*[d]; either in the grace, mercy, and favour of God, dispensed by his right hand; or in his strength, and the mighty power of his arm; and by others it is joined to the last clause, and so it stands in the original text, and rendered, *from those that rise up against thy right hand*[e]; and so the words describe such persons who in a bold and presumptuous manner set themselves against God, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty; who resist his counsel and will, oppose themselves to the Lord and his Anointed, the man of his right hand, made strong for himself; and to his saints, who are as dear to him as his right hand, and who are preserved by him in the hollow of his hand.

Ver. 8. *Keep me as the apple of the eye*, &c.] Which is weak and tender, and is hurt and put to pain, and made uneasy by every little thing that annoys it, and than which nothing is more dear to a man, or he is more careful of preserving from being hurt; and fitly represents the weak estate and condition of God's people, his affection for them, and tender care of them; who as he has provided tunics for the eye, and guarded it with eyebrows, so he has taken care for the safety of his dear children, Deut. xxxii. 10. Zech. ii. 8. *Hide me under the shadow of thy wings*; alluding either to the wings of the cherubim over the mercy-seat, where God granted his presence; so the Targum paraphrases it, " under the shadow of thy Shechinah hide " me;" or to birds, who cover their young ones with their wings to save them from birds of prey; see Psal. xci. 1, 4. Isa. xxx. 5. Matt. xxiii. 37. From such passages perhaps the Heathens had their notion of representing their gods with wings[f].

Ver. 9. *From the wicked that oppress me*, &c.] Or *waste* or *destroy*[g]; as wild beasts do a field or vineyard when they get into it; and such havoc do persecutors and false teachers make of the church and people of God, when they are suffered to get in among them, Psal. lxxx. 13. Acts xx. 29. wherefore from such wicked and unreasonable men protection is desired, 2 Thess. iii. 2. From *my deadly enemies*; enemies against his soul or life, who sought to take it away, nothing would satisfy them but this. *Who compass me about*: on all sides, in order to obtain their desire; such were the enemies of Christ, and so they are described, Psal. xxii. 12, 13, 16.

Ver. 10. *They are enclosed in their own fat*, &c.] Or *their fat has enclosed them*: either their eyes, that they can hardly see out of them, or their hearts, so that they are stupid and senseless, and devoid of the fear of God; the phrase is expressive of the multitude of their wealth and increase of power, by which they were swelled with pride and vanity, and neither feared God nor regarded man; so the Targum paraphrases it, " their riches are multiplied, their fat covers them;" see Deut. xxxii. 15. Psal. lxxiii. 8, 9. some read it, *their fat shuts their mouths*, so Aben Ezra and Kimchi; or *with their fat they shut them*[h]; but the accent *athnach* will not admit of this reading; the last word belongs to the next clause. *With their mouth they speak proudly*; against God and his people, belching out blasphemies against the one, and severe menaces and threatenings against the other.

Ver. 11. *They have now compassed us in our steps*, &c.] The sense is, they could not stir a step but they were at their heels, surrounding them on every side. This was true of David, when he was pursued by Saul, and followed by him to Keilah and the wilderness of Maon, 1 Sam. xxiii. 8, 26. according to the Cetib, or textual writing, it should be rendered, *they have compassed me*: but, according to the Keri, or marginal reading, and the points, it is as we have translated it, and which is followed by the Targum, and both are right, and design David as a principal person, and those that were with him, who were encompassed by Saul and his men. This also was verified in Christ, when Judas followed him into the garden with a band of men to betray him, and when he was enclosed by wicked men as he went to the cross, and hung upon it, John xviii. 2, 3. Psal. xxii. 12, 16. and may likewise be accommodated to the case of all the saints, who are troubled on every side, are beset with the corruptions of their hearts, the temptations of Satan, and the reproaches and persecutions of the men of the world, 2 Cor. iv. 8.

[b] Kimchi & Ben Melech.

[c] הפלה separa, Junius & Tremellius; segrega, Montanus; so some in Vatablus; see Ainsworth.

[d] בימינך — חוסים eos qui fidunt in dextera tua, so some in Vatablus, Castalio, Ainsworth; recipientes se ad dexteram suam, Junius & Tremellius.

[e] ממתקוממים בימינך ob insurgentes in dexteram tuam, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; so Michaelis, Gejerus, Muscalus.

[f] Vid. Cuperi Apotheos. Homer. p. 109, &c.

[g] ישדוני qui vastant, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; qui vastaverunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[h] So De Dieu.

and vii. 5. *They have set their eyes bowing down to the earth*; which posture either denotes fraudulence and hypocrisy, shewing, by looking only upon the ground, as if they were harmless and inoffensive, and had no ill designs, and took no notice of any thing; which, as it was true of David's enemies, respect to Christ, and of false teachers with respect to the church, Luke xx. 20. Matt. vii. 15. and xxvi. 48, 49. or else inhumanity and contempt, not caring to turn their eyes to look upon them in distress, but kept their eyes fixed upon the earth, so Christ was treated by the Jews, Isa. liii. 3. or rather their being intent upon mischief, their diligence and watchfulness to observe all motions, and take every opportunity *to strike*, or *cast me down to the earth*, as the Arabic and Syriac versions render it; or the sense is, as Kimchi gives it, their eyes are upon our ways, to spread nets for us in the earth to take us.

Ver. 12. *Like as a lion that is greedy of his prey*, &c.] Or *the likeness of him is as a lion*[i]; meaning Saul, as Kimchi interprets it; or every one of them that compassed them about, as Aben Ezra observes; sometimes wicked and persecuting princes are compared to lions, for their strength and cruelty; see Prov. xxviii. 15. 2 Tim. iv. 17. so the devil is called a roaring lion, 1 Pet. v. 8. and the antichristian beast is said to have the mouth of a lion, Rev. xiii. 2. *And as it were a young lion lurking in secret places*; to leap upon its prey, and seize it at once, as it has opportunity; this denotes the secret and insidious method which the enemies of Christ take to do mischief; see Psal. x. 9, 10.

Ver. 13. *Arise, O Lord*, &c.] See Psal. iii. 7. and vii. 6. and ix. 19. and x. 12. *disappoint him*, or *prevent his face*[k]; be before-hand with him, and so disappoint him, when he is about to seize his prey; who is comparable to the lion, or to the young lion; meaning the chief of his enemies, it may be Saul. *Cast him down*; every one of them that set themselves to cast down others to the earth. Jarchi's note is, "cut off his feet," that he may bow down and fall. *Deliver my soul from the wicked*, which is *thy sword*; so Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, render the words; that is, from wicked men, whom God makes use of as instruments to afflict and chastise his people: so the Assyrian monarch is called the *rod* of his anger, with whom he scourged his people Israel, Isa. x. 5. Compare with this Psal. xxii. 20. The words are rendered by some, *deliver my soul from the wicked by thy sword*[l]; meaning not the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, by which Christ was delivered from the wicked one, when tempted by him in the wilderness; but the avenging justice of God, the sword of the Lord, which, being whetted and taken hold on, and used by him, brings vengeance on his enemies, and salvation to his people; see Deut. xxxii. 41. Isa. xxvii. 1. Jer. xlvii. 6, 7. The Targum paraphrases the clause thus, "deliver my soul "from the wicked, who deserves to be slain by thy "sword."

Ver. 14. *From men* which are *thy hand, O Lord*, &c.] Some understand these words, with what follows, as independent of the former, and of another set "righteous who deliver their souls for thy sake, O "Lord, unto death in the earth, their portion is in eter- "nal life;" so Jarchi gives the like sense of them: but the words are to be connected with the preceding, as they are by Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; and the sense is, deliver my soul from men, which are instruments in thine hand to chastise thy people: so even Satan himself, and the Sabeans and Chaldeans, whom he instigated to afflict Job, are called the *hand* of the Lord that touched him, because he suffered them to do what they did for the trial of him, Job xix. 21. The words may be rendered, *the men of thy hand*[m]; who are raised up by thine hand to the power and dignity they have; and who can easily be pulled down by it; and who are in thine hand, and at thy beck and control, and whose wrath and fury thou canst restrain. Or they may be rendered, *from men by thy hand*[n]; that is, deliver me from them by thy strong hand and mighty power; as Israel of old was delivered from the Egyptians by the strong and mighty hand of God. *From men of the world*; who are, as they were when they came into the world, in sin, in darkness, and in a carnal and unregenerate state; who are not only in the world, but of it, and belong to it, and to it only; and are under the influence of the god of the world, and are taken with the lusts and pleasures of it, and live in them and serve them: and are of worldly spirits, inordinately love the things of the world, mind earth and earthly things, and are unconcerned about the things of another world; see Luke xvi. 8. Which have *their portion in this life*; and in this only; have a large share of the good things of this life; and which is all their portion, Luke xvi. 25. *And whose belly thou fillest with thy hid* treasure: earthly treasure, as gold and silver, which is called *hid* treasure, because it is first hid in the bowels of the earth, out of which it is dug, and afterwards hid in the coffers of worldly men; and oftentimes kept to the hurt of the owners of it. Or the phrase may denote the value and preciousness of it. And to have the belly filled with this is to have a very great affluence and plenty of it; though it is very rare, let it be ever so large, that men are fully satisfied with it. *They are full of children*; which among the eastern nations was reckoned a considerable part of outward prosperity and happiness; see Job xxi. 7, 8, 11. Psal. cxxvii. 3, 4, 5, or their *children are full*, or *filled*[o] with hidden treasure also. *And leave the rest of their substance to their babes*; their children's children; their grandchildren, as Kimchi explains it; and which is said, not by way of complaint, as an evil in them, since it is lawful and

[i] דמינו כאריה similitudo ejus, vel cujusque est tanquam leonis, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius; so Musculus, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[k] קדמה פניו praeveni faciem ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Musculus, Gejerus; anticipa faciem ejus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[l] מרשע חרבך gladio tuo ab improbis, Junius & Tremellius; Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

[m] ממתים ידך ab inimicis manus tuæ, V. L. so Sept. a viris manus tuæ, Lutherus, Musculus.

[n] Manu tua, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus.

[o] ישבעו בנים saturantur vel satiantur filii, Munster, Muis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus; so Targ. Ar. Ainsworth.

right for parents to lay up for their children, and leave it to them: unless the sense is, that they engross all to themselves, and to their posterity, in life and death; whilst they live, they indulge their sensual appetites and lusts, and fill themselves and theirs, but give thing for the interest of God and true religion; and when they die leave nothing for such use and service, but all to their posterity: but rather the phrase is expressive of their great plenty; that having lived in and enjoyed great fulness themselves, and given large portions to their children, yet have much left; which, at death, they bequeath to the young generation. Now from such men in power and dignity, and from being hurt by them, as well as from communion and conversation with them, the psalmist desires to be delivered; and expresses his satisfaction in other and better things than they enjoy, in the following words.

Ver. 15. *As for me, &c.*] I do not desire to be in their place and stead, with all their plenty and prosperity; I am content with my present condition and situation: for *I will*, or *shall behold thy face in righteousness*; that is, appear before God in public worship, where was the ark, the symbol of the face of God; enjoy his gracious presence, have the discoveries of his love, and see his face and favour; than which nothing was more desirable by him and delightful to him. Or God himself may be meant by *his face*; and especially God as he is to be beheld in the face of Christ, the Angel of his presence; and who is to be beheld by faith in the present state of things, though as through a glass, darkly; and in the future state perfectly, and as he *is*, both with the eyes of the understanding, and, after the resurrection, with the eyes of the body; see Job xix. 26, 27. and to this state the psalmist seems more especially to have respect, as Jarchi interprets it: and the beatific vision of God in Christ will be very glorious and exceeding delightful; it will be assimilating and appropriating; it will be free from all darkness and interruption, and will continue for ever. And this shall be seen *in righteousness*; the psalmist believing that he should then appear as an innocent person, clear of all the false charges brought against him; and so this may be understood of the righteousness of his cause, in which he should stand before God, and enjoy communion with him: or this may design that perfect holiness and purity of heart, without which no man shall in the other state be without spot or blemish; or rather, the righteousness of Christ, which fits believers for, and in which they are brought into and stand in, the King's presence. *I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness*; which will be in the resurrection-morn: or, as Jarchi expresses it, when the dead shall awake from their sleep; for this is not to be understood of awaking from natural sleep in the morning; when it is a satisfaction to a believer to be with God, and to have God with him, Psal. cxxxix. 18. nor of awaking from a sleepy drowsy frame of spirit, which sometimes attends the saints; but of rising from the dead: for as death is oftentimes expressed by sleep in Scripture, so the resurrection by an awaking out of it, Isa. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2. at which time the saints will arise with the image of the heavenly One upon them: they will be like to Christ both in soul and body; in soul, in perfect knowledge and complete holiness: in body, in incorruption and immortality, in power, glory, and spirituality; in this will lie their happiness and satisfaction. Or the meaning is, that he should be satisfied with the likeness of God, with Christ the image of God, when he should arise from the dead; seeing he should then appear with him in glory, see him as he is, and be like him, and be for ever in his presence; which will yield endless pleasure and unspeakable satisfaction. For the words may be interpreted, not of David's awaking, but of the glory of God awaking or appearing; which would afford an infinitely greater satisfaction than worldly men have in worldly things[*], to which this is opposed, ver. 10. so the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions read, I shall be satisfied when thy glory appears, or is seen; and so the Ethiopic and Arabic versions.

PSALM XVIII.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

THIS is the same with that in 2 Sam. xxii. with some variations, omissions, and alterations: *the servant of the Lord*; not only by creation, nor merely by regeneration, but by office, as king of Israel, being put into it by the Lord, and acting in it in submission and obedience to him; just as the apostles under the New Testament, on account of their office, so style themselves in their epistles: *who spake unto the Lord the words of this song*; that is, who delivered and sung this song in so many express words, in public, before all the congregation of Israel, to the honour and glory of God: *in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.* Not that this psalm was composed and sung the selfsame day that David was delivered from Saul, and set upon the throne; for it seems to have been written in his old age, at the close of his days; for immediately after it, in the second book of Samuel, it follows, *now these be the last words of David*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. but the sense is, that whereas David had many enemies, and particularly Saul, who was his greatest enemy, the Lord delivered him from them all, and especially from him, from him first, and then from all the rest: which when he reflected upon in his last days, he sat down and wrote this psalm, and then sung it in public, having delivered it into the hands of the chief musician for that purpose. There are two passages cited out of it in the New Testament, and applied to Christ; ver. 2,

* Vid. Castel. Lexic. Heptaglott. col. 2014.

in Heb. ii. 13. and ver. 49. in Rom. xv. 9. and there are many things in it that very well agree with him; he is eminently the *servant* of the Lord as Mediator; he was encompassed with the snares and sorrows of death and hell, and with the floods of ungodly men, when in the garden and on the cross. God was his helper and deliverer, as man; and he was victorious over all enemies, sin, Satan, the world, death and hell; as the subject of this psalm is all along represented: and to Christ it does most properly belong to be the head of the Heathen, whose voluntary subjects the Gentiles are said to be, ver. 43, 44. and which is expressed in much the same language as the like things are in Isa. lv. 4, 5. which is a clear and undoubted prophecy of the Messiah; to which may be added, that the Lord's Anointed, the King Messiah, and who is also called David, is expressly mentioned in ver. 50. and which is applied to the Messiah by the Jews[t], as the thirty-second verse is paraphrased of him by the Targum on it. *And he said;* the following words:

Ver. 1. *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.*] These words are not in 2 Sam. xxii. the psalm there begins with the following verse. The psalmist here expresses his love to the Lord, and his continuance in it; that Jehovah the Father was, is, and ever will be the object of Christ's love, is certain; and which has appeared by his readiness in the council and covenant of grace to do his will; by his coming down from heaven to earth for that purpose; by his delight in it, it being his meat and drink to do it; and by his sufferings and death, which were in compliance with, and obedience to it, John xiv. 31. and as in David, so in all regenerate ones, there is love to God; Jehovah is loved by them in all his persons; Jehovah the Father is loved, and to be loved, for the perfections of his nature, because of the works of his hands, of creation and providence; and particularly because of his works of special grace and goodness, and especially because of his love wherewith he has loved his people, 1 John iv. 19. Jehovah the Son is loved, and to be loved, above all creatures and things whatever, sincerely and heartily, fervently and constantly; because of the loveliness of his person, the love of his heart, and his works of grace and redemption; all of him is lovely; and he is to be loved, and is loved, in his person, offices, relations, people, word, and ordinances: Jehovah the Spirit is loved, and to be loved, because of his person and perfections, and operations of grace; as a sanctifier, comforter, the spirit of adoption, the earnest and pledge of eternal glory. The word here used signifies the most intimate, tender, and affectionate love; it often designs mercy and bowels of mercy; so Aben Ezra interprets it of seeking mercy of God: the reasons are as follow in this and the next verse: because *the Lord is my strength;* so he was to Christ as man, who as such was the man of his right hand, the son of man, whom he made strong for himself, to do his work, and for his glory, Psal. lxxx. 17. he promised to strengthen him, and he did, Psal. lxxxix. 21. Isa. xlii. 1. 1. and xlix. 8. and so he is the strength of all his saints, even Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; he is the strength of their hearts both in life and at death; he is the strength of their graces, who strengthens that which he has wrought for them, and in them; he strengthens them to do their duty, to bear the cross, and every affliction, and against every enemy of their souls; and this renders him very lovely and amiable to them.

Ver. 2. *The Lord is my rock,* &c.] To whom the saints have recourse for shelter and safety, for supply, support, and divine refreshment; and in whom they are secure, and on whom they build their hopes of eternal life and happiness, and so are safe from all enemies, and from all danger. Christ is called a Rock on all these accounts, Psal. lxi. 2, 3. Isa. xxxii. 2. and xxxiii. 16. Matt. xvi. 18. 1 Cor. x. 4. *And my fortress;* or garrison; so the saints are kept in and by the power of God as in a garrison, 1 Pet. i. 5. *And my deliverer;* out of all afflictions, and from all temptations, and out of the hands of all enemies; from a body of sin and death at last, and from wrath to come. *My God;* the strong and mighty One, who is able to save, and who is the covenant God and Father of his people. *My strength, in whom I will trust;* as Christ did, and to whom these words are applied in Heb. ii. 13. and as his people are enabled to do even under very distressing and discouraging circumstances, Job. xiii. 15. Isa. xxvi. 4. *My buckler;* or *shield;* who protects and defends them from their enemies, and preserves them from the fiery darts of Satan. *And the horn of my salvation;* who pushes, scatters, and destroys their enemies, and saves them; a metaphor taken from horned beasts; so Christ, the mighty and able Saviour, is called, Luke i. 69. And *my high tower;* such is the name of the Lord, whither the righteous run and are safe, Prov. xviii. 10. and where they are above and out of the reach of every enemy; see Isa. xxxiii. 16. In 2 Sam. xxii. 3. it is added, *and my refuge, my Saviour, thou savest me from violence.* These various epithets shew the fulness of safety in Jehovah, the various ways he has to deliver his people from their enemies, and secure them from danger; and the psalmist beholding and claiming his interest in him under all these characters, rendered him exceeding lovely and delightful to him; and each of them contain a reason why he loved him, and why, in the strength of grace, he determined to love him. God may be regarded in all these characters by Christ as man.

Ver. 3. *I will call upon the Lord,* &c.] In prayer, for fresh mercies, and further appearances of himself, and discoveries of his grace and favour. Who is *worthy to be praised;* for the perfections of his nature, the works of his hands, his providential goodness, and more especially for his covenant-grace and blessings in Christ. The Targum is, "in praise, or with an hymn, "I pray before the Lord;" agreeably to the rule the apostle gives, Phil. iv. 6. and this prayer was a prayer of faith, as follows. *So shall I be saved from mine enemies;* which was founded upon past experience of God's goodness to him in distress, when he called upon him, as the next words shew.

Ver. 4. *The sorrows of death compassed me,* &c.] These words and the following, in this and the next verse, as they respect David, shew the snares that

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[t] Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. & Midrash Tillim in Tzeror Hammor, fol. 47. 3.

were laid for his life, the danger of death he was in, and the anxiety of mind he was possessed of on account of it; and as they refer to Christ, include all the sorrows of his life to the time of his death, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs personally, and bore and carried the sorrows and griefs of all his people; and may chiefly intend his sorrows in the garden, arising from a view of the sins of his people, which he was about to bear upon the cross; and from an apprehension of the wrath of God, and curse of the law, which he was going to sustain for them, when his soul was περιλυπος, encompassed about with sorrow, even unto death, Matt. xxvi. 38. when his sorrow was so great, and lay so heavy upon him, that it almost pressed him down to death, he could scarce live under it; and may also take in the very pains and agonies of death; he dying the death of the cross, which was a very painful and excruciating one; see Psal. xxii. 14—17. The Hebrew word for *sorrows* signifies the pains and birth-throes of a woman in travail; and is here fitly used of the sufferings and death of Christ; through which he brought forth much fruit, or many sons to glory. The Targum is, "distress has encompassed me, as a woman that sits upon the stool, and has no strength to bring forth, and is in danger of dying." In 2 Sam. xxii. 5. it is *the waves* or *breakers of death compassed me*; and the word there used is rendered in Hos. xiii. 13. *the breaking forth of children*; moreover the same word signifies *cords*[r], as well as pains and sorrows; and the allusion may be to malefactors being bound with cords when led to execution, and put to death; and may here signify the power of death, under which the Messiah was held for a while, but was loosed from it at his resurrection; to which sense of the word, and to the words here, the Apostle Peter manifestly refers, Acts ii. 24. *And the floods of ungodly men made me afraid*; meaning either the multitude of them, as Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Roman soldiers, and people of the Jews, who all gathered together against him; so the Targum renders it, *a company of wicked men*; or the variety of sufferings he endured by them; as spitting upon, buffeting, scourging, &c. The word rendered *ungodly men* is *Belial*; and signifies vain, worthless, and unprofitable men; men of no figure or account; or lawless ones, such as have cast off the yoke of the law, are not subject to it; persons very wicked and profligate. The word in the New Testament seems to be used for Satan, 2 Cor. vi. 15. where it is so rendered in the Syriac version, and he may be designed here; and by the floods of Belial may be meant, not so much the temptations of Satan in the wilderness, as his violent and impetuous attacks upon Christ in the garden, when being in an agony or conflict with him, his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood, Luke xxii. 44. The Septuagint render the word, *the torrents of iniquity troubled me*; which was true of Christ, when all the sins of his people came flowing in upon him, like mighty torrents, from all quarters; when God laid on him the iniquity of them all, and he was made sin for them; and in a view of all this *he began to be sore amazed*, Mark. xiv. 33. compare with this Psal. lxix. 1, 2. Arama interprets Belial of the evil imagination in David, who had a war in himself.

Ver. 5. *The sorrows of hell compassed me about, &c.*] Or *the cords of the grave*[s], under the power of which he was detained awhile; the allusion may be to the manner of burying among the Jews, who wound up their dead bodies in linen clothes; so that they were as persons bound hand and foot; and thus were they laid in the grave; see John xi. 44. and so was Christ, till he was raised from the dead, when he shewed himself to have the keys of hell and death, and to be no more under their power, or be held by them. *The snares of death prevented me*; or *met* or *got before me*[t]; the sense is, he was taken in them: this phrase designs the insidious ways and methods which the enemies of Christ took to insnare him, and take away his life, and in which they succeeded; see Matt. xxvi. 4.

Ver. 6. *In my distress I called upon the Lord, &c.*] The great Jehovah, the everlasting I AM, who is the most High in all the earth, and who is able to save, Heb. v. 7. *And cried unto my God*; as Jesus did, Matt. xxvii. 46. so the members of Christ, when in distress, as they often are, through sin and Satan, through the hidings of God's face, a variety of afflictions, and the persecutions of men, betake themselves to the Lord, and call upon their God: a time of distress is a time for prayer; and sometimes the end God has in suffering them to be in distress is to bring them to the throne of his grace; and a great privilege it is they have that they have such a throne to come to for grace and mercy to help them in time of need, and such a God to sympathize with them, and help them; and their encouragement to call upon him, and cry unto him, is, that he is Jehovah, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent; who knows their wants, is able to help them, and is a God at hand to do it. *He heard my voice out of his temple*; that is, out of heaven his dwelling-place; for the temple at Jerusalem was not built in David's time; and it may be observed, that the prayer of the psalmist, or whom he represents, was a vocal one, and not merely mental; and hearing it intends a gracious regard unto it, an acceptance of it, and an agreeable answer: for it follows, *and my cry came before him*, even *into his ears*; God did not cover himself with a cloud, that his prayer could not pass through; but it was admitted and received; it came up before him with acceptance; it reached his ears, and even entered into them, and was delightful music to them: see John xi. 41, 42. Heb. 5, 7.

Ver. 7. *Then the earth shook and trembled, &c.*] As it did quickly after Christ called upon the Lord, and cried to his God upon the cross, Matt. xxvii. 50, 51. and so some time after, when his people were praying together, the place where they were assembled was shaken, Acts iv. 31. as a token of God's presence being with them: and the shaking and trembling of the earth is often used as a symbol of the presence of God, and

[r] חבלי מות funes mortis, Musculus, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth, Hammond.

[s] חבלי שאול funes sepulchri, Musculus, Gejerus.

[t] קדמוני praeoccupaverunt me, V. L. anteverterunt me, Vatablus; occurrerunt, Coccejus.

of the greatness of his majesty; as when he brought the children of Israel through the Red sea, went before them in the wilderness, and descended on Mount Sinai, which mountain then moved and quaked exceedingly; see Psal. civ. 32. and lxxvii. 16—18. and lxviii. 7, 8. Exod. xix. 18. and it is easy to observe, that in this, and other parts of this majestic account of the appearance of God on the behalf of the person the subject of this psalm, and against his enemies, there are manifest allusions to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; though it may be this shaking of the earth, and what follows, are to be understood in a figurative sense. *The foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken*; and design the shaking of the earth and heavens, prophesied of in Hag. ii. 6, 7. and which is explained in Heb. xii. 26, 27. of the removing the ordinances of the ceremonial law, that Gospel ordinances might remain unshaken; for in 2 Sam. xxii. 8. the words are, *the foundations of heaven moved and shook*; and the shaking and moving of the earth and mountains may denote the abolition and destruction of kingdoms and nations; and first of the civil polity of the Jews, and of their ecclesiastical state, which quickly ensued upon the death of Christ; and next of the ruin of Rome Pagan, and then of Rome Papal; which are both signified by an earthquake, and by the removal of mountains, Rev. vi. 12, 14. and xi. 13. and xvi. 18—20. *Because he was wroth*; with the people of the Jews, for disbelieving and rejecting the Messiah; for setting themselves, and taking counsel together against him, and putting him to death; for these things God was angry with them, and wrath came upon them to the uttermost, and their nation, city, and temple were destroyed, Psal. ii. 1—5. 1 Thess. ii. 16. and with the Pagan empire and antichristian powers, Rev. vi. 16, 17. and xi. 18.

Ver. 8. *There went up a smoke out of his nostrils*, &c.] This, with what follows, describes a storm of thunder; the *smoke* designs thick black clouds, gathered together; *fire* intends lightning; and *coals of fire* hot thunderbolts; and the whole is borrowed from, and is an allusion to what was at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, Exod. xix. 16, 18. The majesty of God is here set forth in much such language as is the leviathan in Job. xli. 19—21. the *smoke* of his *nostrils* seems to intend the indignation of God against the enemies of David, of Christ, and of his people, and the punishment he will inflict upon them, Isa. lxv. 5. Rev. xiv. 11. The Targum interprets it of the pride and insolence of Pharaoh. *And fire out of his mouth devoured*; God is a wall of fire round about his people, and a consuming one to his and their enemies. This expresses the wrath of God upon the Jewish nation, and his sending the Roman armies to burn their city, Matt. xxii. 7. *Coals were kindled by it*; the Jews being as dry trees, were fit fuel for the fire of divine wrath, and so presently became as coals of fire; so the antichristian party, upon the pouring out of the fourth vial, will be scorched with heat, and blaspheme the name of God, Rev. xvi. 8, 9.

Ver. 9. *He bowed the heavens also, and came down*, &c.] To execute wrath and vengeance on wicked men; which is always the sense of these phrases when they go together; see Psal. cxliv. 6—8. Isa. lxiv. 1, 2. The Targum is, *he bowed the heavens, and his glory appeared*; that is, the glory of his power, and of his mighty hand of vengeance; for not his grace and mercy, but his indignation and wrath, shewed themselves; for it follows, *and darkness was under his feet*; the Targum is, *a dark cloud*, expressive of the awfulness of the dispensation to wicked men; who are not allowed to see the face of God, are debarred his presence, and denied communion with him, and to whom every thing appears awful and terrible, Psal. xcvii. 2—5.

Ver. 10. *And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly*, &c.] The Targum renders it in the plural number, *cherubim*; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions; and by whom may be meant, either the angels, who are as horses and chariots, on whom Jehovah rides, and whom he makes use of as executioners of his wrath and vengeance, Zech. vi. 5. Psal. lxviii. 17. and to whom wings are assigned as a token of swiftness, Isa. vi. 2. or rather the ministers of the Gospel, who are the living creatures in Rev. iv. 7, 8. and answer to the *cherubim* in Ezekiel's visions; and whom God made use of, especially after the death of Christ, and when the Gospel was rejected by the Jews, to carry it into the Gentile world, which was done by them with great speed and swiftness; and Maimonides* gives a caution, not to understand the phrase, *he did fly*, as of God, but of the cherub. *Yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind*; which may design the speedy help and assistance God gave to his son, and gives to his people; and the swift destruction of their enemies; see Psal. civ. 3, 4. the words in 2 Sam. xxii. 11. with only the variation of a letter in one word, are, *and he was seen upon the wings of the wind*; which were both true; nor need a various reading be supposed, the psalmist using both words at different times, suitable to his purpose, and which both express his sense. Wings are ascribed to the winds by the Heathen poets, and they are represented as winged on ancient monuments*.

Ver. 11. *He made darkness his secret place*, &c.] Which, and the dark waters in the next clause, are the same with the thick clouds in the last, in which Jehovah is represented as wrapping himself, and in which he lies hid as in a secret place; not so as that he cannot see others, as wicked men imagine, Job xxii. 13, 14. but as that he cannot be beheld by others; the Targum interprets it, "he caused his Shechinah to dwell in "darkness." *His pavilion round about him were dark waters*, and *thick clouds of the skies*; these were as a tent or tabernacle, in which he dwelt unseen by men; see Job xxxvi. 29. all this may design the dark dispensation of the Jews, after their rejection and crucifixion of Christ; when God departed from them, left their house desolate, and them without his presence and protection; when the light of the Gospel was taken away from them, and blindness happened unto them, and they had eyes that they should not see, and were given up to a judicial darkness of mind and hardness

* Moreh Nevochim, par. 1. c. 49.

* Vide Cuperi Apotheos. Homeri, p. 178. Wings are given to the south wind by Ovid, Metamorph. l. 1. Fab. 7. and by Juvenal, Satyr. 5. v. 10. and by Virgil, Æneid. 8. v. 430. and who also speaks of wings of lightning, Æneid. 5. v. 319.

of heart; which were some of the dark, deep, and mysterious methods of divine Providence, with respect to which God may be said to be surrounded with darkness, dark waters, and thick clouds; see Rom. xi. 7, 8, 25, 32, 33.

Ver. 12. *At the brightness* that was *before him*, &c.] The lightning that came out of the thick clouds; which may denote, either the coming of Christ to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, which was swift and sudden, clear and manifest: or the spreading of the Gospel in the Gentile world, in which Christ, the brightness of his Father's glory, appeared to the illumination of many; see Matt. xxiv. 27. and both may be intended, as the effects following shew. *His thick clouds passed;* that is, passed away; the gross darkness, which had for so many years covered the Gentile world, was removed when God sent forth his light and truth; and multitudes, who were darkness itself, were made light in the Lord. *Hail-*stones *and coals of fire:* the same Gospel that was enlightening to the Gentiles, and the savour of life unto life unto them, was grievous, like hail-stones, and tormenting, scorching, irritating, and provoking, like coals of fire, and the savour of death unto death, to the Jews; when God provoked them, by sending the Gospel among the Gentiles, and calling them: or these may design the heavy, awful, and consuming judgments of God upon them, which are sometimes signified by hail-storms; see Rev. viii. 7. and xvi. 11. In 2 Sam. xxii. 13. it is only, *through the brightness before him were coals of fire kindled.*

Ver. 13. *The Lord also thundered in the heavens*, &c.] By his apostles and ministers, some of which were Boanergeses, sons of thunder, whose ministry was useful to shake the consciences of men, and bring them to a sense of themselves, Mark iii. 17. *and the Highest gave his voice;* the same with thunder; for thunder is often called the voice of the Lord, Job xxxvii. 5. and xl. 9. Psal. xxix. 3—9. compare with this Psal. lxviii. 11. the Targum interprets it, *he lifted up his word;* the same effects as before follow, *hail-*stones *and coals of fire.*

Ver. 14. *Yea, he sent out his arrows*, &c.] By which thunderbolts, cracks of thunder, and flashes of lightning, seem to be meant; see Psal. lxxvii. 17, 18. and cxliv. 6. comparable to arrows shot, and sent out of a bow; and may denote, either the doctrines of the Gospel, which were sharp in the hearts of Christ's enemies, and are either the means of subduing them to him, or of destroying them, being the savour of death unto death; or however, like arrows, give great pain and uneasiness where they stick, and grievously distress and torment; as does the fire which comes out of the mouth of the two witnesses, Rev. xi. 5, 10. The Targum is, "he sent his word as arrows;" or else the judgments of God are meant, as famine, pestilence, and the sword, which God sent unto, and spent upon the Jewish nation, Deut. xxxii. 23. *And scattered them;* among the nations of the world, where they have been dispersed ever since. *And he shot out lightnings;* or *many lightnings*, so the Targum: *and discomfited them;* troubled, terrified, and distressed them.

Ver. 15. *Then the channels of water were seen*, &c.] Or, *of the sea;* as in 2 Sam. xxii. 16. There seems to be an allusion to the drying up of the sea when the Israelites passed through it. Aben Ezra interprets this of the discovery of the secrets of enemies, and of their deep schemes and counsels, which they seek to hide, but are made known by him who sees all things in the dark; and so the following clause. *And the foundations of the world were discovered;* but it rather seems to intend the utter extirpation and ruin of the Jewish nation, both in their civil and ecclesiastic state, the foundation of which was rooted up and laid bare; unless with Jerom we understand this of the ministers of the word, in whom the doctrines of grace were channelled, and who were as fountains of water; and of the foundation of the apostles and prophets made known in the Gospel: but the former sense is best; since it follows, *at thy rebuke, O Lord; at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils;* for the destruction of the Jews was the effect of divine wrath and vengeance: so ends the account of the wonderful appearance of God in favour of the person the subject of this psalm, and against his enemies; the deliverance wrought for him is next described.

Ver. 16. *He sent from above*, &c.]. Either his hand, as in Psal. cxliv. 7. he exerted and displayed his mighty power in raising Christ from the dead; or he sent help from his sanctuary; as in Psal. xx. 2. and helped and strengthened him in a day of salvation; or when he wrought out the salvation of his people; or he sent his word, as in Psal. cvii. 20. his word of command, to take up his life again, as he had given it to lay it down, John x. 18. The Targum is, *he sent his prophets;* but it may be much better supplied, he sent his angels, or an angel; as he did at his resurrection, who rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, as a token of his justification and discharge: so Jarchi interprets it, he sent his angels; and Aben Ezra supplies it thus, "he sent his word or his angel:" unless the sense should be, as Cocceius suggests, he sent a cloud from above, which was done at Christ's ascension, and which received him out of the sight of the apostles, Acts i. 9. Since it follows, *he took me;* that is, up to heaven; thither Christ was carried in a cloud, one of God's chariots, he sent for him; and where he is received, and will be retained until his second coming; though rather the sense is, he took me by the hand: *he drew me out of many waters.* This is said either in allusion to Moses, who had his name from his being drawn out of the water, Exod. ii. 10. and who was an eminent type of Christ; and this is the only place where the Hebrew word is made use of from whence he had his name; or else to a man plunged in water ready to be drowned; see Psal. lxix. 1, 2. By these *many waters* may be meant the many afflictions, sorrows, and sufferings from which Christ was freed, when raised from the dead, and highly exalted and crowned with glory and honour; and the torrent of sins which flowed in upon him at the time he was made sin for his people, from which he was justified when risen; and so will appear a second time without sin unto salvation; and the wrath of God, the waves and billows of which went over him, and compassed him about as water, at the time of his sufferings; from which he was delivered when he was shewn the path of life, and entered into the presence of God, and sat at his right hand, where are joys and pleasures for evermore; and also his grand

enemy Satan, with his principalities and powers, who came in like a flood upon him; but he destroyed him and spoiled them; and particularly the floods of ungodly men, spoken of in ver. 4. seem to be here designed; compare with this Psal. cxliv. 7. So *many waters* signify many people and nations, Rev. xvii. 15. and accordingly the Targum is, "he delivered me "from many people." This was true of Christ when risen and ascended; he was then separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; and this sense is confirmed by the following words, where what is expressed figuratively here is there literally explained.

Ver. 17. *He delivered me from my strong enemy*, &c.] Which, as it may respect David, may be understood of Goliath the Philistine champion, who was a man of war from his youth; or Saul, king of Israel; and, as it may respect David's antitype, may design either the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, who were men of power and influence; or more especially Satan, the strong man armed, with all his principalities and powers; or, likewise death, the last enemy, from whose pains and cords he was loosed when raised from the dead, and when he was delivered from every other strong enemy. *And from them which hated me*: from the old serpent the devil, between whom and him there has been a lasting enmity; and from the world, the people of the Jews, particularly the Pharisees, who bore an implacable hatred to Christ. *For they were too strong for me*: as Goliath and Saul were too strong for David of himself, so Christ's enemies were too strong for him; not as God, for he is the mighty God, the Almighty, and stronger than the strong man armed, but as man; for in his human nature he had a sinless weakness, which shewed itself in his agonies in the garden; or a natural weakness, through which he was crucified; and this weak nature of Christ Satan attacked, and got an advantage over, and brought it to the dust of death, which is meant by his bruising his heel, though by it he got a broken head. But though Christ's enemies were too strong for him, considered merely as man, they not being, at least many of them, flesh and blood, but principalities and powers; yet being helped by his Father, and supported by his divine nature, he overcame them, and was delivered from them.

Ver. 18. *They prevented me in the day of my calamity*, &c.] Referring to the times of his distress in the garden and upon the cross; the time of his sufferings and death, which was a dark and cloudy day, as the word * used suggests, both in a literal and in a spiritual sense; and when the day and hour was come, fixed and determined by the will of God, then his enemies, though not before, met him, laid hold on him, were too mighty for him, condemned, crucified, and insulted him. *But the Lord was my stay*: or staff, on whom he leaned, relied, and depended, believing he would help him; and by whom he was supported and upheld, Isa. xlii. 1. and l. 7, 8, 9. and xlix. 7, 8. The Targum is, "the "Word of the Lord was my stay."

Ver. 19. *He brought me forth also into a large place*, &c.] Into heaven, a place of the glorious liberty of Christ, after his captivity to death and the grave, whither he ascended leading captivity captive, and of the children of God; and a spacious place, where there is room enough for Christ and all his people; here he now is, and will remain till his second coming, and from hence we expect him; see John xiv. 2, 3. Compare with this Psal. xxxi. 8. and cxviii. 5. *He delivered me, because he delighted in me*: God delivered David from all his enemies, because he was a man after his own heart, in whom he delighted; not for any merit and worthiness in him, but of his good will and pleasure: he delivered Christ because he was his elect, in whom his soul delighted; and who was daily his delight, rejoicing in his presence before the world was: and he delivers his church and people, because they are his Hephzi-bah, in whom is his delight; the Father delighted in them, and therefore chose them to salvation; the Son delighted in them, and gave himself for them, and ransomed them out of the hands of him that is stronger than they; the Holy Spirit delighted in them, and therefore regenerates, renews, and sanctifies them, and seals them up unto the day of redemption.

Ver. 20. *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness*, &c.] Which, if applied to David, cannot be understood of his own personal righteousness, or of works of righteousness done by him, for these merit nothing at the hand of God; no reward, in strict justice, is due to them, or given to them; a man's own righteousness is imperfect, and by the law of God is not accounted a righteousness; and it is unprofitable to God, is no gain to him, and so not rewardable by him; and were it perfect, it is but man's duty, and what God has a prior right to, and so is not recompenced by him; though it is so far from being pure and perfect, that it is attended with much sin, and is no other than rags, and filthy ones, which can never recommend a person to God; it is what will not bear the sight of God, and can never be called cleanness in his eye-sight: by it no man is justified before him; and though God does, indeed, reward the works of his people, which are fruits of his grace, yet the reward is not of debt, but of grace. This, therefore, must be understood of the righteousness of David's cause, and of his innocence with respect to the things he was charged with by his enemies; of his righteousness towards Saul; and of *the cleanness of his hands*, in not defiling them with his blood, when it was in his power to take away his life; therefore God rewarded him by delivering him out of his hands, and setting him upon the throne, and causing his kingdom to flourish and prosper; for this respects temporal blessings, and not eternal glory and happiness; and is something that had been and was then enjoyed, and not any thing future, or in another world: though it is best of all to apply it to Christ, and understand it of his righteousness, which he, as Mediator, has wrought out for his people; this is perfect, pure, and spotless, and entirely agreeable to the law of God; what will bear the sight of God, is satisfying to his justice, is well-pleasing to him, and is what he accepts of, and imputes to them that believe in Christ, and by which they are justified from all things. Now, according to this righteousness, Christ

* ביום אידי in the day of my cloudy calamity, Ainsworth; nomen איד proprie significat vaporem vel nubem, ut Gen. vii. 6. hinc per metaphoram transfertur ad obscuras ac terrificas calamitatum nebulas, Prov. i. 26. Gejerus.

in strict justice has been rewarded in his own person; as he had the work of man's redemption assigned him, and he agreed to do it, he had a reward promised him, and which he claimed, when he had glorified his father and finished his work; and which he received when he was set down at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour, in consequence of his obedience, sufferings, and death; see Phil. ii. 7—10. and he is rewarded in his members according to his righteousness, they being justified by it, and made heirs of eternal life on account of it, and are or will be glorified with him for evermore. *According to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompenced me*; which signifies the same thing.

Ver. 21. *For I have kept the ways of the Lord*, &c.] Not those which the Lord himself walks in, his ways of providence, or of grace; though these are and should be taken notice of and observed by good men, as the word [r] used will bear to be rendered; but the ways which he has prescribed and directed men to walk in, the ways of his commandments, in which they should go; these were, in some measure, kept by David, who often, in Psal. cxix. speaks of his keeping the testimonies and statutes, and commandments of the Lord; as they are by good men, with some degree of pleasure, they take delight to walk in them; and with some degree of constancy, they keep walking in them, without turning to the right hand or the left, though solicited to it; but yet not perfectly, for they have many a slip and fall in them; wherefore this cannot be a reason of their being rewarded according to their righteousness: in strict justice, the words better agree with Christ, who kept the law of God perfectly, did his will completely; he came from heaven to do it; it was his meat and drink to accomplish it; and he always did the things which pleased his father, wherefore he rewarded him. *And have not wickedly departed from my God*: which was, in some sense, true of David; not as by disbelieving the power and providence, the promises, truth, and faithfulness of God, and his covenant-interest in him; which to do would have been a wicked departure from God; see Heb. iii. 12. nor by forsaking the house and worship of God; though he was driven from thence by wicked men, yet sore against his will, and which during his exile he frequently laments and complains of; nor by sinning wilfully and presumptuously, only through error, inadvertency, infirmity, and temptation: but when it is observed, how much unbelief, which is a partial departing from the living God, and how many there are that neglect private and public worship, and what a proneness there is to sin and wickedness, and how much there is of the will in sinful actions, in the best of men; it is right and best to understand this of Christ, who never was guilty of sin, nor committed any wickedness in departing from God in the least: as man, God was his God, and he always believed his interest in him, and claimed it even when he forsook him on the cross; nor did he quit his service, desert his cause, nor depart from the work and business he enjoined him, till it was finished.

Ver. 22. *For all his judgments were before me*, &c.] That is, the precepts of the law of God, which David had a respect unto, loved, took delight and pleasure in, and so had them all in his sight, and made them the rule of his actions; and the law of God is delighted in by regenerate persons, after the inward man; and though it is abolished as a covenant of works, it is a rule of walk and conversation to the saints; and as such they keep it in view, and regard it impartially, not only some of its precepts, but all. This in the highest and fullest sense was done by Christ, who was made under the law, in whose heart it was, and who came to fulfil it, and has completely fulfilled it. *And I did not put away his statutes from me*; in 2 Sam. xxii. 23. it is read, *and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them*; the sense is the same; this may have respect to the ceremonial law, and the ordinances of it, which David abode by, very strictly observed, renewed, and put in order; and which Christ, his antitype, never departed from, but conformed unto throughout the whole of his life; witness his circumcision, keeping of the passover, attendance on the synagogue and temple worship; nor did he put them away until they had their full accomplishment in him; when there was a disannulling of them because of their weakness and unprofitableness.

Ver. 23. *I was also upright before him*, &c.] In heart and conversation, being sincere and faithful; so David was in the sight of God; but this is much more true of Christ, in whom there was no unrighteousness nor guile, neither in his heart, nor in his lips; he was of perfect integrity, and faithful in all things to him that appointed him. *And I kept myself from mine iniquity*; which some interpret of original sin, in which David was born, which dwelt in him, and prompted him to sin; but rather it refers to the taking away of Saul's life, which he might be tempted to do, as being his enemy that sought his life; and which he was put upon and urged to by some about him, and yet did it not. But it is best here also to apply these words to Christ; for though he had no iniquity of his own, yet he had the iniquities of his people on him, as their surety, and which he calls *mine*, Psal. xl. 12. But though he bore them, he did not commit any of them; though he was made sin, he knew none; and though he was tempted by Satan to the most enormous iniquities, as destroying himself and worshipping the devil, he kept himself from the evil one, that he could not touch him: the sense is, that he kept himself from committing any sin, which cannot be said of any mere man; and so far as good men are kept from sin, they are kept by the power of God, and not by themselves. All these things shew, that the righteousness of Christ was a perfect, sinless one, entirely agreeable to the laws, statutes, and judgments of God; was pure in the sight of God, and rewardable in strict justice. Hence it is repeated as follows:

Ver. 24. *Therefore hath the Lord recompenced me according to my righteousness*, &c.] Having proved and supported this proposition by the above reasons, it is repeated, for confirmation-sake. *According to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight*. this phrase, *in his eyesight*, is here added, to shew that the righte-

[r] שמרתי observaveram, Tigurine version, Vatablus; observo, Junius & Tremellius; observavi, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

ousness of Christ was clean, pure, and spotless in the sight of God: in the eye of divine justice: hence those that are clothed with it are holy and unblamable, and irreprovable in his sight, Col. i. 22.

Ver. 25. *With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful*, &c.] The merciful man is the good, gracious, holy, and godly man, as the word [a] here used signifies, and is sometimes rendered; one that has received grace and mercy from the Lord, and has principles of grace and goodness wrought in him, and is kind and merciful to others, both to their souls and bodies; and to such men God shews himself merciful: not that they are first merciful to others, and then he is so to them, for it is just the reverse; nor is their mercifulness the cause or condition of his, for he has mercy on whom he will have mercy; but to such he shews fresh mercy, and bestows more grace upon them; they find grace and mercy with him now, and will do hereafter; see Matt. v. 7. This may be applied to Christ, all whose ways are mercy and truth; he saw the estate his people would come into; he pitied their case, and became their surety in eternity; he betrothed them to himself in loving-kindness and tender mercies; and undertook to feed the flock of slaughter, even the poor of the flock; having, through his merciful loving-kindness, assumed human nature, he went about doing good to the souls and bodies of men; he healed the diseased and fed the hungry, and had compassion on the ignorant, and them that were out of the way; and, as a merciful high-priest, he bore the sins and sorrows of his people; and in his love and pity redeemed them, and continues to sympathize with them in all their afflictions and temptations; and though no mercy was shewn him whilst he was suffering for them, for God spared him not, but awoke the sword of justice against him, and used him with the utmost rigour and severity; yet satisfaction being made, he did not leave him in the grave, nor suffer his holy, good, and merciful One to see corruption; but raised him from the dead, prevented him with the blessings of his goodness, and set upon his head a crown of honour and glory. *With an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright*; an upright man, as the word [a] used signifies, is a perfect man, not absolutely, but comparatively; not in himself, but in Christ; perfect with a perfection of parts, but not of degrees; he is one that is upright in heart, sincere and without hypocrisy; an Israelite indeed, whose faith, hope, and love, are undisguised; he is a man of integrity, a faithful man, faithful to God, his cause and interest, his word and ordinances, and is faithful with the saints; he walks uprightly according to the rule of God's word, and by faith in Christ; and to such upright men God shews himself upright, or faithful, by keeping his covenant with them, fulfilling his promises to them, and not suffering one good thing to fail he has given them reason to expect from him. This may also be interpreted of Christ, who is in the highest and fullest sense perfect, upright, and sincere, and faithful to him that appointed him; and as he has been faithful in all his covenant-engagements with his father, so his father has been faithful to him in making good all he promised him; both with respect to his own glory, and the happiness of his people; see Isa. liii. 10—12. John xvii. 4, 5. Phil. ii. 9, 10.

Ver. 26. *With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure*, &c.] None of Adam's posterity are pure by nature; they are all defiled with sin; and though some are pure in their own eyes, they are far from being cleansed from their filthiness; such only are pure who are sanctified by the spirit of God, have clean hearts created in them, and whose hearts are purified by faith in the blood of Christ; who are justified by Christ's righteousness, and are washed from their sins in his blood; and who, in consequence of such grace, love, pureness of heart, speak a pure language, hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, and with a pure conversation, and live soberly, righteously, and godly: and whereas God is a pure and holy Being, his perfections, works, and word, are pure; he shews himself to be so to such persons, by providing for the honour of his purity and holiness in their redemption, sanctification, and salvation; by making all things to be pure to them; by granting them his presence, and blessing them with the vision of himself here and hereafter; see Matt. v. 8. this may likewise be understood of Christ, who, in his human nature, is pure from all sin, both original and actual: he indeed took upon him the sins of his people, and bore them, and made satisfaction for them, and brought in everlasting righteousness; which being done, God has shewed himself pure to him, by justifying, acquitting, and discharging him from all such sins; by accepting his righteousness, and imputing it to those for whom he wrought it. *And with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward*; or *thou wrestlest* [b], or wilt contend with them until they are destroyed; the same word is here used which Naphtali has his name from, Gen. xxx. 6. The froward are such as are of perverse dispositions, and of stubborn and obstinate tempers, and whose ways are crooked and distorted; and such were the people of the Jews in the times of Moses, and of Christ, Deut. xxxii. 5, 20. Matt. xvii. 17. and who seem here to be designed; even the Jews in Christ's time, who were just the reverse of the above characters, were cruel and unmerciful, faithless and hypocritical, filthy and impure, disbelieved the Messiah, rejected and crucified him, were contrary to God, and to all men; and therefore God walked contrary to them, as he threatened, Lev. xxvi. 27, 28. the same as shewing himself froward to them; for God is not froward and perverse in himself, nor in his ways, which are all equal, just, and pure: and though there is one and the same word used in our version, yet there are two different words in the Hebrew text; the same word that is used of the froward is not used of God; that which is used of God, as before observed, signifies wrestling, and designs God's contending with the people of the Jews, in a way of wrath and fury, which came upon them to the uttermost, and issued in their entire ruin as a people

[a] חסיד benigno, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius; bono, Gejerus, so some in Vatablus; qui bonitati studet, Tigurine version; pio, Munster, Cocceius, Michaelis; gracious saint, Ainsworth.

[a] תמים perfecto, Pagninus, Montanus; so Ainsworth.
[b] תתפתל eluctaris, Junius & Tremellius; colluctaris, Aben Ezra; reluctaris, Gejerus; certas, Schmidt.

and nation; the words here had their fulfilment in the destruction of Jerusalem.

Ver. 27. *For thou wilt save the afflicted people*, &c.] As the people of God commonly are; they are afflicted with sin, and the corruption of their own hearts, and with Satan and his temptations, and with the world, its reproaches, and persecutions; but God in his own time saves them out of them, if not here, yet hereafter. This is particularly and eminently true of the Christians who lived between the crucifixion of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem; who were greatly afflicted and persecuted by the Jews, but were in a remarkable manner saved a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, by being directed to go out of it to a place called Pella [c]; so that not one Christian suffered in it. *But wilt bring down high looks*: or proud men, whom God humbles; these he abhors, resists, sets himself against, scatters and destroys. The Jews were a very proud people, and behaved in an insolent and insulting manner towards Christ and his followers; but the high looks of the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, were brought down to a purpose, when their city, temple, and nation, were destroyed; see Isa. ii. 11.

Ver. 28. *For thou wilt light my candle*, &c.] Or *lamp* [d]: in 2 Sam. xxii. 29, it is, *Thou art my lamp, O Lord*; which may either design outward prosperity, and the flourishing condition of David's kingdom; or internal spiritual light, and an increase of it, by giving fresh supplies of the oil of grace, to cause the lamp to burn more clearly; or rather the prosperous estate of Christ's kingdom; and may be the same with the lamp ordained for the Messiah, Psal. cxxxii. 17. *The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness*: or *cause light to shine in my darkness* [e]; that is, bring me out of darkness into light; either out of adversity to prosperity, or from walking in darkness to the enjoyment of the light of his countenance; and is true of Christ, not only of the prosperity of his kingdom and interest, but of him personally; who though, when on the cross, was in darkness of soul, being forsaken by his God; yet, when raised from the dead, he was received up to heaven, and set down at the right hand of God, and was made full of joy with his countenance, Acts ii. 28.

Ver. 29. *For by thee I have run through a troop*, &c.] Or, *I have run to a troop*; to meet one [f], with courage and intrepidity, as some interpret it [g]; or, as others [h], *I have run after a troop*: that is, pursued after one, as David pursued after the troops of the Amalekites who burnt Ziklag, 1 Sam. xxx. 8. to which Jarchi refers this passage; or rather, *I have broke a troop*, or *through one* [i]; for the word, as some Jewish writers [k] observe, comes from a root which signifies to *break* in pieces, and is fitly used for the destroying or cutting in pieces a troop of the enemy; and is true of Christ, when he engaged with the troops of hell, and broke the squadrons of the infernal fiends, and spoiled or disarmed principalities and powers, and triumphed over them on the cross, and made a shew of them openly, when he dragged them at his chariot-wheels, and led captivity captive. *And by my God have I leaped over a wall*; which refers to the scaling of walls, and taking of fortified places; and so the Targum, *By the word of my God I will subdue fortified towns*; so Apollinarius has it, passed over a tower, or took it; which was literally true of David, in many instances. Jarchi applies this to his taking the fortress of Zion from the Jebusites: a learned writer [l] thinks this refers to his leaping over the city-wall, and slipping through the city-watch, when Michal let him down through a window: it may be applied to Christ, who broke down the middle wall of partition, the ceremonial law, which stood between Jew and Gentile; or rather it may design the many difficulties which were in the way of the salvation of his people, which he surmounted and got over with great strength and swiftness; such as fulfilling the law, satisfying justice, bearing sin, and making atonement for it, undergoing a shameful and an accursed death, and grappling with numerous enemies, whom he conquered; and he is said to do all this by his God; because, as man and Mediator, he was strengthened and assisted by him.

Ver. 30. As for *God*, *his way is perfect*, &c.] Or *without spot* [m], as the Septuagint render the word; without any just charge of inequality, or unrighteousness: such is God's way of providence, though sometimes his methods of providence are cavilled at by wicked men, and murmured at by his own people: they are at a loss, at times, to reconcile promises and providences together, and to account for the justice and equity of them; these ways of his are unsearchable, and not to be traced out by them; but when his judgments will be made manifest, the wisdom, goodness, and righteousness of them will be clearly discerned, and they will be admired; for they are all of a piece, and perfectly consistent with the attributes of God; and such also is his way of grace, and method of salvation; it is agreeable to all his perfections, and according to his purposes, counsel, and covenant; this being resolved on in his breast, contrived by his wisdom, and concluded on in the covenant, has been effected and finished by his son; and his inward way of working upon the heart, though at present imperfect, will be completed; he is a rock, and his work is perfect, and all his ways are judgment: whatever way or method he contrives and enters upon, whether in providence or grace, he pursues and brings to an issue; for he is an omnipotent, omniscient, and unchangeable Being, and neither frustrates, nor is he frustrated; nor is there any insincerity, unrighteousness, and unfaithfulness in him; nor can he act contrary to himself, and the perfections of his nature: the way also which he prescribes to others is perfect and plain, whether the path of doctrine or of duty; the path of truth is plain to the enlightened understanding, and the way of holiness is such, in which men, though fools, shall not err; see Prov. viii. 8, 9. Isa. xxxv. 8. *The word of the Lord*

[c] Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 5.
[d] נרי lucernam meam, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.
[e] So Gussetius, Comment. Ebr. p. 493.
[f] ארוץ גדוד occurram turmæ, so some in Vatablus.
[g] Apud Kimchi in loc.
[h] Apud Aben Ezra in loc.
[i] Conteram, Pagninus; perfregi, Vatablus; περιεῤῥηξα, Musculus; perrumpo, Tigurine version, Castalio; so Ainsworth.
[k] Kimchi & Ben Melech.
[l] Delaney's Life of King David, vol. 1. p. 67.
[m] תמים ἄμωμος, Sept. impollutа, V. L. so Syriac. Æthiop.

is tried; as silver in a furnace, and is clear of all dross, of error, and falsehood; is free from human mixtures, and without any impurity and unholiness; nor is God's word of promise chargeable with unfaithfulness; all his promises being yea and amen in Christ, and have been tried and proved by the saints in all ages; and have been found true, faithful, constant, and invariable. *He is a buckler to all those that trust in him*; not in man, nor in themselves; in their own righteousness, or in any creature or creature-enjoyment or performance; but in the providence and power of God, in his grace and mercy, in his word, and especially in his son; in his person, blood, and righteousness; to such he is a buckler or shield: his power is all around them, his favour encompasses them, and his truth, or faithfulness in his word, is their shield and buckler: and so is his son, who is both a sun and shield to them; and such are his precious blood, his spotless righteousness, and atoning sacrifice; which, being held up by faith, repel the fiery darts of Satan.

Ver. 31. *For who is God save the Lord?* &c.] Or Jehovah: there is but one God, and Jehovah is he: there is none besides him, nor any like him: there are many that are called gods, nominal deities, who are not by nature gods; fictitious ones, the idols of the Gentiles, made of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone; but there is but one true God: there are gods, in an improper sense, as civil magistrates; but there is none really and truly so but the Lord; which is to be understood, not of Jehovah the Father, to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit; for the Son is Jehovah, and the Spirit is Jehovah; both are so called, as well as the Father, and all three one God. *Or who is a rock save our God?* to have recourse to for shelter and protection; or to trust to, and build upon, for eternal life and salvation. False gods are rocks; but not like ours, our enemies themselves being judges, Deut. xxxii. 31. so Apollo at Delphos is called the Delphian rock *: the words seem to be taken from, or at least there is in them a reference to, 1 Sam. ii. 2.

Ver. 32. *It is God that girdeth me with strength*, &c.] For battle, as in ver. 39. with strength of body and fortitude of mind; both which are from the Lord, and were in David; and were acknowledged by him as bestowed on him by the Lord; and which confirms what he had before said of him: or with spiritual strength, with strength in his soul, against sin, Satan, and the world; and to do the will and work of God: saints are girt by the Lord with the whole armour of God, and among the rest with the girdle of truth; and are prepared and ready to every good work; see 1 Sam. ii. 4. Hannah's song is again referred to: in 2 Sam. xxii. 33, the words are, *God is my strength* and *power*; they are true of Christ, the man of God's right hand, whom he promised to strengthen, and whom he has made strong for himself. Psal. lxxx. 17. and lxxxix. 21. *And maketh my way perfect*; or *safe*, or prosperous. God removed every impediment and obstacle out of his way, and made it plain and easy, as Jarchi observes; and succeeded him, and gave him victory over his enemies; this has been verified in Christ, who has conquered sin, Satan, the world, death, and the grave: for this is not to be understood of the way and course of David's life and conversation, which was not perfect and unspotted, but had many blemishes and imperfections in it, which he often owns, confesses, and bewails.

Ver. 33. *He maketh my feet like hind's feet*, &c.] As light and swift as theirs, as the Targum; that is, either to flee, when there was a necessity for it, as Kimchi observes; or rather to pursue after the enemy, to run through a troop, and leap over a wall, as before; see 1 Chron. xii. 8. 2 Sam. iii. 18, 19. the same phrase is used in Hab. iii. 19. and may be understood in a spiritual sense of that readiness and cheerfulness with which the saints run the ways of God's commandments, when their hearts are enlarged with his love and grace; and may very well be applied to Christ, who is often compared to a roe, or a young hart, for swiftness; who readily and at once engaged to come and do the will of God, and whose coming in the flesh, at the appointed time, was swift; and who made haste to do the work of God, in which he took the utmost pleasure; and who is a speedy and present help to his people in time of trouble; see Cant. ii. 8, 9, 17. and viii. 14. *And setteth me upon my high places*; the towers and fortresses, and strong and fortified places, where he was safe from his enemies; and, in a spiritual sense, may design the everlasting love of God, the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises; and Christ himself, with the fulness of grace in him, on which believers may be said to be set, when their faith is directed to them, and they live and dwell upon them; see Hab. iii. 19. Isa. xxxiii. 16. and the words were fulfilled in Christ, when God highly exalted him at his right hand, and set him above all principalities and powers, and made him higher than the heavens.

Ver. 34. *He teacheth my hands to war*, &c.] From whence it appears, that war, in some cases, is lawful; and that all the skilfulness and art in training men for war, in the use of armour, in marshalling of armies, in forming sieges, &c. is all from God; see Psal. cxliv. 1. and so is all that spiritual skill, in making use of the whole armour of God against every enemy, sin, Satan, and the world; and even the wisdom and skill, counsel and instruction, which Christ as man and Mediator had, when it was the hour and power of darkness; when he was engaged with principalities and powers, and got the victory over them, were from the Lord: see Psal. xvi. 7. *So that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms*; that is, the bow of an enemy falling into his hands, which might be literally true of David. It is in the Hebrew text, *a bow of brass*; and so Apollinarius renders it; which Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret strong iron, that is, steel; and so the Targum; see Job xx. 24. Satan is an archer; his temptations are darts, and fiery ones; and his strong bow may be said to be broken by the arms of faith, when his temptations, under the influence of divine grace, are repelled and rendered ineffectual; and especially his bow was broken by Christ, not only in the wilderness, when he was vanquished by him; but in the garden, and on the cross, when Satan could find nothing in him, and get no other advantage over him,

* Δελφὶς πέτρα, Sophoclis Œdipus, v. 472.

but to bruise his heel; when he himself had his head broke, his works ruined, and he himself destroyed. Some render the words, *mine arms have bent a bow of steel*: that is, such skill and strength were given him, that he was able to bend, draw, and shoot a bow of steel: the Targum is, *and hath strengthened mine arm as a bow of brass*, or *steel*; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; and to the same purpose the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions; or it may be rendered, *my arms have bent*, or *made to descend**, *a bow of brass*: for when a bow is bent, the horns or corners of it are made to descend towards a man.

Ver. 35. *Thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation, &c.*] Meaning either temporal salvation, which was a shield to him when he had no outward one, as when he fought with Goliath; and was what preserved him in all his battles at other times: or spiritual salvation, which is of the Lord, of his contriving, effecting, and applying, and in which his glory is concerned; interest in which is a free gift of his, as are the knowledge, application, and possession of it; and this is as a shield, which saves from sin, from all sin, and the damning power of it; keeps off the curses of the law, secures from wrath to come, and repels Satan's temptations; the words may be applied to Christ, who, though he was not saved from dying, yet was preserved in the day of salvation, and was not suffered to see corruption in the grave, and was quickly delivered from the power and dominion of it. *And thy right hand hath holden me up*; Christ may be said to be the right hand of God, being as dear to him as his right hand; and being exalted at it; and because by him he communicates all good things to his people, and with him upholds and sustains them; or else it designs the mighty power of God, which is often signified by it, Psal. xx. 6. and xliv. 3. and cxviii. 15, 16. and may be understood of the sustentation of David, both in a providential way, with respect to his being, the preservation of it, the supplies of life, and support in times of trouble and distress; and in a spiritual sense, maintaining the principle of grace in him, furnishing him with fresh supplies of grace, and bearing him up under and through every temptation and exercise; so upholding him that he stood firm in the true grace of God, in the exercise of it implanted, and in the doctrine of grace, so as to go forward in the ways of God, and follow hard after him, and so as not to fall and utterly perish; and which is true of all the saints; see Psal. lxiii. 8. and xxxvii. 24. The words may be interpreted of Christ, who, as man and Mediator, as God's righteous servant, was upheld by him, so that he failed not, nor was he discouraged; the hand of the Lord was established with him, and his arm also strengthened him, Isa. xlii. 1, 4. Psal. lxxxix. 21. this clause is not in 2 Sam. xxii. 36. *And thy gentleness hath made me great*; David was very mean and low by his birth and occupation, and whilst persecuted by Saul; but God of his grace and goodness, of his sovereign good will and pleasure, raised him to an high estate, set him on the throne of Israel, and gave him honour among and above the kings of the earth; so Kimchi interprets the word for *gentleness* by *goodness* or *merciful* kindness; R. Jonah by *providence*, and R. Isaac explains it *thy help* and *good will*; and all shews that his greatness was not owing to his merits, but to the providential goodness of God; and his special grace and mercy in Christ Jesus made him still greater, even a child of God, an heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ, a King and a Priest unto God; gave him a right unto and a meetness for a crown of glory, an everlasting kingdom, an eternal inheritance, as it does all the saints. The words may be rendered, *thy humility hath made me great*†; which may be understood either of God's humbling himself to look upon him in his low estate, and to raise him to such honour and dignity as he did, both in a temporal and spiritual sense; see Psal. cxiii. 6—8. or of the humility which he had in himself from God, as Aben Ezra interprets it; of which grace God is the author; it is a fruit of the spirit; which he takes great notice of, gives more grace to them that have it, and exalts them, as he did David, who was mean and low in his own eyes. The Septuagint, and those versions which follow that, render it *thy discipline* or *correction*: and so may design the gentleness and lenity of God in chastising his people, which is always in measure and in judgment, and for their good; whereby he increases grace in them, and trains them up for, and brings them to his kingdom and glory. The Chaldee paraphrase is, *by thy word thou hast increased me*; it may not be improperly interpreted of Christ, who was very low in his estate of humiliation on earth, but is now highly exalted, and crowned with glory and honour; who first endured great sufferings, and then entered into his glory.

Ver. 36. *Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, &c.*] Which is opposed to those straitened circumstances in which the psalmist was, ver. 4, 5. and is expressive of deliverance from his enemies, by whom he was surrounded, besieged, and shut up; see Psal. xxxi. 8. and of freedom of walking at large, without being straitened for room, or interrupted by others, Prov. iv. 12. and of safety in standing; all which is true in a spiritual sense of believers in Christ, who being delivered by him out of the hands of their enemies, serve the Lord without fear in righteousness and holiness; walk at liberty by faith in Christ, and up and down in the name of the Lord their God; and have their feet established upon the Rock of ages, that sure and large foundation, Christ, from which there is no danger of slipping and falling; as follows. *That my feet did not slip*; so as to fall and perish; for sometimes the steps of the saints are well nigh slipped; yea, in some sense they stumble, slip, and fall, but not so as to be utterly cast down and perish eternally; the bottom on which they are is so broad, and the foundation so sure, that it is not possible they should. The words will bear to be applied to Christ, who was in very pressed and straitened circumstances, when beset with the bulls of Bashan, encompassed with dogs, and enclosed

* נחתה ut curvent, Cocceius; so Michaelis; ut descendat vel deprimatur, Gejerus; vid. Gussetii Comment. Ebr. p. 507. so Jarchi.

† ענותך mansuetudo tua, Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Gejerus; thy meekness, Ainsworth; ענוה sumitur pro familiaritate seu mansuetudine, Zeph. ii. 3. Gejerus.

with the assembly of the wicked; and was in slippery places, when he sunk in deep mire where there is no standing, Psal. xxii. 12, 16. and lxix. 2. but now being delivered from all this, he is brought, as in ver. 19, into a large place, into heaven, and made higher than the heavens, and is set down at the right hand of God, from whence he can never be moved.

Ver. 37. *I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them, &c.*] Which may refer to David's pursuing the Amalekites, who overtook them and recovered all they had carried away, 1 Sam. xxx. 8, 10, 18, 19. so Kimchi explains it. *Neither did I turn again till they were consumed;* for not a man escaped, save four hundred young men that rode on camels and fled, ver. 17.

Ver. 38. *I have wounded them, that they were not able to rise, &c.*] Which was not only true of the Amalekites, but of all with whom David engaged in war. *They are fallen under my feet;* either dead, or become subject and tributaries to him; as the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, and Edomites; see 2 Sam. viii. This, with the preceding verse, may very well be accommodated to David's antitype, and be expressive of the entire victory he has obtained over all his and his people's enemies; he wounded the heads over many countries, Psal. cx. 6. Satan and his principalities and powers, whose head is broke, whose works are destroyed; yea, he himself, which had the power of death, so as not to be able to rise more against Christ, who has led captivity captive: he has also finished and made an end of sin, and overcome the world; nor did he turn back from this work he engaged in until he had made a complete conquest; and moreover he has likewise made his people more than conquerors, through him, over these same enemies; so that the words are also applicable to them.

Ver. 39. *For thou hast girded me with strength unto battle, &c.*] See ver. 32. that natural strength, courage and valour, which David had, were from the Lord; and so is the spirit of power, love, and of a sound mind, which believers have; and likewise that strength which Christ, as man, had and used in his combat with the powers of darkness; see Psal. lxxx. 17. *Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me;* as the psalmist ascribes his strength, so he attributes his success to the Lord; who likewise subdues the sins of his people, and all other enemies of theirs, and who also makes the enemies of his son his footstool, Psal. cx. 1.

Ver. 40. *Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, &c.*] Either to slay them, or to trample or put a yoke upon them: or rather the sense is, thou hast made them to fly before me, to turn their necks or backs unto me, as the word is used in Josh. vii. 8. and it is expressive of an utter rout and vanquishing of them. *That I might destroy them that hate me;* they not being able to face him and stand against him.

Ver. 41. *They cried, but there was none to save them, &c.*] It is in 2 Sam. xxii. 42. *they looked;* that is, they looked round about, here and there, to see if there were any near at hand to help and deliver them: they *cried* in their distress, and because of the anguish of their spirits, and for help and assistance, but in vain: they cried, as Jarchi thinks, to their idols, as Jonah's mariners cried every one to their god; and, if so, it is no wonder there was none to save; for such are gods that cannot save: but it follows, *even unto the Lord, but he answered them not;* as Saul, for instance, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. so God deals with wicked men, often by way of righteous retaliation; see Prov. i. 28. Zech. vii. 13.

Ver. 42. *Then did I beat them small, as the dust before the wind, &c.*] They being given up by God, and he not answering to their cries; the phrase denotes the utter ruin and destruction of them, and represents their case as desperate and irrecoverable; being, as it were, pounded to dust, and that driven away with the wind: just as the destruction of the four monarchies is signified by the iron, clay, brass, silver, and gold, being broken to pieces, and made like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and carried away with the wind, so that no place is found for them any more, Dan. ii. 35. *I did cast them out as the dirt of the streets:* expressing indignation and contempt: in 2 Sam. xxii. 43. it is, *I did stamp them as the mire of the street,* and *did spread them abroad:* which also denotes the low and miserable condition to which they were reduced, and the entire conquest made of them, and triumph over them; see Isa. x. 6. Mic. vii. 10. compare with this 2 Sam. xii. 31.

Ver. 43. *Thou hast delivered me from the strivings of the people, &c.*] In 2 Sam. xxii. 44 it is read *my people,* meaning the people of Israel; either Saul and his men, who contended with David, and sought his life; or rather the tribes of Israel, who, after Saul's death, refused to acknowledge David as their king, but afterwards came and anointed him in Hebron. The words may very well be interpreted of the contentions of the Scribes and Pharisees with Christ, and of the contradiction of sinners, which he for a while endured, but is now delivered from them all. *And thou hast made me the head of the Heathen;* which, if understood of David, refers to the Philistines, Syrians, Moabites, and Edomites, being subdued by him, and becoming tributaries to him, 2 Sam. viii. But it best agrees with Christ, who is the head of his chosen ones among the Gentiles; the political head, King, and Governor of them, the Heathen being given him for his inheritance and possession; and which appeared in the first ages of Christianity, when the Gospel was first preached to the Gentiles by the apostles; and still continues, and will be more clearly seen in the latter day, when the Lord shall be King over all the earth. Christ was made the head of the Heathen, by the appointment and designation of his father; and, in fact, was so when multitudes from among the Gentiles were converted and brought to the obedience of him. In 2 Sam. xxii. 44. it is, *thou hast kept me* to be *head of the Heathen:* which does not seem so much to intend the designation and constitution of him as such, but the continuation of him; and denotes the stability of his government in the Gentile world, of which there will be no end. *A people whom I have not known shall serve me:* by whom are meant the Gentiles, who were not the people of God, were without Christ and without God, and without hope in the world: not that there are any people that can be unknown to Christ,

as he is the omniscient God; nor were these unknown to him, in such sense as reprobates, nominal professors, and foolish virgins, are said not to be known by him, Matt. vii. 23. and xxv. 12. For these people among the Heathen, who are or shall be brought to serve the Lord, are such who were the objects of his love and delight from everlasting; were in his father's choice and in his own, and in the gift of his father to him, and in the covenant of his grace; and therefore must be known by him; moreover, they are the purchase of his blood; and the sheep he knows, for whom he has laid down his life, and of whom he has such an exact and particular knowledge, that he can and does call them by name. But the sense is, these seemed not to be taken notice of and cared for by Christ; they were not owned and acknowledged by him as his people; the Jews were distinguished from all others; they only had the law, the word of God, and his ordinances; the Gentiles were suffered to walk in their own ways; they were neglected, and the times of their ignorance were overlooked and disregarded; so that they were treated as a people that were not known for many hundreds of years: but here it is predicted, that when the Gospel should come among them, and they be called by it, they should *serve* the Lord in righteousness and true holiness, with reverence and godly fear, from a principle of love, in his name and strength, and to his glory; see Isa. lv. 4, 5.

Ver. 44. *As soon as they hear of me they shall obey me*, &c.] That is, as soon as they should hear of Christ, through the preaching of the word, by which faith would come, they should readily and at once receive, embrace, and profess the Gospel, and yield a cheerful submission to the ordinances of it; and which has had its accomplishment among the Gentiles, Acts xxviii. 28. and xiii. 42, 44, 48. *The strangers shall submit themselves unto me*; meaning either the same persons as before, the Gentiles, who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, who should submit to Christ, to his Gospel, to his righteousness, and to the sceptre of his kingdom; though some interpret it of the degenerate Jews, *the sons of the stranger*, as the words may be rendered; who, though called the children of God, and the children of the kingdom, yet were, as our Lord says, of their father the devil; and these, some of them, in a flattering and dissembling way, feigned themselves to be the followers and disciples of Christ: and, indeed, it looks as if hypocrites were intended, whether among Jews or Gentiles, or both, since the word here used, and rendered *submit*, signifies to *lie*; and so it is in the metaphrase of Apollinarius; or, as in the margin of some Bibles, to *yield a feigned obedience*: see Psal. lxvi. 3. There seems to be an allusion to the conquest of nations, some of the inhabitants of which readily and heartily submit, but others only feignedly, and through fear, and the force of superior power they cannot withstand.

Ver. 45. *The strangers shall fade away*, &c.] Like the leaves of trees in autumn, when they fall and perish; to which hypocrites and nominal professors are compared, Jude 12. *And be afraid out of their close places*: their towers and fortified places, or the rocks and mountains to which they betake themselves for shelter; but, as not thinking themselves safe enough, through fear and dread, come out of them; see Micah vii. 17. Some Jewish writers [q] interpret the words, they shall halt or be lame; that is, because of the chains put upon their feet: and so they are expressive of the conquest made of them. The word in the Arabic language signifies to *come out*; and may be so rendered here, and *come out*: in 2 Sam. xxii. 46. it is, *they shall gird themselves*, or *come out girt*.

Ver. 46. *The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock*, &c.] This, with what follows, is the concluding part of the psalm, which ends with a celebration of the Divine Being, and with thankfulness for mercies received from him. The psalmist praises him on account of what he is in himself, what he was to him, and had done for him: in himself he is the living God, *the Lord liveth*; he has life in himself, essentially, originally, and independently; and is the fountain and author of life to all others, even to all creatures that have life, whether rational or irrational: he is the giver of natural life to all men, and the supporter of it; and of spiritual and eternal life to his chosen people; and he continues to live, and ever will; wherefore the saints may conclude that their life in every sense is safe and secure. Some render the phrase, by way of wish, *may the Lord live* [r]; but then it must be understood only that he would shew himself more abundantly to be the living God, and that he might be acknowledged so by others. The next clauses are by way of petition; *and blessed be my Rock*; on which he was built and established, to which he betook himself in times of distress, which was his place of defence, and from whence he had a supply; wherefore he desires he might be blessed, not by invoking or conferring a blessing on him, neither of which can be; there being none greater than he to call upon, and he being El-shaddai, God all-sufficient, and in no need of any; but by declaring his blessedness, by celebrating his greatness and goodness, and by ascribing blessing and honour and glory to him. *And let the God of my salvation be exalted*; God was the God of his salvation in a temporal sense, saving him daily from his many enemies; and in a spiritual sense, being the contriver, author, and applier of it to him; on which account he would have him be exalted both by himself, and in the high praises of his people; ascribing the whole of salvation to him, and giving him all the glory of it. Some render the words, *the God of my salvation is high* [s]; he is the most high God, the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, and is above all others. In 2 Sam. xxii. 47. the words are read, *and exalted be the God of the Rock of my salvation*.

Ver. 47. *It is God that avengeth me*, &c.] Or *giveth vengeance unto me*, or *for me* [t]: vengeance only belongs to God, and he repays it for and in behalf of his people. Private revenge is not to be exercised by any; public

[q] R. Donesh apud Jarchi & Abendana not. in Miclal Yophi in loc. so Apollinar. Metaphras.

[r] חי יהוה vivat Jehova, Musculus, Tigurine version, Piscator, Mair; so some in Vatablus, Ainsworth.

[s] ירום excelsus est, Gejerus.

[t] הנותן נקמות לי qui dat ultiones mihi, Pagninus, Gejerus, so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Musculus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

vengeance on delinquents may be exercised by the civil magistrate, to whom God gives power and authority to exercise it, Rom. xiii. 4. as he did to David, as king of Israel; though the phrase rather seems to design the victories which he obtained over his enemies, which were punishments to them, vengeances inflicted on them, and owing to God; so the acceptable year of the Messiah's coming, and the time of his people redeemed by him, is called the day of vengeance of our God, both on his and their enemies, Isa. lxi. 2. and lxiii. 4. *And subdueth the people under me*: the Edomites, Moabites, and others, as in 2 Sam. viii. or the Gentiles under Christ; see the note on ver. 39.

Ver. 48. *He delivereth me from mine enemies*, &c.] From Saul and his men, from Ish-bosheth and Abner, from Absalom, and the conspirators with him; so all believers are delivered out of the hands of their enemies by Christ, as that they can serve the Lord without fear; and so Christ himself is delivered from all his enemies, being raised from the dead, and set at the right hand of God, where he must reign till all enemies are put under his feet. *Yea, thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me*: David was lifted up from a low and mean estate, and placed on the throne of Israel, above all those that rose up against him, and sought to destroy him; and the saints are set upon their high places in Christ, where they are out of the reach of their enemies to do them any hurt; and Christ, he is highly exalted at the right hand of God, above all principality and power, might and dominion, and every name that is named in this world. *Thou hast delivered me from the violent man*; either from Saul, from whom David was delivered; or from Satan the enemy, the son of wickedness, who shall no more exact upon and afflict the Messiah, Psal. lxxxix. 21, 22. The Chaldee paraphrase says, from Gog; as the saints will be delivered from antichrist, the man of sin, and son of perdition, who will be destroyed with the breath of Christ's mouth.

Ver. 49. *Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the Heathen*, &c.] These words are cited by the apostle, in Rom. xv. 9. and applied to the conversion of the Gentiles, which is manifestly prophesied of in some preceding verses of this psalm: there it is rendered, *I will confess to thee among the Gentiles*; and designs not confession of sin, nor profession of the truth, but an acknowledgment of unworthiness, joined with thankfulness for mercies received; done in the most public manner, not only in the congregation of the righteous, but before the Heathen conquered by him; owning before them all, that the victories he had obtained over them were not to be ascribed to his arm and sword, but to the power of the Lord. *And sing praises unto thy name*; which is comely for the saints to do, and which Jesus Christ himself did, in the great congregation of his disciples, and among the Gentiles, by his apostles, and others, on the account of the conversion of them.

Ver. 50. *Great deliverance giveth he to his king*, &c.] Not that is king over him; for he is King of kings and Lord of lords; but that is made king by him, as David was; who did not usurp the throne, but was anointed king by the appointment of God, and was placed by him upon the throne; to whom he gave great deliverance from his enemies, or *magnified salvations* to him; which were great in kind, and many in number; and as Christ is, whom God has set as his King on his holy hill of Sion, against whom the Heathen raged, and kings and princes set themselves; but he is delivered from them all, and saved from the power of death and the grave, and ever lives to reign over, protect, and defend his people; in 2 Sam. xxii. 51. it is, he is *the tower of salvation for his king*, with which compare Prov. xviii. 10. *And sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore*: which may be understood either of David literally, who was the Lord's anointed, and to whom God shewed mercy in various instances; and then by his seed is meant the Messiah, who was of his seed according to the flesh; or of the Messiah, whose name signifies Anointed; and who is often called David, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24. and xxxvii. 24, 25. Hos. iii. 5. and so some of the Jewish doctors[*] from this verse prove that the name of the Messiah is David: and by his seed are meant his spiritual seed; all the elect of God, who are given him as his children, to whom he stands in the relation of the everlasting Father: and as mercy is kept with him for evermore, Psal. lxxxix. 28. so it is shewn to them in regeneration, in the forgiveness of their sins, and in their everlasting salvation.

PSALM XIX.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

THIS psalm was penned by David, and inscribed to the chief musician, as others, to be used in public service, and was designed for Gospel times, as the subject of it shews; which is first, not an account of the light of nature, and then of the law of Moses, but of the Gospel of Christ; and especially as ministered in the times of the apostles, as a citation out of it in Rom. x. 18. makes appear.

Ver. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God*, &c.] By which we are to understand not the heavens literally taken, though these with the firmament are the handyworks of God, and do declare the glory of his perfections, especially his wisdom and power; these shew that there is a God, and that he is a glorious one: but either Gospel churches, often signified by the kingdom of heaven, in the New Testament; the members of them being heaven-born souls, and the doctrines and ordinances ministered among them being from heaven;

[*] Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2.

and there being a very great resemblance between them and heaven, in the company and communion enjoyed in them; and who declare the glory of the divine perfections, which is very great in the handywork of their redemption; and who ascribe the glory of their whole salvation to God: or rather the apostles and first preachers of the word, as appears from Rom. x. 18. who were set in the highest place in the church; had their commission, doctrine, and success from heaven; and who may be called by this name, because of the purity and solidity of their ministry, and their constancy and steadfastness in it, and because of their heavenly lives and conversations: these declared the glory of the divine perfections; such as those particularly of grace, goodness, and mercy, which are not discoverable by the light of nature or law of Moses, as they are displayed in the salvation of men by Christ, in the forgiveness of their sins, the justification of their persons, and the gift of eternal life unto them: they taught men to ascribe the glory of salvation to God alone, Father, Son, and Spirit: they set forth in their ministry the glory of Christ, of his person, and of his offices and grace; and they shewed that redemption was his handywork, as follows: *the firmament sheweth his handywork*: for the same persons may be called the firmament, since they that are wise are said to shine as the brightness of it, Dan. xii. 3. These were like to stars in it, and were the light of the world, and declared that redemption is the work which Christ undertook, and came into this world to perform, and which he has finished; his hands have wrought it, and his own arm has brought salvation to him. The Targum interprets the heavens and the firmament, of such persons as contemplate the heavens, and look upon the firmament or air; and so do some other Jewish writers*.

Ver. 2. *Day unto day uttereth speech*, &c.] This, with the following clause, *and night unto night sheweth knowledge*, some understand of the constant and continued succession of day and night; which declares the glory of God, and shews him to be possessed of infinite knowledge and wisdom; and which brings a new accession of knowledge to men; others, of the continual declaration of the glory of God, and of the knowledge of him made by the heavens and the firmament, the ordinances of which always continue; the sun for a light by day, and the moon and stars for a light by night; and so night and day constantly and successively proclaim the glory and wisdom of God: but rather this is to be understood of the constancy of the Gospel ministry, and the continuance of the evangelic revelation. The apostles of Christ persevered in their work, and laboured in the word and doctrine night and day: they were in it at all seasons; yea, were instant in season and out of season; and though they are dead, the Gospel continues, and will do as long as day and night remain: and these, like overflowing fountains, sent forth in great abundance, as the word [y] rendered *uttereth* signifies, the streams of divine light and knowledge; they were full of matter, and their tongues were as the pen of a ready writer; they diffused the savour of the knowledge of Christ, in great plenty, in every place where they came. These words express the continuance of the Gospel revelation, as the next do the extent of it.

Ver. 3. There is *no speech nor language where their voice is not heard*, &c.] Not the voice of the day and night; as if the sense was, that there is no people, of any speech or language under the sun, but there is something said every day and night of the weather, what it is, or will be, as the face of the heavens appears morning and evening: but of the heavens and firmament; the meaning of which some take to be this; either that though they have no proper speech nor language, yet there is a voice in them which is heard, declaring the glory of God and his handyworks; and the words may very well be rendered, *they have no speech nor words, without* these *their voice is heard*; or that there is no people, nation, or language under the heavens; see Dan. iii. 4, 29. and vi. 24. though they are ever so different one from another, so as not to be able to understand each other; yet the voice of the heavens, uttering and proclaiming the glory of their Maker, is heard and understood by them all: but rather this is to be interpreted of the extent of the Gospel ministry by the apostles; who, according to their commission, went everywhere preaching the word, to men of all nations, of every speech and language; for which they were qualified, by having the gift of divers tongues bestowed upon them; so that there were no nations, of ever so barbarous a speech and language, but they were capable of speaking to and of being understood by them; and though they could not understand one another, they all heard the apostles speak in their own tongues the wonderful works of God, Acts ii. 4—11. Their voice, in the ministration of the Gospel, was heard in every nation externally, and by many internally: faith came by hearing; and they received the word with gladness and readiness. This gives the Gospel revelation a superiority to the legal one; that was only made to one nation, to the nation of the Jews; the voice of that was not heard elsewhere; but the voice of the Gospel is heard in all nations; this revelation is published throughout the world: and this shews that these words belong to the times of the apostles, after they had received a commission from Christ, to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; which was done before the destruction of Jerusalem, Matt. xxiv. 14. Col. i. 6, 23. and which is further confirmed by what follows.

Ver. 4. *Their line is gone out through all the earth*, &c.] Not the line or writings in the book of the creatures, the heavens, and the earth, which lie open, and are legible, and to be seen and read of all men; nor the line and writings in the book of the Scriptures, called line upon line, and precept upon precept, Isa. xxviii. 13. which, though first given to the Jews, were written for the instruction of others, and have been communicated to them; but the line of the apostles;

* Jarchi & Kimchi in loc.

[y] יביע eructat, Musculus, Munster, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth; scaturit, Muis; scaturiendo effundit, Cocceius; copiose ac constanter instar fœcundæ cujusdam scaturiginis protrudit, emittit, Gejerus; so Michaelis.

every one had his line or measure; or the course he was to steer was measured out and directed to him; the line of one, where he was to go and preach the Gospel, reached so far one way, and the line of another reached so far another way; and what with one and another, their line reached throughout all the earth: see 2 Cor. xvi. 13—16. the apostle citing these words in Rom. x. 18. renders them, *their sound went*, &c. the sound of the Gospel, as published by them; which agrees with the next clause; *and their words to the end of the world*; to the isles afar off, even to these northern and distant ones of England, Scotland, and Ireland, which were reached and visited with the Gospel, either by the apostles, or at least by some of the first ministers of the word. *In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun*; that is, in the heavens and firmament, where the natural sun is placed; and its habitation is fitly called a tabernacle, because it is always in motion and never stops: or this may have some respect to its setting, when, according to the vulgar appearance, and to common understandings, it seems to be hid as in a tent or tabernacle; to be as it were gone to bed, and at rest; when in the morning it rises gay and cheerful, and comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber, as is said in the next verse: but this is all to be understood, spiritually and mystically, of Christ the sun of righteousness, who has his tabernacle among his people, his churches; and particularly has a place, and the chief place, in the ministry of the Gospel, being the sum and substance of it; and this is of God's putting there, who committed to his apostles the word of reconciliation, the sum of which is Christ; and this is what makes the Gospel so glorious a light, so clear a revelation as it is: the nature, continuance, and extent of this revelation, are described in the foregoing verses; the perspicuity and clearness of it is set forth in this clause, and in what follows.

Ver. 5. *Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber*, &c.] His nuptial chamber[r]; who looks lovely and beautiful in his nuptial robes, cheerful and pleasant in his countenance, creating pleasure and delight in all his friends that see him and hear his voice: and this simile is expressive of the brightness and glory of the sun when it rises; and of the joy and pleasure which it produces in the minds of men when they behold it: all which sets forth the loveliness and beauty of Christ, as he is held forth in the ministration of the Gospel, and the joy unspeakable and full of glory which his presence yields, after a short departure from his people; see Isa. lxi. 10. John iii. 29. And *rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race*; in which he shews his readiness, velocity, and strength; and this denotes the swiftness of the sun in running its course, and its indefatigableness in its constant motion; though it has been employed therein for so many thousands of years, yet every morning rises with the same cheerfulness, pursues its course, and is never weary: all which may point at the readiness of Gospel ministers, their swiftness to run to and fro, and their strength to fulfil the course of their ministry, in which Christ, the sun of righteousness, is held forth in so glorious a manner.

Ver. 6. *His going forth is from the end of the heaven*, &c.] From the east, where it rises: *and his circuit to the ends of it*; to the west, where it sets; which is expressive of the large compass the Gospel ministration took in the times of the apostles; whereby the grace of God appeared to all men, shone out in a very illustrious manner, and Christ became, what the sun is to the earth, the light of the world. *And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof*; though things may be hid from the light of it, yet not from its heat, so forcible and penetrating it is. Christ, in the ministration of the Gospel to all to whom it comes with power, not only enlightens their minds, but quickens their souls, warms their hearts, causes them to burn within them, arises with healing in his wings upon them, and makes his Gospel the savour of life unto life unto them. The psalmist goes on to say more and excellent things of the Gospel, its nature and usefulness.

Ver. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect*, &c.] By which is meant, not the law of Moses, or the ten commandments, but the *doctrine* of the Lord; as the word תורה, *torah*, signifies, even the whole word of God, as in Isa. viii. 20. All the Scriptures of truth, which are profitable for doctrine; for setting doctrine in a clear light, and for the vindication and establishment of it, and are the rule of doctrine both to preachers and hearers; and which are *perfect*, contain the whole mind and will of God, both with respect to faith and practice; whereby the man of God is made perfect, and thoroughly furnished to all good works, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. and especially the Gospel part of the word of God may be designed, which both in the Old and New Testament is called a *law* or *doctrine*, being eminently so; the doctrine of the Messiah, and of justification by faith in his righteousness, Isa. ii. 3. and xlii. 1. Rom. iii. 27. The Gospel is a perfect plan and scheme of spiritual and saving truths: it gives an account of perfect things; as of the perfect righteousness of Christ, and complete justification by it; of the full as well as free pardon of sins by the blood of Christ; and of redemption and salvation from all sin and evils by him: and it also shews where true perfection is; namely, in Christ, in whom the saints are complete, he being made to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; see James ii. 25. This character, therefore, suits better with the Gospel than with the moral law; though that, as it is to be gathered out of the whole word of God, contains the good and perfect will of God, with respect to what is to be done or avoided; nor is any thing to be added to it; nor did our Lord come to add unto it, or to make it more perfect, but to fulfil it, which men could not do; nor could the law make any man or any thing perfect, either perfectly sanctify, or justify, or save; whereas the bringing in of the better hope in the Gospel does, Heb. ix. 7, 19. The effect, under a divine influence and blessing ascribed to it, is, *converting the soul*; which is a further proof that the law of Moses is not intended: for though by it is the knowledge of sin, or conviction of sin, which often falls short of conversion; yet the spirit of God, as a spirit of regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, is not received through

[r] Elias, in his Tishbi, p. 110, says, "we call the garment (or "canopy) spread over the head of the bridegroom and bride, supported by four pillars, in the time of their espousals, חפה." The same word is used Isa. iv. 5. and translated a defence.

the doctrine or preaching of the law, but through the ministration of the Gospel; which is designed to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; and which use it has when it is attended with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power; see Rom. iii. 20. Gal. iii. 2. Acts xxvi. 18. though the words may be rendered *relieving*, i. e. refreshing and comforting the *soul* [z], as in Lam. i. 11—16. Through want of bodily food, which is the case in the passage referred to, the spirits faint and sink, the soul is almost gone, when, by the ministration of proper food, it is as it were brought back again, as the word [a] here used signifies, and the animal spirits are cheered and revived: and of like use is the Gospel; it is the food of the soul, by which it is refreshed and exhilarated, when ready to sink and faint away; hereby it is restored and revived, comforted and nourished. *The testimony of the Lord is sure*; this is another name for the word of God, or the holy Scriptures; so called because they testify of Christ, of his person, office, and grace; of what he is, was to do, and suffer, and perform for his people, and of his glory that should follow thereon, John v. 39. and particularly the doctrine of the Gospel is the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, both which he himself testified, and which is a testimony concerning him, 2 Tim. i. 8. John iii. 11. And this is *sure*, or *to be believed* [b]: the whole of Scripture is true, coming from the God of truth; having for its principal subject Christ, who is truth itself, and being dictated by the spirit of truth; and particularly the Gospel part of it, and all the truths therein contained, especially the doctrine of salvation by Christ, which is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation: the Gospel is a testimony or record which God himself has bore concerning his son, and eternal life by him, and therefore sure and to be depended upon; for if the witness of men is received, the witness of God is greater, 1 John, v. 9, 10, 11. The effect ascribed to the word of God, or to the Gospel under this character, is, *making wise the simple*. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, render it *babes or children*; and so Apollinarius; and the word פתי, here used in the Arabic language, is said to [c] signify such; and here it intends babes and children not in years, but in understanding, to whom God is pleased to reveal the truths of his Gospel, when he hides them from the wise and prudent: these simple ones are such who are sensible of their simplicity and folly, and of their want of understanding; who, with Agur, think themselves more foolish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man; and these, by the word of God, are made wise to know themselves, their folly, sinfulness, imperfection, and impotence; and are made wise unto salvation, to know the right way of salvation by Christ; see 2 Tim. iii. 15. where the same phrase is used as here, and seems to be borrowed from hence, and is used of the Scriptures; which also make men wise in the knowledge of Gospel doctrines, the wisdom of God in a mystery, which to know is the greatest wisdom and understanding, and much more so than to be acquainted with the law only, Deut. iv. 6.

Ver. 8. *The statutes of the Lord are right*, &c.] The word of God may be called *statutes*, or *visitations* [d], because that God will visit, in a way of resentment, such persons as despise its authority, do not act according to it, or add unto it, or detract from it; or the word may be rendered *commissions* [e], things committed to trust, as the Scriptures were to the Jews, Rom. iii. 1, 2. and as the Gospel is committed to the trust of the ministers of it, who faithfully dispense it, 2 Cor. v. 19. 1 Tim. i. 11. Now these may be said to be *right*, as the word of the Lord is, Psal. xxxiii. 4. since they set men right in their principles, and direct them to right practices; they are the means of making them upright in heart, and in conversation: the doctrines of the word of God have nothing crooked, froward, and perverse in them; are without sophism, and the hidden things of dishonesty; they are all in righteousness, and plain and easy in every thing respecting salvation, to those who have a spiritual knowledge and understanding of them, Prov. viii. 8, 9. they lead into right and straight paths of truth and holiness, in which wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err; and particularly the Gospel directs to the right way of salvation and eternal life by Jesus Christ; the effect of which is *rejoicing the heart*. This cannot be understood of the law, which is a voice of terror, pronounces guilty, curses and condemns, is the killing letter, and works wrath; but of the Gospel part of the word, which is a joyful sound; publishes good tidings of good things; and, when applied by the spirit of God, is found to have this effect, see Jer. xv. 16. *The commandment of the Lord is pure*; not only the Scriptures in general may bear this name, because they deliver out the commands of God to men, as those of a moral and ceremonial kind to the Jews under the former dispensation; so the ordinances of Christ, which are his commands under the Gospel dispensation; yea, the Gospel itself may be so called, though, strictly speaking, it has no command in it; because, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, it is made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, Rom. xvi. 25, 26. besides, the commandment is no other than the word or doctrine, see 1 John ii. 7. and as every commandment of the Lord, of what kind soever it is, is pure and holy, so is every word of God, Prov. xxx. 5. being without any mixture of men's inventions, or the dross of corrupt doctrine, sincere, unadulterated, clear of all chaff and impurity, consistent, uniform, and all of a piece, and which tends to promote purity of heart, life, and conversation. *Enlightening the eyes*; that is, of the understanding, so as for a man to see his lost state and condition by nature; to see the glory, fulness, and grace of Christ; to behold wondrous things in the doctrine of the Gospel, and to observe the way of duty in which he should walk: this is the eye-salve in Rev. iii. 18. and so the Jewish doctors [f] explaining this text call the law, using the same word as there.

[z] משיבת נפש recreans animam, Vatablus, Schmidt; refocillat, Piscator.

[a] Restituens animam, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius; reducens, Gejerus, Muntanus; so Ainsworth.

[b] נאמנה fidelis, V. L. Musculus, Pagninus; fide dignum, Piscator, Michaelis.

[c] Shemot Rabba, s. 3. fol. 93. 2.

[d] פקודי visitationes, Ainsworth.

[e] Commissiones, Munster; deposita, so some in Rivetus; depositum, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[f] Vajikra Rabba, s. 12. fol. 155. 2. & Debarim Rabba, s. 1. fol. 243. 3.

Ver. 9. *The fear of the Lord* is *clean,* &c.] Still the word of God is intended, which teaches men to fear the Lord; gives a full account of the worship of God, which is often meant by the fear of God; it instructs in the matter and manner of worship; and nothing more powerfully engages to serve the Lord with reverence and godly fear than the Gospel does: and this is *clean;* and the doctrines of it direct to the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, and to the righteousness of Christ, the fine linen, clean and white; the promises of it put the saints on cleansing themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; and the whole of it is the word of truth, by which God and Christ sanctify the church and the members of it, John xv. 2. and xvii. 17. Eph. v. 25, 26. And this word is *enduring for ever;* the law is done away; the ceremonial law entirely, and the moral law, as a covenant of works, and as to the ministration of it by Moses; but the Gospel continues; it is an everlasting one; it endures for ever, notwithstanding all the opposition made to it by open persecution, or false teachers. *The judgments of the Lord* are *true,* and *righteous altogether; the judgments of the Lord* are the same with *the word of God,* as appears from Psal. cxix. 25, 149. and these seem to design that part of the word, which contains rules of God's judging and governing his people; or the laws, orders, and ordinances of Christ in his house, which his people should observe, and yield a cheerful obedience to, he being their King, Judge, and Lawgiver: and these are *true,* or *truth*[g] itself; being wisely made, according to the truth of things, and agreeable to the holiness and righteousness of God, and so righteous; not at all grievous, but easy, pleasant, and delightful, one and all of them.

Ver. 10. *More to be desired* are they *than gold,* &c.] This refers to all the truths in the word of God; to all the doctrines of the Gospel; which, by good men, are more desirable, and by them more prized and valued, than all worldly riches and treasure. *Yea, than much fine gold;* more than gold, and the best of gold, and a great deal of it, than thousands of gold and silver; see Psal. cxix. 72, 127. Prov. viii. 10, 11. *Sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb; or the dropping of the honeycombs*[h], which is the purest and sweetest of the honey; and what honey is to the natural taste of men, that is the Gospel, and the truths of it, to the spiritual taste of believers, Psal. cxix. 103. and when the presence of Christ is enjoyed, his love is shed abroad, and the blessings of his grace are partook of, the ordinances of the Gospel are very delightful, Cant. ii. 3. eloquence, and eloquent orators, are sometimes described by mellifluous words; or by their expressions being like honey, and sweeter than that[i].

Ver. 11. *Moreover, by them is thy servant warned,* &c.] By whom the psalmist means himself, who was the servant of the Lord, not only in common with other saints, but as he was a king and prophet, and as such he received advantage from the word of God; all his instructions as a prophet, and all his rules of government as a king; and the whole of that wisdom, prudence, and knowledge, with which he conducted in both offices, were from the Lord by his word: and it may be applied to any servant of the Lord, and especially in an ecclesiastical office, as an apostle of Christ, and minister of the word; who serve God in the Gospel of his Son, and, by means of the Scriptures, are furnished for every good work; and also to believers in Christ in common; who, of whatsoever rank and quality, in whatsoever state and condition of life, whether high or low, rich or poor, bond or free, are Christ's servants; and whatsoever is written is for their instruction, and by the word of God they are *warned;* the Scriptures are a way-mark to them, to direct them in a right way, and to caution them against turning to the right or left; either to immoral practices, or the errors and heresies of wicked men: it is a lamp to their feet, and a light to their path, and teaches them to walk circumspectly, and warns them of rocks, gins, and snares in the way; or, as the words may be rendered, *by them is thy servant made clear,* or *bright*[k]; so the word is used in Dan. xii. 3. that is, in his understanding: the psalmist confirms, by his own experience, what he had said before of the word, ver. 8, that it enlightened the eyes: the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ shining into the heart gives the light of the glory of God in the person of Christ; it illuminates and irradiates the mind, and gives clear ideas of the glory and perfections of God, of his counsels and covenant, of his works of nature and of grace; and makes a bright discovery of the person, offices, and grace of Christ; and of the blessed Spirit, and his operations; and of the blessings of grace, and of eternal glory and happiness. And *in keeping of them* there is *great reward;* which is to be understood, not of keeping the law of Moses, and the precepts of that, which, if a man did keep perfectly and constantly, he should live in them; but of observing the word of God, and by diligent searching into it, reading and learning it, and meditating on it, to get and obtain knowledge of divine things; which carries its own reward with it, and is better than thousands of gold and silver; and of laying up the word of God, and the truths of the Gospel, and keeping them in mind and memory, which is very profitable and serviceable, to promote spiritual peace and comfort, and to preserve from sin, doctrinal and practical; and also of yielding a cheerful obedience to the Gospel, by cordially embracing and professing the doctrines, and submitting to the ordinances of it; from all which arise great profit, and much reward: such come at the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which is preferable to every thing else, and is more precious than rubies; and all desirable things; such enjoy the presence of Christ, have much peace and comfort in their souls; they are made wise unto salvation, and are fitted for every good word and work.

Ver. 12. *Who can understand* his *errors?* &c.] Sin is an error, a wandering out of the way of God, swerving from the rule of his word; and many mistakes are made by the people of God themselves; even so many that they cannot number them; they are more than the hairs of their head; they cannot understand, find out and express, neither their number, nor their evil

[g] אמת veritas, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; Cocceius, Gejerus, Rivetus.

[h] נפת צופים stillatione favorum, Vatablus, Rivetus, Cocceius; so Ainsworth.

[i] Του και απο γλωσσης, Homer. Iliad. 1. v. 249.

[k] נזהר illustratur, Pagninus, Montanus, Rivetus.

nature, nor the many aggravating circumstances which attend them; this the psalmist said, upon a view of the large extent, glory, and excellency of the word of God; and upon comparing himself with it, in which, as in a glass, he saw how far short he came of it, and what a disagreement and want of conformity there was in him unto it; see Psal. cxix. 97. Rom. vii. 14. and he suggests, that though the word he had been describing was perfect, pure, and clean, he was not; nor could he expect any reward of debt, but merely of grace, for his observance of it; and that it was best, under a sense of sin, to have recourse, not to works of righteousness done by men; but to the grace and mercy of God in Christ, as follows: *cleanse thou me from secret faults*; by which are meant not such sins as are done in secret, and are unknown to men; such as David's sin with Bath-sheba, 2 Sam. xii. 12. nor the inward motions of sin in the heart, to which none are privy but God, and a man's own soul; not but that each of these may be properly enough included in such a petition; but sins, which are unknown to a man himself, are meant: there are some actions, which, though known when committed, are not known to be sinful ones; and there are some sins which are committed unadvisedly, and through carelesness, and pass unobserved; not only many vain and sinful thoughts pass to and fro uncontrolled, without being taken notice of; but many foolish and idle words are spoken, and many evil actions, through infirmity and inadvertency, are done, which, when a good man, at the close of a day, comes to reflect upon the things that have passed in it, are quite hidden from him, are unknown to him, being unobserved by him; wherefore such a petition is highly proper to be inserted in his address at the throne of grace: and which also supposes the person sensible of the defiling nature of sin, and of his own impotency to cleanse himself from it; and that God only can do it, who does it by the application of the blood of his son, which cleanses from all sin; for this respects not regenerating and sanctifying grace, but pardoning grace; a manifestation of it, a view of acquittance from sin by Christ, and of freedom from obligation to punishment for it.

Ver. 13. *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, &c.*] Some understand these words of persons: the Septuagint, and the versions that follow that, render it *from strangers*: such who are strangers to God and godliness; that is, keep from all conversation with them in things sinful, or from others' sins; from having a fellowship with them, being a partaker of them, lest their plagues and punishments should be shared in: others, as the Targum, *from proud men*, who are haughty, insolent, and conceited of themselves; lest he should be so corrupted and drawn aside by them: but rather the words are to be understood of sins wilfully, contumaciously, and presumptuously committed; and the petition supposes, that these may be committed by good men, if left to themselves; and that there is a proneness in them to them; and that they would rush into them, were they not kept back and restrained by the powerful and efficacious grace of God: and it also supposes that the saints cannot keep themselves; that God only can keep them from evil; and therefore they pray to him that he would, who does keep them by his power, at least from a final and total falling away. *Let them not have dominion over me*: neither presumptuous sins, nor any other, Psal. cxix. 133. as they shall not, Rom. vi. 14. as sin has over wicked men; and they yield a ready obedience to the laws and lusts of it; it reigns over them as a king and tyrant, even unto death: it is something very powerful in good men; it prevails over them, and carries them captive; wherefore they pray it may not have a continued dominion, as it shall not; because they are in another kingdom, and under grace as a governing principle, which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. *Then shall I be upright*; in heart, and walk uprightly in conversation; being cleansed from secret faults, and kept from notorious crimes, and gross enormities; and shall exercise a conscience void of offence, both to God and man; and be *perfect*, as the word is sometimes rendered, at least comparatively; and absolutely so, as washed in Christ's blood, and justified by his righteousness. *And I shall be innocent from the great transgression*; which some understand of pride, others of apostacy; perhaps the sin against the Holy Ghost may be intended; though the words may be rendered, *from much transgression*[k]; and the sense is, that he should be cleared and acquitted of a multitude of transgressions he had been guilty of; or be preserved from much sin, which otherwise he should have fallen into.

Ver. 14. *Let the words of my mouth, &c.*] Meaning either his speech in common conversation, which should not be filthy and foolish, rotten and corrupt; but such as ministers grace to the hearer; or else his address to God, both in prayer and thanksgiving. *And the meditation of my heart*; his inward thoughts continually revolving in his mind; or his meditation on the word of God and divine things; or mental prayer, which is not expressed, only conceived in the mind. *Be acceptable in thy sight*; as words and thoughts are, when they are according to the word of God; and as the sacrifices of prayer, whether vocal or mental, and of praise, are through Jesus Christ our Lord. The psalmist, in order to strengthen his faith in God, that he should be heard and answered in the petitions he put up, makes use of the following epithets: *O Lord, my strength*, or *rock*[l], *and my Redeemer*; who had been the strength of his life and of his salvation, the rock on which he was built and established, and the Redeemer who had redeemed his life from destruction, and out of the hands of all his enemies, and from all his iniquities.

[k] רב multa, Montanus, Rivetus, Gejerus, Cocceius; so Ainsworth.

[l] צורי rupes mea, Mercerus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; mea petra, Pagninus, Montanus, Rivetus; so Ainsworth.

PSALM XX.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

THIS psalm is thought, by some, to be written by David, on account of himself, and as a form to be used by the people for him, when he was about to go to war; particularly with the Ammonites and Syrians, 2 Sam. x. 6, 18. mention being made of chariots in it, ver. 7. of which there was a great number in that war: Arama thinks it was made by him when he got the victory over the Philistines; others think it was written by one of the singers on David's account, and should be rendered, *a psalm for David*, as Psal. lxxii. and xcii. but rather it is a *psalm concerning David*; concerning the Messiah, whose name is David; or a psalm of David concerning the Messiah, since he is expressly mentioned, ver. 6. and Aben Ezra says, there are some that interpret it of the Messiah; and some passages in it are, by Jewish writers [m], applied unto him, as ver. 6, 9. and our countryman, Mr. Ainsworth, says, the whole psalm is a prophecy of Christ's sufferings, and his deliverance out of them, for which the church with him triumpheth. Theodoret takes it to be a prophecy of Sennacherib's invasion of Judea, and of Rabshakeh's blasphemy, and of Hezekiah's distress and prayer on that account.

Ver. 1. *The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble*, &c.] All the days of Christ were days of trouble; he was a brother born for adversity; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs; he had his own sorrows, and he bore the griefs of others; he was persecuted by Herod in his infancy; he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness; he was harassed by the Scribes and Pharisees continually; he was grieved at the hardness, impenitence, and unbelief, of that perverse and faithless generation of men, and was sometimes made uneasy by his own disciples: at some particular seasons his soul or spirit is said to be troubled, as at the grave of Lazarus, and when in a view of his own death, and when he was about to acquaint his disciples that one of them should betray him, John xi. 33. and xii. 27. and xiii. 21. but more particularly it was a day of trouble with him, when he was in the garden, heavy, and sore amazed, and his sweat was, as it were, drops of blood falling on the ground, and his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; but more especially this was his case when he hung upon the cross, and is what seems to be principally respected here; when he was in great torture of body through the rack of the cross; when he endured the cruel mockings of men, of the common people, of the chief priests, and even of the thieves that suffered with him; when he had Satan, and all his principalities and powers, let loose upon him, and he was grappling with them; when he bore all the sins of his people, endured the wrath of his father, and was forsaken by him: now in this day of trouble, both when in the garden and on the cross, he prayed unto his father, as he had been used to do in other cases, and at other times; and the church here prays, that God would hear and answer him, as he did: he always heard him; he heard him at the grave of Lazarus; he heard him in the garden, and filled his human soul with courage and intrepidity, of which there were immediate instances; he heard him on the cross, and helped him as man and Mediator, Isa. xlix. 8. *The name of the God of Jacob defend thee*; that is, God himself, who is named the God of Jacob, whom Jacob called upon, and trusted in as his God, and who answered him in the day of his distress: Jacob was exercised with many troubles, but the Lord delivered him out of them all; and which may be the reason why the Lord is addressed under this character here; besides, Israel is one of the names of the Messiah, Isa. xlix. 3. on whose account the petition is put up; to which may be added, that Jacob may design the people of God, the spiritual sons of Jacob, the church of the living God, whose God the Lord is; and the phrase may be here used by the church, to encourage her faith in prayer: the petition, on account of the Messiah, is, that God would *defend* him, or *set* him *on an high place* [n]; or *exalt* him: he was brought very low in his state of humiliation; he was in the form of a servant; he was in a very low and mean condition throughout the whole of his life; through the suffering of death he was made lower than the angels, and he was laid in the lower parts of the earth: the church, in this petition, prays for his resurrection from the dead; for his ascension into the highest heavens; for his exaltation at the right hand of God; for the more visible setting him on his throne in his kingdom; in all which she has been answered.

Ver. 2. *Send thee help from the sanctuary*, &c.] Meaning either from the tabernacle, the holy place, where was the ark, the symbol of the divine Presence; or rather heaven, the habitation of God's holiness; unless the same is meant by it as by Zion, in the next clause, the church of God, from whence he sends the rod of his strength. *And strengthen thee out of Zion*; and the *help* and *strength* prayed for are not to be understood of that assistance and support, which Christ, as man, had from his father, at the time of his sufferings, which were promised him, and he believed he should have, and had, Psal. lxxxix. 21. Isa. l. 7, 9. and xlix. 8. since these petitions follow that which relates to his exaltation; but of the help and strength afforded to the apostles and ministers of Christ, after they had received the commission from him to preach the Gospel to every creature; when, as a full answer to these petitions, God worked with them, greatly assisted them, strengthened them with strength in their souls; confirmed the word with signs and wonders

[m] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 18. 1. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 44. 2.

[n] ישגבך elevet te, Pagninus, Montanus; exaltet te, Vatablus, Musculus, Michaelis; in edito collocet te, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

following; made it the power of God to salvation to multitudes; and so strengthened the cause, interest, and kingdom of the Redeemer.

Ver. 3. *Remember all thy offerings,* &c.] The spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise which Christ, as the great High-priest, offers up for his people; or which they offer by him, and are acceptable to God through him, by virtue of the incense of his mediation: or the offering up of himself, which answers to, and is the body, the sum and substance, of all the offerings of the law; they were types of this, and what they could not do this did; and therefore it is expressed in the singular number in the next clause. *And accept thy burnt-sacrifice. Selah.* The word rendered *accept* signifies *to reduce to ashes*[o]; and the way in which it was known that sacrifices were acceptable to God was by fire coming down from heaven upon them and consuming them, Lev. ix. 24. 1 Chron. xxi. 26. 2 Chron. vii. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 38. and therefore the word is rightly rendered *accept;* and Christ's sacrifice of himself, putting away sin, and perfecting for ever them that are sanctified, is of a sweet-smelling savour to God; for hereby his justice is satisfied, his law is magnified and made honourable, the sins of his people are atoned for, their persons are accepted, and their sacrifices of prayer and praise come up also with acceptance to him through the virtue of this sacrifice; and so these petitions have their accomplishment.

Ver. 4. *Grant thee according to thine own heart,* &c.] Which is to see his seed, the travail of his soul, and to have the pleasure of the Lord prosper in his hand; to have all his people called, preserved, and glorified. *And fulfil all thy counsel;* whatever was agreed upon in the council and covenant of peace between him and his father, relating to his own glory, and the salvation of his people.

Ver. 5. *We will rejoice in thy salvation,* &c.] That is, *so will we,* &c. or *that we may*[p], &c. or *let us;* these words, with what follow, point at the end of the church's requests, and what she resolved to do upon the accomplishment of the above things; for instance, she would rejoice in the salvation of the Messiah; meaning either the salvation and deliverance from death and the grave, and all other enemies, which he himself is possessed of, and which enters into, and is the occasion of the joy of his people; for not his sufferings and death only, but chiefly his resurrection from the dead, session at God's right hand, and intercession for them, cause the triumph of faith in him, and further the joy of it, Rom. viii. 33, 34. or else the salvation he is the author of, which being so great, so suitable, so complete and perfect, and an everlasting one, is matter of joy to all sensible of their need of it, and who have a comfortable hope of interest in it. *And in the name of our God we will set up our banners:* either as a preparation for war; see Jer. li. 27. so when Cæsar[q] set up his banner, it was a token to his soldiers to run to their arms and prepare to fight; and then the sense is, putting our trust in the Lord, relying on his strength, and not on our own, we will cheerfully and courageously engage with all his and our enemies, sin, Satan, and the world; as good soldiers of Christ, we will endure hardness, fight his battles under the banners of the Lord of hosts, in whose service we are enlisted; or as a token of victory, when standards were set up, and flags hung out[r]; see Jer. l. 2. Exod. xvii. 15. and then the meaning is, Christ, the great Captain of our salvation, having obtained a complete victory over all enemies, and made us more than conquerors thereby, we will set up our banners, hang out the flag, and in his name triumph over sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell. *The Lord fulfil all thy petitions;* the same as in ver. 4. this is put here to shew that the church will be in such a frame as before described, when the Lord shall have fulfilled all the petitions of his Anointed; of which she had a full assurance, as appears from the following words.

Ver. 6. *Now know I that the Lord saveth his Anointed,* &c.] Not David, though he was the anointed of the God of Jacob, and was anointed with material oil to be king of Israel by Samuel, at the express order of God himself; but David is not here speaking of himself, nor the church of him, but of the Messiah; anointed by Jehovah king over his holy hill of Zion, with the oil of gladness, or the Holy Spirit. The church in prayer rises in her faith, and is strongly assured of the salvation of the Messiah; that though his troubles would be many and great, he should be delivered out of them all; should be heard and helped in the day of salvation, and be freed from the sorrows of death and hell, he should be encompassed with; that he should be raised from the dead; have all power in heaven and earth given him; ascend on high, and triumph over all his enemies; and all his people, all the members of his body, should be saved through him, which is in a sense the salvation of himself. *He will hear him from his holy heaven;* where his throne and temple are, which is the habitation of his holiness, whither the prayers of the Messiah when on earth ascended, where they were received, heard, and answered. Before the church prays that he might be heard, now she believes he would; and that, *with the saving strength of his right hand;* that is, by the exertion of his mighty power, in strengthening him as man to bear up under his sorrows, go through his work, and finish it; by upholding him with his right hand whilst engaged in it, and by raising him up from the dead with it, and setting him down at it in the highest heavens.

Ver. 7. *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses,* &c.] That is, in chariots and horses prepared for war; which, besides their use for carriage, did great annoyance to the enemy in battle, and were very terrible to them, and were greatly trusted in by those that possessed them, Deut. xx. 1. Isa. xxxi. 1. such chariots as were called *currus falcati,* that had scythes at the sides of them, which being drove with fury among the infantry, cut them down as grass is mown with scythes; such the old Canaanites used, which were very terrible, Josh. xvii. 16. Judg. iv. 3. and horses

[o] ידשנה incineret, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; in cinerem vertat, Vatablus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus, Ainsworth.

[p] So Ainsworth; נרננה ovemus, Vatablus, Piscator, Michaelis; cantemus, Gejerus.

[q] De Bello Gallico, l. 2. c. 20.

[r] Schindler. Pentaglott. col. 1126.

trained up for war do much execution in a battle by pawing and trampling; see Job xxxix. 21—25. though these are vain things for safety, and not to be depended on, for salvation and victory are of the Lord, Psal. xxxiii. 17. Prov. xxi. 31. and such are the chariots and horses of the sun, and the idols in which the Gentiles trusted, 2 Kings xxiii. 11. Psal. cxv. 8. and all external things in which men depend for salvation, as fleshly privileges, outward works of righteousness, morality, a profession of religion, a round of duties, &c. all which are disclaimed by those who know the way of life and salvation by Christ, Hosea xiv. 3. *But we will remember the name of the Lord our God;* not any of the names by which the Lord God is called, as Elohim, El-shaddai, Jehovah, and the like; though each of these are worthy of remembrance, and greatly serve to encourage faith in him; but rather the perfections of God, such as the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, which are to be remembered and confided in; and not the friendship of princes, the schemes of human policy, and the outward forces of strength; or else God himself is intended, whose name is himself, and is a strong tower to the righteous; and to remember him is to bear him in mind, and not forget him; to have the desires of the soul towards him, and to the remembrance of him; and to make mention of him, of his names, attributes, word, and works; which is both for his glory and for the encouragement of faith in him, both in ourselves and others; it is to call upon his name in times of trouble, and at all times, and also to trust in him and not in an arm of flesh; for it stands opposed to trusting in chariots and horses; and it is to call to mind past instances of his goodness, wisdom, and power, and be thankful for them, and make use of them to engage confidence in him; and which should be done from the consideration of his being God and not man, and of his being our God, our covenant God and Father.

Ver. 8. *They are brought down and fallen,* &c.] These are they that rode in chariots and on horses, and trusted in them; who are brought down from their places of honour and safety; and fall, not into the hands of their enemies, and into a low and mean estate, but to the ground by death; as also such who, being like Capernaum, lifted up to heaven with their own outward attainments, and think to get thither by them, are brought down to hell, and fall into the pit of corruption. *But we are risen, and stand upright;* who remember the name of the Lord, and trust in him; the church is sometimes in a very low and depressed condition; it consists of a poor and an afflicted people, and who are persecuted by men; so the church has been under the Heathen Roman emperors, and under the Papacy, and will be as long as she is in the wilderness, and the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth; and especially when they will be slain, and their bodies lie on the earth unburied; but these shall rise and stand upright, and ascend to heaven; there will be a glorious state of the church; there will be a reviving of the interest of Christ, through the bringing in the fulness and forces of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews; the dry bones will live again, and stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army; in those days the righteous will flourish and have abundance of peace and prosperity. This may also include the first resurrection, which the saints will have a part in; the dead in Christ will rise first, and will stand before the Lord with confidence, and not be ashamed; when the ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for though these words are expressed in the present tense, because of the certainty of them, they belong to future times; hence the following petitions.

Ver. 9. *Save, Lord,* &c.] Not *the king,* as the Septuagint, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions read the words, joining the word *king* to them, which is in the next clause; but this, as Aben Ezra observes, is not right, because of the accent *athnach,* which divides these words from the following; rather the word *us* may be supplied; and so the Syriac version renders it, *the Lord will deliver us;* and the Targum is, *O Lord,* פרק לן, *redeem us,* or *save us;* that is, with a temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation: this petition is directed to Jehovah the Father, as the following is to the King Messiah. *Let the King hear us when we call;* for not God the Father is here meant, though he is an everlasting King, the King of kings; and who hears his people, when they call upon him, and while they are calling; yet he is rarely, if ever, called *the King,* without any other additional epithet; whereas the Messiah often is, as in the next psalm, ver. 1, 7. and xlv. 1. and prayer is made to him, and he hears and receives the prayers of his people; and, as Mediator, presents them to his Father perfumed with his much incense; for he is a Priest as well as a King.

PSALM XXI.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

THIS psalm was either written by David; and therefore called a *psalm of David:* or it was written, as it may be rendered, *for David,* by some other person, on account of his victories and triumphs; or rather *concerning David* *; that is, concerning the Messiah, the son of David, as Kimchi says some expound it; or concerning the Messiah, who is called David, Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25. and Jarchi observes, that their Rabbins interpret it of the Messiah; but, says he, it is right to explain it, moreover, of David himself, for an answer to the heretics (Christians) who err in it; and various passages in this psalm are by the Jewish writers understood of the Messiah; as *the King,* in ver. 1, 7. is in the Targum called the King Messiah;

* לדוד pro Davide, vel de Davide, Vatablus.

ver. 4. is in the Talmud applied [t] to him, ver. 3, 5, are in Zohar [u], and in the Midrashes [w], interpreted of him; and many Christian writers understand the whole of him; which is right: though Theodoret thinks it was penned on the account of the health of King Hezekiah, and his restoration from his disease; which is not likely.

Ver. 1. *The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord,* &c.] Either in that strength which is in Jehovah himself, in whom is everlasting strength; and which is seen in the works of creation and providence, and is the same in Christ himself, as he is the mighty God; or else in the strength which Jehovah communicated to Christ as man, whereby he was strengthened in his human nature, to go through and complete the work of man's redemption; or in the strength which the Lord puts forth, and the power which he exerts towards and upon his people, in conversion; which is the produce of the exceeding greatness of his power; and in strengthening them, from time to time, to exercise grace, discharge duty, and withstand temptations and sin; and in keeping them safe to the end; in supporting them under all their trials, and in carrying on and finishing the work of faith upon their souls; all which is matter of joy to Christ. *And in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice?* meaning either his own salvation by the Lord, from all his sorrows and troubles, and out of the hands of all enemies, being in the presence of God, where is fulness of joy, Psal. xvi. 9—11. or else the salvation of his people by him, which Jehovah appointed them to, secured for them in the covenant of grace, sent Christ to work out for them, applies by his Spirit, and at last puts into the full possession of: Christ rejoices at the effectual vocation and conversion of his people, when salvation is brought near unto them; and especially at their glorification, when they shall be in the full enjoyment of it; then will they be his joy, and crown of rejoicing: this is the joy that was set before him, which made him go so cheerfully through his sufferings and death for them, Heb. xii. 2. the reasons of this joy are, because of the great love he bears to them; the interest and property he has in them; his undertakings for them, as their surety, to bring them safe to glory; his purchase of them by his blood; his intercession for them, that they might be with him to behold his glory; and, last of all, because of his Father's glory, his own glory, and the glory of the blessed Spirit, which are concerned in the salvation of these persons.

Ver. 2. *Thou hast given him his heart's desire,* &c.] Which the church had prayed for in Psal. xx. 4. whatever Christ's heart desired, or his lips requested, has been given him. *And hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.* Whatever he asked in the council and covenant of peace was granted; he asked for all the elect, as his spouse and bride; these were the desire of his heart and eyes, and they were given him; he asked for all the blessings of grace for them, and all grace was given to them in him; he asked for glory, for eternal life, and it was promised him; and not only the promise of it was put into his hand, but the thing itself; see Psal. ii. 8. 2 Tim. i. 1, 9. 1 John v. 11. and Psal. xx. 4. whatever he requested of his father, when here on earth, was granted; he always heard him; that memorable prayer of his in John xvii. is heard and answered, both in what respects himself, his own glorification, and the conversion, sanctification, union, preservation, and glorification of his people; whatever he now desires and requests in heaven, as the advocate and intercessor for his saints, is ever fulfilled; which is an instance of the great regard Jehovah has unto him, and may be considered as a reason of his joy in him.

Ver. 3. *For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness,* &c.] Not temporal, but spiritual blessings, which spring from the grace and goodness of God, and consist of it; and relate to the spiritual and eternal welfare of those for whose sake he receives them, and who are blessed with them in him: his being *prevented* with them denotes the freeness of the donation of them; that before he could well ask for them, or before he had done requesting them, they were given him; and also the earliness of the gift of them, they were put into his hands before his incarnation, before he was manifest in the flesh, even from the foundation of the world, and before the world began, Eph. i. 3, 4. 2 Tim. i. 9. and likewise the order in which they were given; first to Christ, and then to his people in him, as the passages referred to shew. *Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head;* which is expressive of his victory over all enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, death and hell; and of his being possessed of his throne and kingdom; and has respect to his exaltation at the right hand of God, where he is crowned with glory and honour: and this crown being of *pure gold* denotes the purity, glory, solidity, and perpetuity of his kingdom; this is a crown, not which believers put upon him by believing in him, and ascribing the glory of their salvation to him, or what the church, called his mother, has crowned him with, Cant. iii. 11. but which his father put upon him, who has set him King over his holy hill of Zion, Psal. ii. 6. and viii. 5. compare with this Rev. xiv. 14. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions read *a crown of a precious stone;* and so Apollinarius; and seem to refer to the crown set on David's head, which had precious stones in it, 2 Sam. xii. 30. Josephus [x] says it had a sardonyx. Fortunatus Scacchus [y] fancies the topaz is meant, and that the Hebrew text should be read *a crown of topaz;* mistaking the sense of the word *phaz,* which never signifies a topaz, but the best gold, pure solid gold.

Ver. 4. *He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him,* &c.] Both for himself, as man, when he was about to die, that he might be raised to life again, which was granted him; and for his people, that they might live spiritually and eternally, and accordingly life is given to him for them; and he has power to give it to as many as the father has given him, John xvii. 2. Even *length of days for ever and ever:* the life he has for himself as man is what will ever continue; he will

[t] T. Bab. Succah, fol. 52. 1. Vid. Nachman. disput. cum fratre Paulo, p. 56. Ed. Wagenseil.
[u] In Numb. fol. 69. 3. 4.
[w] Midrash Tillim apud Viccars. in loc. & in Galatin. l. 3. c. 9. Bemidbar Rabba, fol. 212. 4. & 218. 1.
[x] Antiqu. l. 7. c. 7. s. 5.
[y] Elæochrism. Sacr. l. 3. c. 40. p. 1003.

die no more, death will have no more dominion over him: he will live for evermore, and that to make intercession for his members, Rom. vi. 9, 10. Rev. i. 18. Heb. vii. 25. and the life which is granted them at his request is an everlasting one, both as to body and soul: for though they die as other men, they shall live again in the resurrection of the just, and never die more, but shall be like the angels in heaven: and as for the second death, that shall not hurt them, nor have any power over them; they will live and reign with Christ for ever.

Ver. 5. *His glory is great in thy salvation*, &c.] That is, the glory of the King Messiah is great in the Lord's salvation of him; delivering him from all his troubles and sorrows, and out of the hands of all his enemies, when he was raised from the dead, and was set at the right hand of God, and crowned with glory and honour: or the sense is, that his glory is great in the salvation of his people by him; it was his glory as Mediator to be appointed to be the Lord's salvation to them; and it being effected by him declares the glory and greatness of his person; and the nature of it is such as cannot fail of bringing glory to him; and such is the sense his people have of it, that it obliges them to ascribe the glory of it alone to him. *Honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him*: which is to be understood not of the honour and majesty of his divine nature, which are essential to him, and not laid upon him by any; nor of the glory which the saints attribute to him on account of their salvation by him; but of that which his father has put upon him, and lies in the introduction of him into his glory after his sufferings and death, and resurrection from the dead; in exalting him at his right hand above all creatures and things; in giving him all power in heaven and in earth; in putting all the gifts of the Spirit into his hands, which he receiving gave to men, and in ordaining him Judge of quick and dead.

Ver. 6. *For thou hast made him most blessed for ever*, &c.] Not as God, for as such he is over all blessed for ever, and not made so; but as man and Mediator; the words may be rendered, *thou hast set him to be blessings for ever*[z]; which design the blessings which are laid up in Christ for his people, and which he imparts unto them, and they are blessed with in him; so that he is made a blessing, or rather blessings to them; such as redemption to free them from bondage, righteousness to justify them, sanctification to make them holy, wisdom to direct and guide them, and strength to assist and support them; through whom they have the forgiveness of sins, by whom they have peace with God, and from whom they receive all their joy and comfort, and at last eternal life and happiness; and all these are for ever, they are irreversible blessings, are never repented of, nor taken away: or this blessedness may be understood of that which Christ himself enjoys as man; which lies in his human nature being exalted to union with the son of God; in being heard and helped in the day of salvation; in being raised from the dead, and glory given him; in being set at God's right hand, angels, authorities, and powers, being subject to him; and in seeing the travail of his soul with satisfaction: the particular instance of his blessedness follows. *Thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance*; the glorious presence of God in heaven; Christ having done his work on earth ascended to heaven, where he was received by his father with a cheerful countenance, was made to sit down on the same throne with him, being well-pleased with his obedience, righteousness, and sacrifice; and being now in the presence of God, in which is fulness of joy, and at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore, the human nature of Christ is filled with an excess of joy; the words may be rendered, *thou hast made* or *wilt make him glad with joy*[a], *with thy countenance*; see Psal. xvi. 11. Acts ii. 28.

Ver. 7. *For the King trusteth in the Lord*, &c.] That is, the King Messiah, as the Targum paraphrases it; he trusted in the Lord for his support and sustenance as man, for assistance and help in his time of trouble, and for deliverance out of it; he trusted in the Lord that he would hear him for himself, and for his people; and that he would glorify him with all glory, honour, majesty, and blessedness, before spoken of; see Psal. xxii. 8, 9, 10. Isa. l. 7, 9. John xiii. 31, 32. *And through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved*; God the Father is the most High; Christ is called the Son of the Highest, and the Spirit the power of the Highest, Luke i. 32, 35. there is mercy with him, which is a ground of hope and trust, in his people, and also in the Messiah; see Psal. lxxxix. 28. and some versions make the mercy of the most High to be what the King Messiah trusts in, reading the words[b], *for the King trusteth in the Lord, and in the mercy of the most High*: but the accent *athnach*, which distinguishes the propositions, will not admit of it; but the sense is, that because of the mercy, grace, goodness, and faithfulness of God in making and keeping his promises, Christ would not be and was not moved from his trust and confidence in the Lord; nor shall he ever be removed from his throne of glory on which he sits; nor from the glorious and happy state in which he is: nor will it ever be in the power of his enemies to displace him; for these in time will be destroyed by him, as the following words shew.

Ver. 8. *Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies*, &c.] The Jews, that would not have him to reign over them, who crucified him and persecuted his apostles; the Gentiles, who were also concerned in his death; the Roman emperors, who persecuted the Christians, and are signified by the red dragon that waited to devour the man-child when brought forth by the woman, the church, Rev. xii. 3, 4. and also the Papists, the followers of the man of sin, who oppose Christ in his offices and grace, and are the enemies of his witnesses, and of his interest; and besides these there are many professors of religion who are

[z] תשיתהו ברכות posuisti vel pones eum benedictiones, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; so Ainsworth, Cocceius, Gejerus.

[a] תחדהו בשמחה lætificabis eum in lætitia, Pagninus, Montanus, Michaelis; so Junius & Tremellius, Gejerus.

[b] So Genebrard. Muis.

enemies of Christ, either doctrinally or practically; to whom may be added, the devil and his angels, and all those who are the children of him and are influenced by him: these the hand of Christ will find out sooner or later; for the words are an address to the King Messiah, who being omniscient knows where all his enemies are, and where to find them; and being omnipotent he will lay hold upon them, and hold them, and none shall escape from him; his hand of vengeance shall fall upon them, and he shall inflict righteous and deserved punishment on them; and this shall be the case of *all* of them, none will be able to hide themselves in secret places from him. This has been in part verified in the Jewish nation at the destruction of Jerusalem, when wrath came upon that people to the uttermost for their treatment of the Messiah; and in the Pagan empire, when it was demolished, and kings and great men in vain called to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb, Rev. vi. 15, 16, 17. and will have a further accomplishment in the antichristian states and kingdoms, when the vials of God's wrath shall be poured out upon them; and especially at the battle of Armageddon, when Christ will avenge himself, and get rid of all his enemies at once; and will have its final accomplishment in all wicked men and devils at the day of judgment, when all Christ's enemies will be found out by him, whether open or secret, and receive their just punishment. *Thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee;* this is the same with the former clause, and is repeated for the further certainty and greater confirmation of the thing; and *the right hand* is mentioned as expressive of the mighty power of the Lord. The Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *the vengeance of thy right hand.*

Ver. 9. *Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven,* &c.] Some think the allusion is to David's causing the Ammonites to pass through the brick-kiln, 2 Sam. xii. 31. others to the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah: it represents what a severe punishment shall be inflicted on the enemies of Christ; they shall be cast into a fiery oven, or furnace of fire, as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were by the order of Nebuchadnezzar; so some render the words, *thou shalt put them into a fiery oven,* כ, *as,* being put for ב, *into* [*]: wicked men are as dry trees, as stubble, as thorns or briers, and are fit fuel for a fiery oven or furnace; by which is meant the wrath and fury of God, which is poured forth as fire; and this has had its fulfilment in part in the Jews at Jerusalem's destruction; when that day of the Lord burned like an oven, and the proud and haughty Jews, and who dealt wickedly by Christ, were burned up in it, Mal. iv. 1. and will have an additional accomplishment when the whore of Babylon shall be burnt with fire, and when the beast and false prophet shall be cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone; and still more fully at the general conflagration, when will be the perdition of ungodly men, and the earth and all that is therein shall be burnt up; and especially when all wicked men and devils shall be cast into the lake and furnace of fire, where will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; see Rev. xvii. 16. and xix. 20. and xx. 10—15. Matt. xiii. 41, 42. and xxv. 41. 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 12. This will be *in the time of thine anger, or of thy countenance* [*]; not his gracious, but his angry countenance; when he shall put on a fierce look, and appear as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and stir up all his wrath. *The Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath;* not that they shall be annihilated; their souls remain after death, and their bodies after the resurrection, and will be tormented with the fire of God's wrath for ever and ever; the phrase is expressive of utter ruin, of the destruction of soul and body in hell; see Psal. xxxv. 25. Jarchi takes it to be a prayer, *may the Lord swallow them up,* &c. *and the fire shall devour them;* that is, as the Targum paraphrases it, the fire of hell; or, however, it designs the wrath of God, who is a consuming fire; or that fiery indignation of his, which shall devour the adversaries; which comes down upon them either in temporal judgments here, or in their everlasting destruction hereafter.

Ver. 10. *Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth,* &c.] Meaning the offspring of wicked men; the fruit of the womb, Psal. cxxvii. 3. the same with their seed in the next clause: *and their seed from among the children of men;* see Psal. xxxvii. 28. which must be understood of such of their seed and offspring as are as they were when born; are never renewed and sanctified, but are like their parents; as the Jews were, their parents were vipers, and they were serpents, the generation of them; and were the children of the devil, and did his works: now these passages had their accomplishment in the Jews, when the day of God's wrath burnt them up, and left them neither root nor branch, Mal. iv. 1. and in the Pagan empire, when every mountain and island were moved out of their places, and the Heathen perished out of the land, Rev. vi. 14. Psal. x. 16. and will be further accomplished when the Lord shall punish the wicked woman Jezebel, the antichristian harlot, and kill her children with death, Rev. ii. 23. See Psal. civ. 35.

Ver. 11. *For they intended evil against thee,* &c.] All evil, whether in thought or deed, if not immediately and directly, yet is ultimately against the Lord, whose law is transgressed, and who is despised and reflected upon as a lawgiver; all sin is an hostility committed against God, or against Christ, against the Lord and his Anointed, or against his people, who are all one as himself: the intention of evil is evil, and is cognizable by the Lord, and punishable by him: *they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform;* not the death of Christ; that was indeed in itself a mischievous device of theirs, but that they performed, though they had not their end in it; they expected his name would then perish, and they should hear no more of him: but rather it respects his resurrection from the dead, they could not prevent, though they took all imaginable care that there might be no shew of it; and when they found he was really raised from the dead, they contrived a wicked scheme to stop the credit of it, but in vain, Matt. xxvii.

[*] Vide Aben Ezram in loc.

[*] פניך vultus tui, V. L. so Sept. Æthiop. Gejerus, Muis, Ainsworth; faciei iratæ tuæ, Junius & Tremellius; so Michaelis.

63—66. xxviii. 12, 13, 14. and Jews and Gentiles, and Papists, have formed schemes and done all they can to root the Gospel, cause, and interest of Christ, out of the world, but have not been able to perform it.

Ver. 12. *Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, &c.*] Or flee and run away to private places, to hide themselves from the wrath of God and of the Lamb, though to no purpose; or *make them turn behind thy back*: God will turn his back upon them, and be negligent and careless of them, and not regard them when they cry in their misery and destruction. Some Jewish interpreters [e] understand it of their being put together on one side, in one corner, and be separate from the people of God; to which sense the Targum inclines, rendering the word for *back* the *shoulder*, which sometimes signifies unanimity and conjunction, Zeph. iii. 9. and thus, being all together by themselves, the wrath of God shall be poured forth upon them, and they shall be destroyed at once: so the Christians were, by the providence of God, brought out of Jerusalem before its destruction; and the saints will be called out of Babylon before its fall; and the goats, the wicked, will be separated from the righteous, and set together at Christ's left hand; for they shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous: but the best sense of the words is, *thou shalt set them* for a *butt* or [f] *heap*: or, as it is in the Hebrew text, *a shoulder*; a butt to shoot at being so called, because it is earth heaped up like a shoulder; see Job xvi. 12, 13. and to this agrees what follows: when *thou shalt make ready* thine arrows *upon thy strings against the face of them*; that is, direct the arrows of his wrath and vengeance right against them; see Psal. vii. 11—13.

Ver. 13. *Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength, &c.*] Exert thy strength, display thy power in such manner, that thou mayest be exalted and magnified on account of it. This was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, when the kingdom of God came with power, Mark ix. 1. and will be again when Babylon shall be utterly destroyed, because the Lord is strong who judgeth her, Rev. xviii. 8. and finally at the day of judgment, when the wicked will be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power, 2 Thess. i. 9. So *will we sing and praise thy power*: forms of such songs of praise may be seen, as Cocceius observes, in Rev. xi. 15—18. and xv. 3, 4. and xix. 1, 2—7. at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, at the victory over the beast, and his image, and at the destruction of Babylon.

PSALM XXII.

To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, a Psalm of David.

THE only thing observable in the title of this psalm is the sense of the words *Aijeleth Shahar*, left untranslated; which, according to some of the Jewish [g] interpreters, is the name of a musical instrument; to which our version inclines; and a learned Jew [h] says, it is the instrument which the mourning women used on account of distress which was sudden, not known till it came, as a man does not think of the morning till he sees it. *Aijeleth* with him has the signification of mourning, as *Eli* in Joel i. 8. and *Shahar*, as in Isa. xlvii. 11. and Hos. x. 15. so אלית and איילית are used in the Misnah [i] for a mourning woman; and with others it is the beginning of a song to the tune of which the psalm was set [k]; but I rather think the words express the subject-matter of the psalm, and that they may be rendered, *concerning Aijeleth Shahar*; which signify, either according to the Chaldee paraphrase, *the daily morning-sacrifice*; or, as some Jewish writers [l] observe, *the morning-star*; or, according to the Septuagint, *the morning-help* [m]; or rather *the morning-hind*; or *hind of the morning*; but who should be designed hereby is the question. The Jews would have any rather than the Messiah; some say Esther [n], who so seasonably and readily appeared for the Jews in distress, and was the means of their deliverance; but there is not one word in the psalm that agrees with her; and there are some things which were manifestly spoken of a man, and not a woman, ver. 8, 24. others say David [o], when he fled from Saul, or, as others, from Absalom: but the disjointing the bones of this person, the piercing his hands and feet, parting his garments, and casting lots on his vesture, mentioned in ver. 14, 16, 18. were never fulfilled in him. Others [p] would have the congregation of Israel in captivity intended; but it is plain that a single person is spoken of throughout; and he is manifestly distinguished from others, from his brethren, from the congregation, from the seed of Jacob and Israel, ver. 22, 23. and, indeed, no other than the Messiah can be meant: and of this there ought to be no doubt with Christians, when ver. 1 is compared with Matt. xxvii. 46. ver. 8 with Matt. xxvii. 43. ver. 18 with Matt. xxvii. 35. ver. 22 with Heb. ii. 12. and the Jews themselves sometimes say, that by *Aijeleth Shahar* is meant the Shechinah [q], or the divine Majesty; and in what way soever these words are rendered, they agree with Christ: he is the antitype of *the daily morning-sacrifice*, the Lamb of God, who continually takes away the sin of the world; and very fitly is he so called in the title of a psalm which speaks so much of his sufferings and death,

[e] Kimchi & Ben Melech in loc.

[f] תשיתמו שכם ponis eos metam, Cocceius; humerum, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus; velut tumulum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[g] Jarchi, Kimchi, & Abendana in loc.

[h] Leo Mutinens. Shilte Haggibborim, fol. 5. 1.

[i] Misn. Celim, c. 15. 6. & 16. 7. & Maimon. & Bartenora in ib.

[k] Aben Ezra in loc.

[l] Vide Kimchium & Abendanam in loc.

[m] So Menachem in Jarchi, and others in Kimchi & Abendana in loc.

[n] R. R. in Jarchi in loc.

[o] In Kimchi in loc.

[p] Kimchi & Ben Melech in loc.

[q] Zohar in Lev. fol. 5. 4. & Imre Binah in ib.

which are a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of his people; he is the bright and *morning-star*, Rev. xxii. 16. the day-spring from on high, the sun of righteousness, and light of the world: he had *morning-help* in his very infancy, when his life was sought for by Herod; and had early and seasonable help and assistance in the acceptable time, and in the day of salvation, and early in the morning was he raised from the dead, and had glory given him: but as the words are better rendered *the morning-hind*, this suits with Christ, who is frequently compared to a roe or a young hart, Cant. ii. 9, 17. and viii. 14. and he may be compared to a *hind* for its lovingness to its mate and young, Prov. v. 19. the love of Christ to his church and people being very strong and affectionate, and passing knowledge; and also for its loveliness and goodliness, Gen. xlix. 21. Christ being exceeding amiable and lovely, and fairer than the children of men; likewise for its gentleness and harmlessness, Christ being meek and lowly, holy and harmless; and for its antipathy to serpents, there being an enmity between Christ, the seed of the woman, and the serpent and his seed; for its being hunted by dogs, as Christ was by Herod, by the Scribes and Pharisees, by Judas, and the band of soldiers; see ver. 16 of this psalm; for its being fit for food, Deut. xiv. 5. and as it is said to be the fitter for being hunted, Christ's flesh being meat indeed, and the more suitable to faith, as being sacrificed for us; and for its long life it is said to have, Christ, though once dead, being alive again, and living for evermore; to which may be added its great swiftness, expressive of the readiness of Christ to comply with his father's proposals and do his will; to come into this world in the fulness of time, and set about the work he came to do; to deliver up himself into the hands of his enemies, and lay down his life for his people; and of his haste to help them in distress, and visit them with his gracious presence, and to appear a second time to them unto salvation. He may be called the hind of *the morning*, looking lovely and beautiful as the morning, and swift and cheerful as the hind when it rises from its rest, and runs its course; or because of his being hunted in the morning of his infancy by Herod; or because it was early in the morning the chief priests consulted to take away his life; and as early also he rose from the dead, when God made his feet like hinds' feet, and set him on his high places, Psal. xviii. 33. The ancient Christian writers generally understood it of Christ wholly. Justin Martyr [r] says, the whole psalm is spoken of Christ; and Tertullian observes[s], that it contains the whole passion, or all the sufferings of Christ. The late Mons. Fourmont[t], the elder, professor of the Oriental languages in the university of Paris, has a very singular notion, that this psalm was written by Jeremiah, when he was drawn up from the dungeon, and is a history of his life and sufferings, in which he was a type of Christ.

Ver. 1. *My God, my God*, &c.] God is the God of Christ as he is man: he prepared a body for him, an human nature; anointed it with the oil of gladness; supported it under all its sorrows and sufferings, and at last exalted it at his own right hand: and Christ behaved towards him as his covenant-God; prayed to him, believed in him, loved him, and was obedient to him as such; and here expresses his faith of interest in him, when he hid his face from him, on account of which he expostulates with him thus, *why hast thou forsaken me?* which is to be understood, not as if the hypostatical or personal union of the divine and human natures were dissolved, or that the one was now separated from the other: for the fulness of the Godhead still dwelt bodily in him; nor that he ceased to be the object of the Father's love; for so he was in the midst of all his sufferings, yea, his Father loved him because he laid down his life for the sheep; nor that the principle of joy and comfort was lost in him, only the act and sense of it; he was now deprived of the gracious presence of God, of the manifestations of his love to his human soul, and had a sense of divine wrath, not for his own sins, but for the sins of his people, and was for a while destitute of help and comfort; all which were necessary in order to make satisfaction for sin: for as he had the sins of his people imputed to him, he must bear the whole punishment of them, which is two-fold the punishment of loss and the punishment of sense; the former lies in a deprivation of the divine presence, and the latter in a sense of divine wrath, and both Christ sustained as the surety of his people. This expostulation is made not as ignorant of the reason of it; he knew that as he was wounded and bruised for the sins of his people, he was deserted on the same account; nor as impatient, for he was a mirror of patience in all his sufferings; and much less as in despair; for, in these very words, he strongly expresses and repeats his faith of interest in God; see ver. 8. and also Isa. l. 6, 7, 9. But this is done to set forth the greatness and bitterness of his sufferings; that not only men hid their faces from him, and the sun in the firmament withdrew its light and heat from him, but, what was most grievous of all, his God departed from him. From hence it appears that he was truly man, had an human soul, and endured sorrows and sufferings in it; and this may be of use to his members, to expect the hidings of God's face, though on another account; and to teach them to wait patiently for him, and to trust in the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God, even while they walk in darkness and see no light. Why art thou so *far from helping me?* or *from my salvation;* from saving and delivering him out of his sorrows and sufferings? not that he despaired of help; he firmly believed he should have it, and accordingly had it: but he expostulates about the deferring of it. He adds, and from *the words of my roaring?* which expresses the vehemency of his spirit in crying to God, the exceeding greatness of his sorrows, and his excruciating pains and sufferings: this is what the apostle means by his *strong crying and tears*, Heb. v. 7. or the *words of my roaring* are *far from my salvation*: there is a great space or interval between the one and the other, as Gussetius [u] observes.

Ver. 2. *O my God, I cry in the day-time*, &c.] In the time of his suffering on the cross, which was in

[r] Dialog. cum Tryphone, p. 325.
[s] Adv. Judæos, c. 10.
[t] In hunc Psalm. M. S. penes me, fol. 8. 9.
[u] Comment. Ebr. p. 788.

the day-time: *but thou hearest me not*; and yet he was always heard, John xi. 41, 42. though he was not saved from dying, yet he was quickly delivered from the power of death, and so was heard in that he feared, Heb. v. 7. *And in the night-season*; in the night in which he was in the garden, sorrowing and praying, the night in which he was betrayed and was apprehended; and though the natural desires of his human soul were not heard and answered, that the cup might pass from him, yet his prayer in submission to the will of God was: moreover, the day-time and night-season may design the incessant and continual prayer of Christ; he prayed always, night and day: *and am not silent*; but continue to pray, though as yet seemingly not heard and answered; or there is *no silence to me*[w]; that is, no rest from sorrow and pain; or *no likeness to me*[x], there are none like me, no sorrow like my sorrow, as in Lam. i. 12.

Ver. 3. *But thou art holy*, &c.] Which may be considered either as an argument with his God, why he should hear and answer him, since he is holy, just, and faithful; he has promised, when any call upon him in a day of trouble, he will hear and answer them, and will be glorified by them; this Christ did, and therefore pleads his faithfulness to his promise: or rather a reason quieting him under divine desertion, and a sense of divine wrath, that God was righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; and that whereas he was the surety of his people, and had all their sins on him, it was perfectly agreeable to the holiness and justice of God to treat him in the manner he did; yea, it was done to declare his righteousness, that he might appear to be just, whilst he is the justifier of him that believes in him. O thou *that inhabitest the praises of Israel*; either the place where Israel offered the sacrifices of praise to God, the tabernacle or temple, the house of prayer and praise in which Jehovah dwelt: or the true Israel of God praising him, who are formed for himself, and called by his grace to shew forth his praises; among whom he takes up his residence: or else the praises themselves; and so the phrase denotes God's gracious acceptance of them, and well-pleasedness in them, signified by his inhabiting of them, and the frequent and constant ascription of them to him: and perhaps respect may be had chiefly to the praises of his people for providing such a Saviour for them, sending him in the fulness of time, and not sparing him, but delivering him up into the hands of justice and death for them; and for giving all things freely with him.

Ver. 4. *Our fathers trusted in thee*, &c.] By whom are meant Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from whom our Lord descended; and the people of Israel when in Egypt, in the times of the judges, and in all ages before the coming of Christ, of whom, as concerning the flesh, or as to his human nature, Christ came, Rom. ix. 5. these, as they were sojourners, and went from place to place, especially the patriarchs, and were often in trouble and distress, when they called upon the Lord, looked to him, and put their trust and confidence in him; not in themselves, their own wisdom, riches, and strength, nor in others, in any mere creature, nor in any outward thing, or arm of flesh, but in the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength; they believed in the power of God, that he was able to help and deliver them, and they had faith in him that he would; they depended upon his word and promise, and were persuaded he would never suffer his faithfulness to fail; they committed themselves to the Lord, and stayed themselves upon him. *They trusted*; this is repeated not only for the sake of emphasis, pointing out something remarkable and commendable, and for the greater certainty of it, more strongly confirming it; or to observe the many that put their trust in the Lord, the numerous instances of confidence in him; but also to denote the constancy and continuance of their faith, they trusted in the Lord at all times. *And thou didst deliver them*; out of the hands of all their enemies, and out of all their sorrows and afflictions; instances of which we have in the patriarchs, and in the people of Israel when brought out of Egypt, and through the Red sea and wilderness, and in the times of the judges, when they were distressed by their neighbours, and God sent them a deliverer time after time.

Ver. 5. *They cried unto thee, and were delivered*, &c.] As the Israelites did in Egyptian bondage, and as they in after-times did when in distress; see Exod. ii. 23. Psal. cvii. 6, 13. &c. The crying is to be understood of prayer to God, and sometimes designs mental prayer, sighing, and groaning, which cannot be uttered, when no voice is heard, as in Moses, Exod. xiv. 15. but oftener vocal prayer, put up in times of distress, and denotes the vehemency of trouble, and eagerness of desire to be heard and relieved; and this cry was from faith, it followed upon and was accompanied with trusting in the Lord; it was the prayer of faith, which is effectual and availeth much, and issued in deliverance. *They trusted in thee, and were not confounded*; or *ashamed*; neither of the object of their trust, the living God, as those who trust in graven images; so Moab was ashamed of Chemosh, Jer. xlviii. 13. nor of their hope and trust in him, it being such as makes not ashamed, Psal. cxix. 116. Rom. v. 5. nor of the consequences of it; when men trust in any thing and it fails them, and they have not what they expect by it, they are filled with shame and confusion, Isa. xxx. 2. but they that trust in the Lord are never confounded, or made ashamed; their expectations do not perish: now Christ mentions this case of his ancestors as a reason of the praises of Israel, which they offered up to God for deliverances, and which he inhabited, ver. 3. as also by way of encouragement to himself in his present circumstances, that though the Lord was at a distance from him, and seemed not to regard him and his cries, yet that he would deliver him; and likewise as an argument with God that he would do so, since it had been his wonted way and method with his fathers before; moreover he may take notice of it in order to represent his own forlorn, uncomfortable, and deplorable condition, which was abundantly worse than theirs, and the reverse of it, as it seemed at present.

[w] לא דמיה לי non est silentium mihi, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius; intermissio, Cocceius; quies, Gejerus; cessatio, quies, aut silentium, Michaelis.

[x] Non est mihi similitudo, Gussetius, p. 193.

Ver. 6. *But I am a worm, and no man, &c.*] Christ calls himself *a worm*, not because of his original, for he was not of the earth earthy, but was the Lord from heaven; nor because of his human nature, man being a worm, and the son of man such, Job xxv. 6. and because of his meanness and low estate in that nature, in his humiliation; nor to express his humility, and the mean thoughts he had of himself, as David, his type, calls himself a dead dog, and a flea, 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. but on account of the opinion that men of the world had of him; so Jacob is called *a worm*, Isa. xli. 14. not only because mean in his own eyes, but contemptible in the eyes of others. The Jews esteemed Christ as a worm, and treated him as such; he was loathsome to them and hated by them; every one trampled upon him and trod him under foot as men do worms; such a phrase is used of him in Heb. x. 29. there is an agreement in some things between the worm and Christ in his state of humiliation; as in its uncomeliness and disagreeable appearance; so in Christ the Jews could discern no form nor comeliness wherefore he should be desired; and in its weakness, the worm being an impotent, unarmed, and defenceless creature; hence the Chaldee paraphrase renders it here a *weak worm;* and though Christ is the mighty God, and is also the son of man whom God made strong for himself, yet there was a weakness in his human nature, and he was crucified through it, 2 Cor. xiii. 4. and it has been observed by some, that the word תולעת here used signifies the scarlet worm, or the worm that is in the grain or berry with which scarlet is dyed; and like this scarlet worm did our Lord look, when by way of mockery he was clothed with a scarlet robe; and especially when he appeared in his dyed garments, and was red in his apparel, as one that treadeth in the wine-fat; when his body was covered with blood when he hung upon the cross, which was shed to make crimson and scarlet sins as white as wool. When Christ says he was *no man*, his meaning is, not that he was not truly and really man, for he assumed a true body and a reasonable soul; he partook of the same flesh and blood with his children, and was in all things made like unto his brethren, excepting sin; but that he was a man of no figure, he bore no office, and had no title of honour; he was not a Rabbi, nor a member of the Jewish sanhedrim; he had no share of government, either in the civil or ecclesiastic state; he was a carpenter's son, and a carpenter; nor was he treated as a man, but in the most inhuman manner; he was despised and rejected of men, he was called a madman, and said to have a devil. *A reproach of men:* he was reproached by men, as if he had been the worst of men; the reproaches of God and of his people all fell on him, insomuch that his heart was broken with them; see Psal. lxix. 7—12, 19, 20. and it was reckoned a reproach to men to be seen in his company, or to be thought to belong to him, and be a disciple of his; hence some, who believed he was the Messiah, yet would not confess him, because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God, John xii. 42, 43. *And despised of the people:* rejected with contempt as the Messiah, refused with scorn as the stone of Israel, disallowed of men, and set at nought by them; by *the people* are meant the people of the Jews, his own people and nation; which contempt of him they signified both by gestures and words, as in the following verses.

Ver. 7. *All they that see me laugh me to scorn, &c.*] To the afflicted pity should be shewn; but instead of pitying him in his distresses they laughed at him; this must be understood of the soldiers when they had him in Pilate's hall, and of the Jews in general when he hung upon the cross; some particular persons must be excepted, as John the beloved disciple, the mother of our Lord, Mary Magdalen, and some other women, who stood afar off beholding him. *They shoot out the lip;* or *open with the lip*[y]: they made mouths at him, they put out their lips, or gaped upon him with their mouths, and in a way of sport and pastime made wide mouths and drew out their tongues, as in Job xvi. 10. Isa. lvii. 4. *They shake the head,* saying; in a way of scorn and derision, as in Lam. ii. 15. This was fulfilled in the Jews, Matt. xxvii. 39.

Ver. 8. *He trusted on the Lord,* that *he would deliver him, &c.*] Not that they spoke in a deriding way of the object of his trust, for, as impious as they were, this they did not do; but of his trust in the Lord, which they looked upon to be a false one, as would appear by his not being delivered, as he trusted; but his confidence was a well-grounded one, though jeered at by these men, and he was delivered in the Lord's own time and way from all his enemies, and out of all his troubles. *Let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him:* this is another ironical sarcastic flout, not at God, but at Christ, and at his profession of trust in God, his claim of interest in his favour, and of relation to him as being the Son of his love, in whom he was well-pleased; he always was the delight of his Father; he expressed his well-pleasedness in him at his baptism, and transfiguration on the mount; he took pleasure in him whilst he was suffering and dying in the room and stead of his people; and he delivered him, raised him from the dead, and brought him into a large place, because he delighted in him, Psal. xviii. 19. These very words were said by the Jews concerning Christ, as he hung upon the cross, Matt. xxvii. 43.

Ver. 9. *But thou art he that took me out of the womb, &c.*] The Papists affirm, that there was something miraculous in the manner of Christ's coming into the world, as well as in his conception; that his conception of a virgin was miraculous is certain, being entirely owing to the wonderful and mysterious overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and which was necessary to preserve his human nature from the contagion of sin, common to all that descend from Adam by ordinary generation; that so that individual of human nature might be proper to be united to the Son of God, and that it might be a fit sacrifice for the sins of men; but otherwise in all other things, sin only excepted, he was made like unto us; and it is a clear case, that his mother bore him the usual time, and went with him her full time of nine months, as women commonly do; see Luke i. 56. Matt. i. 18, 20, 24. Luke ii. 5, 6. and it is as evident that he was born and brought forth in the same manner other infants are, seeing he was presented

[y] יפטירו בשפה hiatum fecerunt labiis suis, Grotius; they make a mow with their lip, Ainsworth.

to the Lord in the temple, and the offering was brought for him according to the law respecting the male that opens the womb, Luke ii. 22, 23. and the phrase that is here used is expressive of the common providence of God which attends such an event, every man being as it were midwifed into the world by God himself; see Job x. 18. Psal. lxxi. 6. though there was, no doubt, a peculiar providence which attended the birth of our Lord, and makes this expression more peculiarly applicable to him; since his mother Mary, when her full time was come, was at a distance from the place of her residence, was in an inn, and in a stable there, there being no room for her in the inn, and so very probably had no women about her to assist her, nor any midwife with her; and there was the more visible appearance of the hand of God in this affair, who might truly be said to take him out of the womb: *thou didst make me hope* when I was *upon my mother's breasts*: which may be understood of the expectation and hope, common to infants, which have not the use of reason, with all creatures, whose eyes wait upon the Lord, and he gives them their meat in due season; and here may regard the sudden and suitable provision of milk in the mother's breast, to which there is in the infant a natural desire, and an hope and expectation of. The words may be rendered, as they are by some, *thou didst keep me in safety*, or make me safe and secure [a], when I was *upon my mother's breast*: this was verified in Christ at the time Herod sought to take away his life; he was then in his mother's arms, and sucked at her breast; when the Lord in a dream acquainted Joseph with Herod's design, and directed him to flee with the young child and his mother into Egypt, where they were kept in safety till the death of Herod. This sense of the words frees them from a difficulty, how the grace of hope, or of faith and confidence, can, in a proper sense, be exercised in the infant-state; for though the principle of grace may be implanted so early, yet how it should be exercised when there is not the due use of reason is not easy to conceive; if, therefore, the words are taken in this sense, the meaning must be, that he was caused to hope as soon as he was capable of it, which is sometimes the design of such a phrase; see Job xxxi. 18. unless we suppose something extraordinary in Christ's human nature, which some interpreters are not willing to allow, because he was in all things like unto us excepting sin; but I see not, that seeing the human nature was an extraordinary one, was perfectly holy from the first of it, the grace of God was upon it as soon as born, and it was anointed with the Holy Ghost above its fellows, why it may not be thought to exercise grace in an extraordinary manner, so early as is here expressed, literally understood.

Ver. 10. *I was cast upon thee from the womb*, &c.] Either by himself, trusting in God, hoping in him, and casting all the care of himself upon him; or by his parents, who knew the danger he was exposed to, and what schemes were laid to take away his life; and therefore did, in the use of all means they were directed to, commit him to the care and protection of God: the sense is, that the care of him was committed to God so early; and he took the care of him and gave full proof of it: *Thou art my God from my mother's belly*: God was his covenant-God from everlasting, as he loved his human nature, chose it to the grace of union, and gave it a covenant-subsistence; but he shewed himself to be his God in time, and that very early, calling him from the womb, and making mention of his name from his mother's belly, and preserving him from danger in his infancy; and it was his covenant-interest in God, which, though mentioned last, was the foundation of all his providential care of him and goodness to him. Now all these early appearances of the power and providence of God, on the behalf of Christ as man, are spoken of in opposition to the scoffs and flouts of his enemies about his trust in God, and deliverance by him, and to encourage his faith and confidence in him; as well as are so many reasons and arguments with God yet to be with him, help and assist him, as follows.

Ver. 11. *Be not far from me*, &c.] Who had been so near unto him, as to take him out of the womb, and to take the care of him ever since; this is to be understood not with respect to the omnipresence of God, who is everywhere, and is not far from any of us; but of his gracious presence, which was now withdrawn from Christ, and he was filled with a sense of divine wrath, and with sorrow and distress; and also of his powerful and assisting presence which he had promised, and Christ expected, and believed he should have, as he had: the reasons for it follow: *for trouble is near*; Satan was marching towards him with his principalities and powers, to attack him in the garden and on the cross; Judas, one of his own disciples, was at hand to betray him; a multitude with swords and staves were about to seize him; the sins and chastisement of his people were just going to be laid upon him; the sword of justice was awaked against him, ready to give the blow; the hour of death was near, he was brought to the dust of it, as in ver. 15. A second reason is given, *for there is none to help*; none among his disciples: one of them was to betray him, another to deny him, and all to forsake him and flee from him, as they did; nor any among the angels in heaven; for though they ministered to him in the wilderness, and strengthened him in the garden, there were none near him on the cross, that it might be manifest that salvation was wrought out alone by him, Isa. lxiii. 5. and, indeed, if any of these had been willing to have helped him, it was not in their power to do it, none but God could; and therefore he applies to him, who had promised and was as good as his word, Isa. xlix. 8.

Ver. 12. *Many bulls have compassed me*, &c.] By whom are meant the chief priests, elders, Scribes, and Pharisees, among the Jews, and Herod and Pontius Pilate among the Gentiles, comparable to bulls for their fierceness, rage, and fury against Christ, Psal. ii. 1, 2. and for their pushing at him with their horns of power and authority, and for their trampling him under their feet, his person and offices; these compassed him about at his apprehension, arraignment, trial, and condemnation; and there were many of them to one child, Jesus: *strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round*; Bashan was a very fruitful country, in

[a] מבטיחי tu me tutum fecisti, Coccelus; so Michaelis.

which cattle of various sorts, and bulls among the rest, were fed and fattened; see Deut. xxxii. 14. Ezek. xxxix. 18. bulls are noted for their strength in other writers [a]. Hence great men, who abounded in riches and power, and used them to the oppression of the poor, are compared to the kine of Bashan, Amos iv. 1. and a very fit name this was for the kings and princes of the earth; for Caiaphas, Annas, and the chief priests, that lived upon the fat of the land, who beset Christ around, and employed all their power and policy to take him and bring him to death; nor is it unusual with Heathen writers [b] to compare great personages to bulls.

Ver. 13. *They gaped upon me with their mouths, &c.*] Either by way of derision and contempt, Job xvi. 10. or belching out blasphemy against him, or rather, with the greatest vehemency, crying out Crucify him, crucify him; and this they did as a *ravening and roaring lion*, when it has got its prey and rejoices, Amos iii. 4. and being in such hands, and encompassed about with such enemies, as Christ was in the garden, in the high-priest's hall, and in Pilate's judgment-hall, is a third reason or argument used by him with God his Father, to be near to him and not far from him.

Ver. 14. *I am poured out like water, &c.*] This may refer to Christ's sweat in the garden, when through his agony or conflict with Satan, and his vehemency in prayer, and the pressure on his mind, in a view of his people's sins, and the wrath of God for them, and the accursed death he was about to undergo on that account, sweat in great abundance came from all parts of his body, and not only stood in large drops, but fell to the ground like great drops of blood; so that his body was all covered with water, or rather seemed to be dissolving into water, or else to the quantity of tears he shed both there and elsewhere; his sorrow was great even unto death, which vented itself in floods of tears; his prayers were offered up with strong crying and tears; his head was, as Jeremy wished his might be, as waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, yea, his whole body seemed to be bathed with them: or else to the shedding of his blood, and the pouring out his soul unto death for his people, which was voluntarily done by himself, or by his enemies; which they shed like water, and made no account of it, Psal. lxxix. 3. Some have thought this respects the opinion some had of him, even some of his own disciples, when he was dead; all their hopes of his being their Redeemer and Saviour being gone, he was as water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up; see 2 Sam. xiv. 14. but rather the phrase intends his being quite dispirited, his heart failing, his soul sorrowful unto death, his hands feeble, his knees weak like water, and he just ready to faint and die; see Joshua vii. 5. and Ezek. vii. 17. *And all my bones are out of joint:* not through the stretching of his body on the cross, which seems to be designed in ver. 17. but as it is with persons in a panic, their joints seem to be loosed, and their bones parting asunder, their legs tremble, no member can perform its office, but as if every one was dislocated and out of its place; see Psal. vi. 2. *My heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels;* as wax melts before the fire, so did the heart of Christ at the wrath and fury of God, which was poured forth like fire upon him; and which he had a sense of, when in the garden and on the cross, bearing the sins of his people, and sustaining the punishment due unto them; for it was not because of his enemies, nor merely at the presence of God, and his righteous judgments, which is sometimes the case; see 2 Sam. xvii. 10. Psal. lxviii. 2. and xcvii. 5. but at the apprehension of divine wrath, and feeling the same, as the surety of his people; and what an idea does this give of the wrath of God! for if the heart of Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, melted at it, what heart can endure, or hands be strong, when God deals with them in his wrath? Ezek. xxii. 14.

Ver. 15. *My strength is dried up like a potsherd, &c.*] The radical moisture of his body was dried up through his loss of blood and spirits, and through the violent fever upon him, brought on him by his being hurried from bar to bar; and which generally attends persons under a panic, in consternation and fear of danger and death, and at crucifixion; or this was occasioned by the inward sorrow and distress of his mind, which affected his body and dried his bones, as a broken spirit is said to do, Prov. xvii. 22. and chiefly it was brought upon him through the sense he had of the wrath of God, which like fire dried up his strength, just as a potsherd burnt in a furnace; which expresses his dolorous sufferings, which were typified by the passover-lamb being roasted with fire, and the manna being baked in pans. *And my tongue cleaveth to my jaws;* so that he could not, or rather would not, speak; this phrase sometimes signifying silence, Job xxix. 10. Ezek. iii. 26. Thus Christ answered not a word to the charges of the false witnesses before the high-priest, nor to the accusations of the chief priests and elders before Pilate; nor did he open his mouth, when he was led to be crucified, neither against the law and justice of God, nor against his people for whom he suffered, nor against his enemies who used him cruelly; when he was reviled he reviled not again; but rather this was occasioned by thirst, through the violent fever that was upon him; see Lam. iv. 4. Hence, when he hung upon the cross, he said, *I thirst*, John xix. 28. *And thou hast brought me into the dust of death;* meaning either death itself, which brings to the dust, and which is signified in this psalm by going down to it, ver. 29. or the grave, where the body crumbles into dust, and where it is covered with dust, and therefore is said to sleep in the dust of the earth, Dan. xii. 2. and accordingly the Targum renders it here, *thou hast shut me up in the house of the grave:* now Christ both died and was laid in the grave, though he did not lie there so long as to corrupt and pulverize, yet he might be truly said to be laid in the dust: and this is attributed to God, to his counsel, disposal, and Providence; and even whatever was done to Christ antecedent to his death, and which led on to it, were what God's hand and counsel had determined to be done; and though it was with wicked hands the Jews took Christ and used him in the manner after related, and crucified and slew

[a] Fortes tauri, Virgil. Georgic. l. 1. v. 65. Ovid. Metamorph. l. 9. Fab. 1.

[b] Homer. Iliad. 2. v. 48. Horat. Satyr. l. 1. Satyr. 3. v. 110.

him, he was delivered to them by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God; and by these he was delivered into the hands of justice, and brought to death itself, Acts ii. 23. and iv. 27, 28.

Ver. 16. *For dogs have compassed me,* &c.] By whom are meant wicked men, as the following clause shews; and so the Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *the wicked who are like to many dogs;* and to these such are often compared in Scripture, Matt. vii. 6. Rev. xxii. 15. and it may be the Roman soldiers, who were Gentiles, may be chiefly intended, whom the Jews used to call dogs, Matt. xv. 26. these assembled together in Pilate's hall and surrounded Christ, and made sport with him; to these were committed the execution of him, they crucified him, and sat around him watching him whilst on the cross, as they also did when in the grave: some have thought the dregs of the Jewish people are designed, the common people, such as Job says he would not set with the dogs of his flock, Job xxx. 1. who encompassed Christ on the cross, wagging their heads at him; though I see not but that all of them, even the chief among them, the high-priest, sanhedrim, Scribes, and Pharisees, may be intended; who are so called because of their impurity in themselves; for their avarice and covetousness, being greedy dogs that could never have enough; and for their impudence, calumnies, malice, and envy, against Christ: the allusion seems to be to hunting dogs, who, when they have got the creature they have been in pursuit of, surround it and fall upon it. Christ, in the title of this psalm, is called Aijeleth Shahar, the *morning-hind*, who was hunted by the Jews, and at last surrounded and taken by them. The *assembly of the wicked have enclosed me;* the Jewish sanhedrim, the chief priests and elders, who assembled together to consult his death, before whom he was brought when taken; and in the midst of whom he was set and examined, and by them unanimously condemned; and who, notwithstanding all their pretensions to religion, were a set of wicked men: and also the whole congregation of the Jews, the body of the people, who were united in their request for his crucifixion and death; and who in great numbers got together, and in a circle stood around him when on the cross, insulting him. *They pierced my hands and my feet;* by nailing them to the cross, which, though not related by the evangelists, is plainly suggested in John xx. 25, 27. and is referred to in other passages of Scripture, Zech. xii. 10. Rev. i. 7. and clearly points at the kind of death Christ should die; the death of the cross, a shameful and painful one. In this clause there is a various reading; in some copies in the margin it is, *as a lion my hands and my feet,* but in the text, *they have dug* or *pierced my hands and my feet;* both are joined together in the Targum, *biting as a lion my hands and my feet:* as it is by other interpreters[c]; and Schultens[d] retains the latter, rendering the preceding clause in connexion with it thus, "the assembly of the wicked have broken me to pieces, "as a lion, my hands and my feet." In the Targum, in the king of Spain's Bible, the phrase, *as a lion,* is left out. The modern Jews are for retaining the marginal reading, though without any good sense, and are therefore sometimes charged with a wilful and malicious corruption of the text; but without sufficient proof, since the different reading in some copies might be originally occasioned by the similarity of the letters י and ו; and therefore finding it in their copies, or margin, sometimes כארו, and sometimes כארי, have chose that which best suits their purpose, and is not to be wondered at; however, their *masoretic* notes, continued by them, sufficiently clear them from such an imputation, and direct to the true reading of the words; in the small Masorah on the text it is observed that the word is twice used as here pointed, but in two different senses; this is one of the places; the other is Isa. xxxviii. 13. where the sense requires it should be read *as a lion:* wherefore, according to the authors of that note, it must have a different sense here, and not to be understood of a lion; the larger Masorah, in Numb. xxiv. 9. observes the word is to be found in two places, in that place and in Psal. xxii. 16. and adds to that, it is written כארו, *they pierced;* and Ben Chayim confirms[e] this reading, and says he found it so written in some correct copies, and in the margin כארי; and so it is written in several manuscripts; and which is confirmed by the Arabic, Syriac, Ethiopic, Greek, and Vulgate Latin versions; in which it is rendered, *they dug my hands and my feet:* and so took it to be a verb and not a noun: so Apollinarius in his metaphrase; and which is also confirmed by the points; though taking כארי for a participle, as the Targum, that reading may be admitted, as it is by some learned men[f], who render it *digging* or *piercing,* and so has the same sense, deriving the word either from כאר or כור, which signify to dig, pierce, or make hollow; and there are many instances of plural words which end in י, the ם omitted, being cut off by an apocope; see 2 Sam. xxiii. 8. 2 Kings xi. 4, 19. Lam. iii. 14. Ezek. xxxii. 30. and either way the words are expressive of the same thing, and manifestly point to the sufferings of Christ, and that kind of death he should die, the death of the cross, and the nailing of his hands and feet to it, whereby they were pierced. This passage is sometimes applied by the Jews[g] themselves to their Messiah.

Ver. 17. *I may tell all my bones,* &c.] For what with the stretching out of his body on the cross, when it was fastened to it as it lay on the ground, and with the jog of the cross when, being reared up, it was fixed in the ground, and with the weight of the body hanging upon it, all his bones were disjointed and started out; so that, could he have seen them, he might have told them, as they might be told by the spectators who were around him; and so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions render it, *they have numbered all my bones;* that is, they might have done it: the Targum is, *I will number all the scars of my members,* made by the blows, scourges, and wounds he received. *They look and stare upon me;* meaning not his bones, but his ene-

[c] Amamæ Antibarb. Bibl. p. 743.
[d] Origin. Heb. l. 1. c. 12. s. 8. Vid. Jacob. Alting. Dissert. Philolog. 5. s. 27—34.
[e] In Maareath א, fol. 10. 2. ad Calc. Baxtorf. Bibl.
[f] Pocock. Miscell. c. 4. p. 59, 60. Pfeiffer. Exercitat. s. s. 37. Carpzov. Critic. Sacr. p. 838, 839. Alting. ut supra. s. 48, 49.
[g] Pesikta in Yalkut, par. 2. fol. 56. 4.

mies; which may be understood either by way of contempt, as many Jewish interpreters explain it: so the Scribes and elders of the people, and the people themselves, looked and stared at him on the cross, and mocked at him, and insulted him; or by way of rejoicing, saying, *Aha, aha, our eye hath seen*, namely, what they desired and wished for, Psal. xxxv. 21. Such a sight as was enough to have moved an heart of stone made no impression on them; they had no sympathy with him, no compassion on him, but rejoiced at his misery: this staring agrees with their character as dogs.

Ver. 18. *They part my garments among them, &c.*] Such as died the death of the cross were crucified naked [h], and their clothes were the perquisites of the executioners; there were four soldiers concerned in the crucifixion of Christ, and these parted his garments into four parts, and every one took his part. *And cast lots on my vesture*: which was a seamless coat, wove from the top to the bottom: and therefore, not willing to rend it, they cast lots upon it who should have it: all this was exactly fulfilled in Christ, John xix. 23, 24.

Ver. 19. *But be not thou far from me, O Lord, &c.*] See the note on ver. 11. *O my strength*: Christ as God is the mighty God, the Almighty; as Mediator, he is the strength of his people; but, as man, God is his strength; he is the man of his right hand, whom he has made strong for himself, and whom he has promised his arm shall strengthen, Psal. lxxx. 17. and lxxxix. 21. and therefore he addresses him in this manner here, saying, *Haste thee to help me*: his help was alone in God his strength; there were none that could help him but he, and he seemed to stand afar off from helping him, ver. 1, 11. and his case being so distressed, as is represented in the preceding verses, it required haste.

Ver. 20. *Deliver my soul from the sword, &c.*] Wicked men, whose tongues were as a sharp sword, reproaching and blaspheming him, and bearing false witness against him; and crying out, Crucify him, crucify him; see Psal. xvii. 12, and lvii. 4. Prov. xxv. 18. or any instrument of violence, as the iron bar with which the legs of the malefactors crucified with him were broken, which he escaped; and the spear which pierced his side, after he had commended his soul or spirit into the hands of his father; or a violent death; for though his death had the appearance of one, he was taken in a violent manner, and adjudged to be put to death, and was crucified, yet his life was not taken away by men; he laid it down, and gave up his breath himself. *My darling from the power of the dog*, or *my only one* [i]; meaning his life or soul, as before; so called, not because there is but one soul in the body, but because it was dear and valuable to him; and hence we render it *darling*, an only one being usually the darling of its parents; so a man's life is dear to him, all that he has will he give for it, Job ii. 4. Christ's life was a more precious life than any man's, and peculiarly his own, in such sense as another man's, is not his own; and his soul also was an only one, it was not polluted with original sin, as the souls of other men are; it was pure and holy: the word here used is sometimes rendered *desolate* and *solitary*: see Psal. xxv. 16. and lxviii. 6. and it may have this sense here, and be translated *my lonely* or *solitary one* [k]; he being forsaken by God, and deserted by his disciples; his soul was in darkness, sorrow, and distress, wherefore he prays it might be delivered *from the power of the dog*; either Satan is so called for his malice and envy, who had put it into the heart of Judas to betray him, and had filled the Pharisees with envy at him, and who through it delivered him to Pilate; or the impure, cruel, and wicked Roman soldiers, and in short all his crucifiers; called in the plural number *dogs*, in ver. 16. see the note there.

Ver. 21. *Save me from the lion's mouth, &c.*] Either the devil, who is as a roaring lion, whom Christ overcame both in the garden and on the cross, and destroyed him and his works; or all his wicked enemies, especially the most powerful of them, who were in greatest authority, as the chief priests and elders; so rulers and civil magistrates, who are cruel and unmerciful, are compared to lions, Prov. xxviii. 15. 2 Tim. iv. 17. *For thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns*: some read this as a prayer like the former, *hear thou me* [l], &c. that is, deliver me; but according to our version it expresses what God had done, that he had heard him and saved him; and is used as a reason or argument with him that he would regard also his other petitions: or it may have respect to what follows, that since God had heard him, and delivered him out of the hands of his most powerful enemies, therefore he would declare his name and praise him; for the unicorn being a very strong creature, and its strength lying much in its horn, with which it pushes and does mischief; see Numb. xxiii. 22. Job xxxix. 9—12. Deut. xxxiii. 17. Christ's strong and potent enemies are intended here; such as Satan and his principalities and powers, the sanhedrim of the Jews, Herod, Pontius Pilate, and others, from whose power he was freed when raised from the dead. According to Pliny [m], the monoceros, or unicorn, is the fiercest of wild beasts; in its body like a horse, it has the head of an hart and feet of an elephant, the tail of a bear, makes a great bellowing; has one black horn rising up in the middle of the forehead, of two cubits long; it is denied that it was ever taken alive, which agrees with Job xxxix. 9, 10. see the note there.

Ver. 22. *I will declare thy name unto my brethren, &c.*] Not those who were more nearly related to him according to the flesh; for though there were some who believed in him, and to whom he declared the name of God, as James and Joses, and Judas and Simon, Matt. xiii. 55. yet there were others that did not believe on him, John vii. 3, 5. nor those more remotely related to him, as all the Jews, who were his brethren and kinsmen also according to the flesh; to these indeed he came and preached, but they received him not; but rather his apostles, whom he called his brethren, even after his resurrection, and to whom he appeared and declared the name of God, Matt. xxviii. 10. John xx. 17. and the five hundred brethren by whom

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[h] Vid. Lipsium de Cruce, l. 2. c. 7. p. 81.

[i] יחידתי unicam meam, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Junius & Tremellius.

[k] Solitarium meam, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[l] עניתני exaudi me, Muis, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[m] Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 21.

he was seen at once may be also included; and even all true believers in him, who through his incarnation, being their *goel* and near kinsman, stands in such a relation to them, and through their adoption into his father's family, his father being their father, and his God their God; which is manifested in regeneration, and evidenced by their doing the will of God, which is believing in Christ, Matt. xii. 49, 50. By the *name* of God is meant, not any one of the names by which he is known, as God Almighty, Jehovah, &c. if any of these could be thought to be designed, the New-Testament name and title of God as the father of Christ would bid fair for it; but rather the perfections of God, which appear in Christ, and were glorified in the work of redemption; or God himself; or else his Gospel, Acts ix. 15. and which Christ declared and manifested to his disciples, both before and after his resurrection, John xvii. 6, 8. Acts i. 3. which latter seems here to be referred unto. *In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee;* meaning not the congregation of the Jews, their synagogue, or temple, where he often attended on public worship, and preached and praised the Lord; but rather the company of his disciples, among whom he sung an hymn the night he was betrayed, and with whom he conversed by times for forty days after his resurrection: unless the general assembly and church of the first-born in heaven is intended, in the midst of which he praised the Lord, when he ascended on high, led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; though it seems best to understand this of the church of God, particularly among the Gentiles, under the Gospel dispensation, where Christ in his members sings the praise of electing, redeeming, and calling grace; see Psal. xviii. 49. compared with Rom. xv. 9. This is a proof of singing of psalms and hymns in Gospel churches, and of its being a duty to be publicly performed by the members of them, who may expect the presence of Christ in the midst of his church, seeing he here promises to be there: these words are applied to Christ in Heb. ii. 12.

Ver. 23. *Ye that fear the Lord, praise him,* &c.] By whom are meant, not the proselytes among the Gentiles, as distinct from the Jews, which is the sense of some Jewish interpreters [*]; but all the people of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, who have the grace of filial and godly fear put into their hearts, with which they worship God, and walk before him in all holy conversation; which is not a fear of wrath, or a distrust of divine goodness; but is a reverential affection for God, and is consistent with the greatest degree of faith, the strongest expressions of spiritual joy and holy courage: it includes the whole worship of God, internal and external; and such who have it in their hearts, and before their eyes, are called upon by Christ to praise the Lord for him, for the unspeakable gift of his love; that he has not spared his son, but delivered him up for them, to undergo so much sorrow, and such sufferings as before related, to obtain salvation for them; and that he has delivered him out of them, raised him from the dead, and has given him glory. *All ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him;* not the natural, but spiritual seed of Jacob, who walk in the steps of the faith of that man of God; these are exhorted to glorify the Lord with their bodies and spirits, which are his, being redeemed with the precious blood of Christ; by believing in him, glorying in him, and offering praise unto him. *And fear him, all ye the seed of Israel;* who are the same with the seed of Jacob, Jacob and Israel being two names of the same person; and design not Israel according to the flesh, but according to the spirit; the whole Israel of God, the all-spiritual seed of Israel, who are justified in Christ, and are saved in him; they are the same with them that fear the Lord, and are here stirred up to exercise the grace of fear upon him; to fear him only, and not men, though ever so mighty and powerful, as before described in ver. 12, 13, 16, 20, 21. and that not only because of his power and greatness; but because of his grace and goodness, as shewn forth in Christ Jesus.

Ver. 24. *For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted,* &c.] That is, Christ, who was afflicted by men, both by their tongues, and by their hands; by devils, by the temptations of Satan; for Christ suffered being tempted, though he was not overcome; and by his attacks upon him, both in the garden and on the cross; and by the Lord himself, Jehovah his Father, who laid on him the iniquity and chastisement of his people, bruised him, and put him to grief; awoke the sword of justice against him, and spared him not: his afflictions were many, both in body and soul; in body, being scourged, buffeted, bruised, pierced, racked, and tortured on the cross; in soul, being made exceeding sorrowful, and an offering for sin; sustaining his father's wrath, and seeing and enduring affliction by the rod of it; see Isa. liii. 4, 7. now, though his afflictions and sufferings were despised by men, and he was despised and abhorred on account of them; yet not by his father, he took pleasure in them, and in him as suffering for his people; not simply considered, as if he delighted in his sufferings as such, but as they were agreeable to his counsel and covenant, and brought about the salvation of his chosen ones: he accepted them in the room and stead of his people; the sacrifice of Christ was of a sweet-smelling savour to him; he was well-pleased with his righteousness, his law being magnified and made honourable by it; and his death was precious in his sight, being the propitiation for the sins of his people; so far was he from despising and abhorring the afflictions of his son. And this is mentioned as a reason or argument for praise and thanksgiving in them that fear the Lord; since God has looked upon the redemption-price his son has paid for them sufficient; has not despised, but accepted of it as the ransom of their souls: some render the words, *the prayer of the afflicted:* so the Targum, and the Septuagint version, and the versions that follow that; which agrees with the next words: *neither hath he hid his face from him;* when men did, as ashamed of him, Isa. liii. 3. for though he forsook him for a while, and in a little wrath hid his face from him for a moment, that he might bear the whole curse of the law for us; yet he returned again, and did not hide his face from him for ever. *But when*

* Midrash Tillim, Jarchi & Aben Ezra, in loc.

he cried unto him, he heard; cried not only on account of his crucifiers, that God would forgive them; but on account of himself, that he would not be afar off from him; that he would take his spirit or soul into his hands, into which he committed it; that he would deliver him from the power of death and the grave, and loose their bands; in all which he was heard, Heb. v. 7.

Ver. 25. *My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation,* &c.] Or, *my praise is from thee**; not that he should have praise of God, as he had, when he was received up into heaven, and set down at the right hand of God; but that God should be the object of his praise, as he was the cause of it; his salvation and deliverance of him, and resurrection from the dead, and exaltation of him, were the occasion and matter of it: the place where Christ determined to praise the Lord is *the great congregation;* either his apostles, who, though a little flock, yet, on account of their extraordinary office and gifts, and peculiar privileges, were the greatest congregation that ever was in the world; or the five hundred brethren to whom Christ appeared at once after his resurrection; or else the whole church under the Gospel dispensation; in the midst of which Christ is, and who in the members of it praises the name of the Lord; and this especially will have its accomplishment at the latter day, when great multitudes will be converted, and the voice of praise and thanksgiving will be among them, Rev. vii. 9, 10. and xi. 15. and xiv. 1, 2. and xix. 1, 5, 6. *I will pay my vows before them that fear him;* either those which he made in the council and covenant of grace, when he engaged to become a surety for his people, to assume their nature, to suffer and die for them, to redeem them from sin and misery, and bring them nigh to God, and save them with an everlasting salvation; all which he has openly done; see Psal. xxxi. 19. or those which he made in ver. 21. that he would declare the name of the Lord unto his brethren, and sing praise unto him in the midst of the church; compare with this Psal. cxvi. 12—14.

Ver. 26. *The meek shall eat and be satisfied,* &c.] Such who, being made thoroughly sensible of sin, look upon themselves the chief of sinners, and the least of saints; and being truly convicted of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, wholly trust to and rely on the righteousness of Christ; and, being acquainted with their impotency and inability to do any good thing of themselves, ascribe all to the grace of God, and have no dependence on any thing done by them; who are willing to be instructed and reproved by the meanest saint; are not easily provoked to wrath; patiently bear indignities and affronts, and are gentle unto all men: these shall *eat* the fat and drink the sweet of Christ the bread of life; they shall eat of his flesh by faith, which is meat indeed; they shall find the word, and eat it; feed on the wholesome words of Christ, the words of faith and good doctrine, and shall be *satisfied,* or *filled:* other food is not satisfying; it proves gravel, ashes, and wind; it is not bread, and satisfies not; but such as hunger and thirst after Christ and his righteousness, and are poor in their own eyes, meek and humble; these are filled with good things to satisfaction, Matt. v. 6. Luke i. 53. Jarchi interprets these words of the time of the redemption, and the days of the Messiah. *They shall praise the Lord that seek him;* in Christ, with their whole heart; who being filled by him, and satisfied, bless the Lord for their spiritual food and comfortable repast, as it becomes men to do for their corporeal food, Deut. viii. 10. *Your heart shall live for ever;* this is an address of Christ to them that fear the Lord, the seed of Jacob and Israel; the meek ones, and that seek the Lord, his face and favour, and who eat and are satisfied; signifying, that they should be revived and refreshed, should be cheerful and comfortable; should live by faith on Christ now, and have eternal life in them; and should live with him for ever hereafter, and never die the second death.

Ver. 27. *All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord,* &c.] That is, all the elect of God among the Gentiles, who live in the furthermost parts of the world, for whom Christ is appointed to be their salvation, and whom he calls to look to him for it; these shall remember the Lord whom they have forgotten, and against whom they have sinned, how great and how good he is; they shall be put in mind of their sins and iniquities committed against him, and call to mind their latter end; and consider, that after death will come judgment to which they must be brought; they shall be apprised of the grace and goodness of God in Christ, in providing and sending him to be the Saviour of lost sinners, by his sufferings and death, at large described in this psalm; which will encourage them to turn unto the Lord, since they may hope for full pardon of sin, through his blood and sacrifice; and to turn from their idols, and from all their evil ways, and from all dependence on themselves or on creatures, to trust in and serve the living God in faith and fear; which turning is usually brought about under and by the ministry of the word; which is appointed to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and has this effect when it is attended with the spirit and power of God; for conversion is not the work of man, neither of ministers nor of men themselves, but of God, in which men are at first passive; they are turned, and then, under the influence of grace, become active, and turn to the Lord, by believing in him, and so cleave unto him: and likewise remembrance of the above things is not owing to themselves, but to the spirit of God, who puts them into their minds; and which is very necessary and essential to conversion, even as a remembrance of past things is necessary to a restoration after backslidings, which is a second conversion. *And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee:* not only externally, by praying before the Lord, and attending on his word and ordinances; but internally, in spirit and in truth, which worshippers the Lord seeks; such spiritual worship being suitable to his nature, and such worshippers believers in him are: this must be understood of some of all nations, kindred and tongues, whom Christ has redeemed by his blood, and calls by his grace; see Zech. xiv. 16, 17.

* מאתך παρα σου, Sept. a te, Pagninus, Montanus, Rivetus, Cocceius, Ainsworth.

Ver. 28. *For the kingdom is the Lord's*, &c.] Not the kingdom of nature and providence, though that is the Lord Christ's; but the kingdom of grace, the mediatorial kingdom: this was Christ's by the designation and constitution of his father from eternity; the government of the church was always upon his shoulders during the Old-Testament dispensation; when he came into this world, he came as a King; though his kingdom being not of this world, it came not with observation; but upon his ascension to heaven, whither he went to receive a kingdom and return, he was made or declared Lord and Christ, and was exalted as a Prince, as well as a Saviour; and in consequence of his being set down at the right hand of God, he sent forth the rod of his strength, his Gospel, into the Gentile world, which was succeeded to the conversion of multitudes of them, among whom he has had a visible kingdom and interest ever since; and which will more abundantly appear in the latter day, when he shall be King over all the earth; and now this is a reason why so many, in the distant parts of the world, and among all the kindreds of the nations, shall remember, turn to him, and worship him. *And he is the Governor among the nations*: he rules in the hearts of some by his spirit and grace, and over others with a rod of iron.

Ver. 29. *All they that be fat upon earth*, &c.] Rich men, who abound in worldly substance, are in very flourishing and prosperous circumstances, of whom for the most part this is literally true; yea, by these sometimes are meant princes, rulers, the chief among the people in power and authority, as well as in riches; see Psal. lxxviii. 31. Isa. x. 16. the phrase may design such who are in prosperous circumstances in their souls, in spiritual things, in faith, comfort, and spiritual joy, Psal. xcii. 14. but the former sense is best: Jarchi inverts the words, *they shall eat*, i. e. the meek shall eat, *all the fat of the earth, and worship*: which may be understood of the spiritual blessings of grace, which converted persons shall feed and live upon, Psal. lxiii. 5. the allusion may be to the fat parts of the earth, and what grows thereon, made so by ashes, which the word used has the signification of; for some lands are fattened by ashes being strewed upon them [p]; but rather the rich and great men of the earth are intended, who yet are but dust and ashes. *They shall eat, and worship*: for as, in the first times of the Gospel, not many mighty and noble were called, yet some were; so more especially, in the latter day, many of this sort will be called, even kings and queens; who will not live upon their titles of honour, their grandeur and glory, but upon Christ and his Gospel, and will fall down before him, and serve and worship him; see Psal. lxxii. 10, 11. Isa. xlix. 7, 23. and lx. 3, 16. *All they that go down to the dust shall bow before him*: such as are in mean circumstances of life; so that both rich and poor shall serve him; or who are mean in their own eyes, sit in the dust of self-abhorrence, and put their mouths in the dust, are in a low condition, out of which the Lord raises them, Psal. cxiii. 7, 8. The Targum paraphrases it; *who go down to the house of the grave*; that is, the dead; and then the sense is, that Christ is the Lord, both of the dead and living, and that those that are under the earth, and are reduced to dust, as well as they that live and are fat upon it, shall bow the knee to Christ, when raised again, who is the Judge of quick and dead; see Rom. xiv. 9. Phil. ii. 10, 11. *And none can keep alive his own soul*: as no man can quicken himself when dead in trespasses and sins; so when he is made alive, he cannot preserve his life, nor nourish himself, nor make himself lively and comfortable, nor cause his heart to live, as in ver. 26. but by eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ, feeding and living upon him by faith: though some take the sense to be, that such as are before described as converted persons, will not seek to save their lives, but will freely lay them down and part with them for Christ's sake; but rather the meaning is, that so universal will the kingdom of Christ be, as that high and low, rich and poor, will be bowing to him; whoever are his enemies, and will not have him to rule over them, will be brought before him and slain, and none of them will be able to save themselves; so the Targum, *he will not quicken*, or *keep alive, the soul of the wicked*; or as Jarchi interprets it, "he will have no mercy on them, to keep "their souls alive from hell."

Ver. 30. *A seed shall serve him*, &c.] That is, Christ shall always have a seed to serve him in every age; a remnant according to the election of grace; see Rom. ix. 29. so that as the former verses speak of the amplitude of Christ's kingdom, through the calling of the Gentiles, these words and the following express the duration of it: and this *seed* either means Christ's seed; so the Septuagint version, and others that follow it, render it, *my seed*; the spiritual seed and offspring of Christ, which the father has given him, and which shall endure for ever, Isa. liii. 10. Psal. lxxxix. 29, 36. or else the church's seed, which comes to the same thing; not the natural seed of believers, but a succession of godly men in the church, who are born in her, and nursed up at her side; see Isa. lix. 21. such shall, and do, in every age serve Christ, willingly and cheerfully, in righteousness and true holiness, without slavish fear, and yet with reverence and godly fear. The Chaldee paraphrase is, *the seed of Abraham shall serve before him*: but this seed designs not the Jews only, but the Gentiles also, and chiefly. *It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation*: of his people, his children whom he accounts of, reckons, and esteems as such; or the seed shall be reckoned to the Lord, as belonging to him, *unto generation*: that is, in every generation [q], throughout all ages, to the end of time; so the Targum, *to an after-generation*; or *a generation to come*.

Ver. 31. *They shall come*, &c.] One generation after another; there shall always be a succession of regenerate persons, who shall come to Christ, and to his churches; and a succession of Gospel ministers among them, who shall come forth, being sent and qualified by Christ. *And shall declare his righteousness*; either the faithfulness of God, in fulfilling his

[p] Effoetas cinerem immundum jactare per agros, Virgil. Georgic. l. 1. v. 79.

[q] לדור in quacunque generatione, Noldius, p. 226. No. 1076.

promises; especially those which respect the mission of Christ, and salvation by him, as Zacharias did, Luke i. 68—73. or rather the righteousness of Christ, which is revealed in the Gospel, and makes a most considerable part of the declaration of it, and is published by Gospel ministers in all ages, as the only justifying righteousness before God: and that *unto a people that shall be born*; in successive generations; that shall be brought upon the stage of time and life; or that shall be born again; for to such only, in a spiritual and saving way, is the righteousness of Christ declared, revealed, and applied, by the blessed Spirit, through the ministry of the word: it is added, *that he hath done* this; wrought this righteousness; so Jarchi; that is, is the author of it; is become the end of the law for it; has finished it, and brought it in; or else all the great things spoken of in this psalm, relating to the Messiah, his sufferings, death, and resurrection, and the calling of the Gentiles; all which are the Lord's doings, and are what is declared in the Gospel: the Targum is, *the miracles which he hath done*; the Septuagint version, and those that follow it, connect this clause with the preceding thus, *to a people that shall be born, whom the Lord hath made*; made them his people, created them in Christ, and formed them for himself.

PSALM XXIII.

A Psalm of David.

THIS psalm was written by David, either when he was in distressed circumstances, being persecuted by Saul, and was in the forest of Hareth, 1 Sam. xxii. 5. as some think[r]; wherefore he comforts himself with the Lord's being his shepherd, so that he should not want; nor would he fear, was he in worse circumstances than he at present was; or rather, when he was settled upon the throne of Israel, and in the most prosperous and flourishing state of his reign, as the latter part of the psalm shews; he speaks not in his own person only, but in the name of all believers; for Christ, who is the shepherd spoken of, is a common shepherd to all the saints, who are all the sheep of his pasture, as well as David; and the prophet here makes use of similes very familiar with him; he having been a shepherd himself, and knew what it was to do all the parts of that office, which are herein expressed; and very pertinently does this psalm follow the former; for as there Christ is prophesied of as laying down his life for the sheep, as the good shepherd does; and of his being brought again from the dead, as the great shepherd of the sheep, as Christ has been; so here of his performing his office as such, in all its parts, to the great comfort, refreshment, and safety of his people.

Ver. 1. *The Lord is my shepherd*, &c.] This is to be understood not of Jehovah the Father, and of his feeding the people of Israel in the wilderness, as the Targum paraphrases it, though the character of a shepherd is sometimes given to him, Psal. lxxvii. 20. and lxxx. 1. but of Jehovah the Son, to whom it is most frequently ascribed, Gen. xlix. 24. Isa. xl. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. and xxxvii. 24. Zech. xiii. 7. John x. 11, 14. 1 Pet. ii. 25. and v. 4. This office he was called and appointed to by his father, and which through his condescending grace he undertook to execute, and for which he is abundantly qualified; being omniscient, and so knows all his sheep and their maladies, where to find them, what is their case, and what is to be done for them; and being omnipotent, he can do every thing proper for them; and having all power in heaven and in earth, can protect, defend, and save them; and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge being in him, he can guide and direct them in the best manner; wherefore he is called the great shepherd, and the chief shepherd, and the good shepherd. David calls him *my shepherd*; Christ having a right unto him, as he has to all the sheep of God, by virtue of his father's gift, his own purchase, and the power of his grace; and as owning him as such, and yielding subjection to him, following him as the sheep of Christ do wheresoever he goes; and also as expressing his faith of interest in him, affection for him, and joy because of him: and from thence comfortably concludes, *I shall not want*; not any thing, as the Targum and Aben Ezra interpret it; not any temporal good thing, as none of Christ's sheep do, that he in his wisdom sees proper and convenient for them; nor any spiritual good things, since a fulness of them is in him, out of which all their wants are supplied; they cannot want food, for by him they go in and out and find pasture; in him their bread is given them, where they have enough and to spare, and their waters are sure unto them; nor clothing, for he is the Lord their righteousness, and they are clothed with the robe of his righteousness; nor rest, for he is their resting-place, in whom they find rest for their souls, and are by him led to waters of rest, as in the following verse: the words may be rendered, *I shall not fail*, or *come short*[s]; that is, of eternal glory and happiness; for Christ's sheep are in his hands, out of which none can pluck them, and therefore shall not perish, but have everlasting life, John x. 27, 28, 29.

Ver. 2. *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures*, &c.] Or *pastures of tender grass*[t]; this is one part of the shepherd's work, and which is performed by Christ, Ezek. xxxiv. 14. John x. 9. by these *green pastures* may be meant the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises, where there is delicious feeding; likewise the fulness of grace in Christ, from whence grace for grace is received; also the flesh and blood, righteousness and sacrifice, of Christ, which faith is led unto and lives upon, and is refreshed and invigorated by: to which may be added the doctrines of the Gospel, with

[r] Jarchi & Kimchi.
[s] לא-אחסר non deficiam, Pagninus, Montanus.

[t] דשא tenera herbæ, Piscator, Amama, Gejerus, Michaelis; in folds of budding grass, Ainsworth.

which Christ's under-shepherds feed his lambs and sheep, there being in them milk for babes and meat for strong men: and likewise the ordinances of the Gospel, the goodness and fatness of the Lord's house, the feast of fat things, and breasts of consolation: here Christ's sheep are made to *lie down*, denoting their satiety and fulness; they having in these green pastures what is satisfying and replenishing: as also their rest and safety, these being sure dwellings and quiet resting-places, even in the noon of temptation and persecution; see Cant. i. 7. *He leadeth me beside the still waters*, or *waters of rest and quietness**; not to rapid torrents, which by reason of the noise they make, and the swiftness of their motion, the sheep are frighted, and not able to drink of them; but to still waters, pure and clear, and motionless, or that go softly, like the waters of Shiloah, Isa. viii. 6. and the *leading* to them is in a gentle way, easily, as they are able to bear it; so Jacob led his flock, Gen. xxxiii. 14. and Christ leads his, Isa. xl. 11. by these *still waters* may be designed the everlasting love of God, which is like a river, the streams whereof make glad the hearts of his people; these are the waters of the sanctuary, which rise to the ancles, knees, and loins, and are as a broad river to swim in; the pure river of water of life Christ leads his sheep to, and gives them to drink freely of: also communion with God, which the saints pant after, as the hart pants after the water-brooks, and Christ gives access unto; moreover he himself is the fountain of gardens, and well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon; and the graces of his spirit are also as rivers of living water, all which he makes his people partakers of; to which may be added, that the Scriptures, and the truths of the Gospel, are like still, quiet, and refreshing waters to them, and are the waters to which those that are athirst are invited to come, Isa. lv. 1. and in the immortal state Christ will still be a shepherd, and will feed his people, and lead them to fountains of living water, where they shall solace themselves for ever, and shall know no more sorrow and sighing, Rev. vii. 17.

Ver. 3. *He restoreth my soul*, &c.] Either when backslidden, and brings it back again when led or driven away, and heals its backslidings; or rather, when fainting, swooning, and ready to die away, he fetches it back again, relieves, refreshes, and comforts with the discoveries of his love, with the promises of his word, and with the consolations of his spirit, and such-like reviving cordials, see the note on Psal. xix. 7. *He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness*: in the plain paths of truth and holiness, in which men, though fools, shall not err; in right ones, though they sometimes seem rough and rugged to Christ's sheep, yet are not crooked; there is no turning to the right hand or the left; they lead straight on to the city of habitation; and they are righteous ones, as paths of duty are, and all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord be: moreover, Christ leads his by faith, to walk on in him and in his righteousness, looking through it, and on account of it, for eternal life; see Prov. viii. 20. and all this he does *for his name's sake*: for his own glory and the praise of his grace, and not for any merits or deserts in men.

Ver. 4. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death*, &c.] Which designs not a state of spiritual darkness and ignorance, as sitting in the shadow of death sometimes does, since the psalmist cannot be supposed to be at this time or after in such a condition; see Isa. ix. 2. Matt. iv. 13, 16. Luke i. 79. nor desertion or the hidings of God's face, which is sometimes the case of the people of God, and was the case of the psalmist at times; but now he expressly says the Lord was with him; but rather, since the grave is called the land of the shadow of death, and the distresses persons are usually in, under apprehensions of immediate death, are called the terrors of the shadow of death; see Job x. 21, 22. and xxxviii. 17. and xxiv. 17. the case supposed is, that should his soul draw nigh to the grave, and the sorrows of death compass him about, and he should be upon the brink and borders of eternity, he should be fearless of evil, and sing, O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? though it seems best of all to interpret it of the most severe and terrible affliction or dark dispensation of Providence it could be thought he should ever come under, Psal. xliv. 19. and cvii. 10, 14. Jer. xiii. 16. The Targum interprets it of captivity, and Jarchi and Kimchi of the wilderness of Ziph, in which David was when pursued by Saul; and the latter also, together with Ben Melech, of the grave, and of a place of danger and of distress, which is like unto the grave, that is, a place of darkness; and Aben Ezra of some grievous calamity, which God had decreed to bring into the world. Suidas* interprets this phrase of danger leading to death; afflictions attend the people of God in this life; there is a continued series of them, so that they may be said to walk in them; these are the way in which they walk to heaven, and through which they enter the kingdom; for though they continue long, and one affliction comes after another, yet there will be an end at last; they will walk and wade through them, and come out of great tribulations; and in the midst of such dark dispensations, comparable to a dark and gloomy valley, covered with the shadow of death, the psalmist intimates what would be the inward disposition of his mind, and what his conduct and behaviour: *I will fear no evil*; neither the evil one Satan, who is the wolf that comes to the flock to kill and to destroy, and the roaring lion that seeks whom he may devour, since the Lord was his shepherd, and on his side: nor evil men, who kill the body and can do no more, Psal. xxvii. 1, 2, 3. nor any evil thing, the worst calamity that could befall him, since every thing of this kind is determined by God, and comes not without his knowledge and will, and works for good, and cannot separate from the love of Christ; see Psal. xlvi. 1—4. *For thou art with me*; sheep are timorous creatures, and so are Christ's people; but when he the shepherd is with them, to sympathize with them under all their afflictions, to revive and comfort them with the cordials of his love and promises of his grace, to bear them up

* מי מנחות aquas requietum, Pagninus, Montanus; quietum, Vatablus, Michaelis; vel quietis, Gejerus; so Ainsworth; ἀναπαύσεως, Apollinar.

* In voce Ἅδης.

and support them with his mighty arm of power, to teach and instruct them by every providence, and sanctify all unto them; their fears are driven away, and they pass through the dark valley, the deep waters, and fiery trials, with courage and cheerfulness; see Isa. xli. 10. and xliii. 1, 2. *Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me;* not the rod of afflictions and chastisements, which is the sense of some Jewish [x] as well as Christian interpreters; though these are in love, and the saints have often much consolation under them; but these are designed by the valley of the shadow of death, and cannot have a place here, but rather the rod of the word, called the rod of Christ's strength, and the staff of the promises and the provisions of God's house, the whole staff and stay of bread and water, which are sure unto the saints, and refresh and comfort them. The Targum interprets the rod and staff of the word and law of God; and those interpreters who explain the rod of afflictions, yet by the staff understand the law; and Jarchi expounds it, of the mercy of God in the remission of sin, in which the psalmist trusted: the allusion is to the shepherd's crook or staff, as in other places; see Micah vii. 14. Zech. xi. 7. which was made use of for the telling and numbering of the sheep, Lev. xxvii. 32. Jer. xiii. 33. Ezek. xx. 37. and it is no small comfort to the sheep of Christ that they have passed under his rod, who has told them, and that they are all numbered by him; not only their persons, but the very hairs of their head; and that they are under his care and protection: the shepherd with his rod, staff, or crook, directs the sheep where to go, pushes forward those that are behind, and fetches back those that go astray; as well as drives away dogs, wolves, bears, &c. that would make a prey of the flock; and of such use is the word of God, attended with the power of Christ and his Spirit; it points out the path of faith, truth, and holiness, the saints should walk in; it urges and stirs up those that are negligent to the discharge of their duty, and is the means of reclaiming backsliders, and of preserving the flock from the ravenous wolves of false teachers: in a word, the presence, power, and protection of Christ, in and by his Gospel and ordinances, are what are here intended, and which are the comfort and safety of his people, in the worst of times and cases.

Ver. 5. *Thou preparest a table before me,* &c.] In a providential way, granting a sufficiency, and even an affluence of temporal good things; the providence of God lays and spreads a table for his people in the wilderness, and sets them down at it, and bids them welcome to it; see Psal. lxxviii. 19. and in a way of grace, the Lord making large provisions in his house for them, called the goodness and fatness of his house, and a feast of fat things; and under the Gospel dispensation, the table of the Lord, on which are set his flesh and blood for faith to feed upon; see Prov. ix. 2. and also in heaven, the joys of which are compared to a feast, and the enjoyment of them to sitting at a table, and which are prepared by the Lord for his people, from the foundation of the world; and of which they have some foresight and foretaste in this world; see Luke xxii. 30. and all this *in the presence of my enemies;* they seeing and envying the outward prosperity of the saints, whenever they enjoy it, and their liberty of worshipping God, hearing his word, and attending on his ordinances, none making them afraid; as they will see, and envy, and be distressed at a more glorious state of the church yet to come, Rev. xi. 12. and even, as it should seem from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the glory and happiness of the saints in the other world will be seen, or by some way or other known, by wicked men; which will be an affliction to them, and an aggravation of their misery; though here it seems chiefly to regard the present life. Some have thought there is an allusion to princes, who, having conquered others, eat and feast at a well-spread table in the presence of the conquered, and they being under it; see Judges i. 7. *Thou anointest my head with oil;* giving him an abundance of good things, not only for necessity, but for pleasure and delight; especially pouring out largely upon him the oil of gladness, the spirit of God and his graces, the anointing which teaches all things, and filling him with spiritual joy and comfort; for this refers not to the anointing of David with material oil for the kingdom, by Samuel, whilst Saul was living, or by the men of Judah, and afterwards by all the tribes of Israel, when Saul was dead. The allusion is to the custom of the eastern countries, at feasts, to anoint the heads of the guests with oil; see Eccl. ix. 7, 8. Matt. vi. 17. It was usual to anoint the head, as well as other parts of the body, on certain occasions; hence that of Propertius [y]: and in the times before Homer [z] it was usual both to wash and anoint before meals, and not the head only, but the feet also; which, though Pliny [a] represents as luxurious, was in use in Christ's time, Luke vii. 38, 46. and it is spoken of as an ancient custom by Aristophanes [b] and his Scholiast for daughters to anoint the feet of their parents after they had washed them; which may serve to illustrate the passage in the Gospel; see Eccl. ix. 8. *My cup runneth over;* denoting an affluence of temporal good things, and especially of spiritual ones, which was David's case. Such who are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, to whom the grace of the Lord has been exceeding abundant, and the Lord himself is the portion of their cup, their cup may be said to run over indeed.

Ver. 6. *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me,* &c.] Either the free grace, love, favour, and mercy of God in Christ, which endures continually, and is always the same from everlasting to everlasting; or the effects of it; and these either temporal good things, which flow from the goodness and mercy of God, and not the merits of men; and which are in great mercy and loving-kindness bestowed on his people, and which follow them: they do not anxiously seek after them; but seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, these are added to them, they trusting in the Lord, and he caring for them: or spiritual good things, which arise from the mere grace and mercy of God;

[x] Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 9. 2. Jarchi & Kimchi in loc.
[y] Terque lavet nostras spica cilissa comas, l. 4. eleg. 6. v. 74.
[z] Iliad. 10. v. 577, 578. Odyss. l. 2. v. 466. & l. 8. v. 454. & l. 10. v. 450.
[a] Nat. Hist. l. 13. c. 3.
[b] Vespæ, p. 472, 516, 537.

such as the blessings of the covenant, the sure mercies of David, the discoveries and instances of the love of God, and the provisions of his house, which follow them, being undeserving of them; and even when they have backslidden from the Lord, and in times of distress, when his grace is sufficient for them; and of all this the psalmist had a comfortable assurance, depending upon the promise of God, arguing from the blessings he had already bestowed, and from the constant care he takes of his people, having in view his unchangeableness and faithfulness, the firmness of his covenant, and the irreversibleness of the blessings of it: the words may be rendered *only goodness and mercy*, &c.[c] nothing but mere mercy and kindness; for though afflictions do attend the children of God, yet these are in mercy and love; there is no fury in the Lord against them; there is nothing comes in wrath to them, throughout the whole course of their lives; wherefore it is added, *all the days of my life;* the mercies of God are new every morning, they continue all the day long; temporal goodness abides as long as life lasts, and ends with it; and spiritual blessings are for ever, they are the gifts of God, which are without repentance. *And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever;* which may denote his constant attendance on the public worship of God, of which he had been deprived in time past, being driven out from it, but now he enjoyed it, and believed he ever should; or it may design his being a member of the church of God, and a pillar in the house and temple of the Lord, that should never go out; see Rev. iii. 12. or it may regard the assurance he had of dwelling in the house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens, Christ's father's house, in which are many mansions, sure dwellings, and quiet resting-places for his people, and that to all eternity. The Targum interprets it of the house of the sanctuary; and Kimchi expounds the whole verse in a petitionary way, *may goodness and mercy*, &c.

PSALM XXIV.

A Psalm of David.

THIS psalm is thought by some of the Jewish writers[d] to have been wrote when the ark was brought from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David, and put into the place prepared for it by him, 2 Sam. vi. 17. to which reference is supposed to be had in ver. 7—10. or after that David had built an altar in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and had knowledge of the hill Moriah, as the place where the sanctuary was to be built; called the hill of the Lord, and his holy place, ver. 3. however, it was certainly written by David, under the inspiration of the spirit of God; and is a prophecy of Christ, and of the Gospel church, and describes the members of it.

Ver. 1. *The earth* is *the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,* &c.] The whole universe, all the terraqueous globe, both land and water, and the circumambient air, and all that is therein; the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, all plants and vegetables that spring out of the earth, and metals and minerals in the bowels of it; all which are the riches of the Lord the earth is full of, Psal. civ. 24. see Psal. l. 10, 11, 12. *The world, and they that dwell therein;* the habitable world, and the dwellers on it, rational and irrational. These words may be interpreted of Christ, who is Lord of all; he made the world, and has a right and claim to all things in it; for the same person is here spoken of as in the preceding psalm, under the character of a shepherd; and this shews him to be very fit and proper for such an office, seeing he cannot fail of feeding and protecting his sheep; nor can they want any good thing, since the fulness both of nature and of grace is with him; and hence it is that all things are theirs, whether the world, or things present, or things to come; and though they seem to have nothing, yet possess all things, they possessing him whose all things are. The apostle makes use of this passage of Scripture, to prove, explain, and direct in the use of Christian liberty, with respect to the free use of creatures, they all being the Lord's; and therefore good, and to be received with thanksgiving: and yet, inasmuch as there is a variety of them, such should be abstained from, when to use them serves to embolden evil men in their wicked ways, or offend and grieve weak Christians, 1 Cor. x. 25, 26, 28.

Ver. 2. *For he hath founded it upon the seas,* &c.] Or *with* them, as some interpret[e] the particle על; he hath founded the earth and seas together, and both upon nothing; and yet are stable and firm; or *by the seas*[f], near unto them, at the side of them; which, though higher than the earth, are wonderfully bounded by the power of God, so as not to return and cover the earth; see Job xxxviii. 8—11. Psal. civ. 5—9. so the particle is used in Psal. i. 3. and xxiii. 2. Some have thought that the first earth, which Peter says was standing in the water, and out of the water, 2 Pet. iii. 5. was made in the form of an egg, and that the waters were under the earth, and the earth was as a crust or shell over them, until the deluge came; and this crust then broke in, and formed the sea; and so it was literally true, that the earth was founded upon, or over the waters. *And established it upon the floods;* the floods of the seas, or rivers of water running to and fro in it: this shews the ground and foundation of Christ's right and claim to the earth, and all that is in it; which is not by reason of his father's gift to him as Mediator, but by virtue of his concern in creation, the world, and all things in it, being made and established by him; in him do all things consist, Col. i. 16, 17.

Ver. 3. *Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?* &c.] Though the Lord has a claim in general to the

[c] אך nil nisi, Junius & Tremellius; certe vel tantum, Cocceius.
[d] Aben Ezra & Kimchi.
[e] R. Moses in Aben Ezra in loc.
[f] על ימים juxta maria, Vatablus, Gejerus, Amama; so Kimchi & Ben Melech.

whole world, and all its fulness; yet there is a particular part of it, or spot in it, which is his special and peculiar property, and that is his church and people; for though some reference may be had, in this passage, to Mount Moriah, and the hill of Zion, on which the temple was afterwards built, and is called the hill of the Lord, where he desired to dwell, Psal. lxviii. 15, 16. yet the church is mystically intended, and is so called on account of its visibility, through a profession of faith in Christ, and for its immoveableness, being built on him. *And who shall stand in his holy place?* the same with the hill of the Lord; the temple being to be built upon it, where the Lord took up his residence, and was worshipped, and holiness becomes the house of God for evermore: the import of these questions is, who is a proper person to be an inhabitant of Zion, or a member of a Gospel church? and the answer to them is in the following verse, in which is a description much like that which is given of one hundred forty and four thousand seen with the Lamb on Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1, 4, 5. compare with this Psal. xv.

Ver. 4. *He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, &c.*] Though *clean hands* are mentioned first, as being more obvious to view, and better known, and more subject to the cognizance and observation of others; yet a *pure heart* is first in being and in order; from whence cleanness of hands, when right and real, springs: no man has a pure heart naturally and of himself: the heart is desperately wicked; the imagination of the thoughts of it is evil continually; the mind and conscience are defiled with sin; nor can any man make his heart clean, or say he is pure from sin; but it is God that creates a clean heart, and renews a right spirit within men, and purifies the heart by faith, which is led to the blood of sprinkling, which purges the conscience, and cleanseth it from all sin; and from this purity of heart flows purity of life and conversation, signified by *clean hands*; the hand being the instrument of action, holy actions, or good works, performed from a principle of grace, are meant: the phrase is expressive of a holy, harmless, and innocent conversation, washing the hands being used to denote innocence, Matt. xxvii. 24. Psal. xxvi. 6. and lxxiii. 13. not a conversation entirely free from sin, nor by which a man is justified before God; for though he wash his hands ever so clean, they will not be pure in his sight, and will need washing in the blood of the Lamb; but it denotes a conversation upright in general, and declares a man righteous in the sight of men, and distinguishes him from one of a dissolute life, whose hands are full of blood, and defiled with sin. *Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity*; or *set his heart upon*[g], and desired vain things, as the phrase is sometimes used, Deut. xxiv. 15. Jer. xxii. 27. that is, the vain things of this world; as the riches, honours, pleasures, and profits of it; or has not served other gods, the idols of the Gentiles, which are lying vanities, but has lifted up his soul to God, and served him only: or *who hath not received his soul in vain*[h]; from the hands of God, but loves him with all his soul, believes with the heart in Christ for righteousness, being sanctified by the spirit of God; and so the desire of his soul is to his name, and the remembrance of him. The Keri, or marginal reading, according to the points, is, *who hath not lifted up my soul to vanity*[i]; that is, has not taken the name of God in vain, or swore falsely by his name; his soul being put for his name or himself, and by which he is said sometimes to swear, Jer. li. 14. Amos vi. 8. and this sense the Jewish interpreters[k] generally give into. The Targum seems to take in both the writing of the text and the marginal reading, as it often does, and renders the words, *who hath not sworn in vain, to the condemnation of his soul*; though sometimes to his own disadvantage, yet not to the hurt of others; see Psal. xv. 4. it follows, *nor sworn deceitfully*; by bearing false witness against any man; or by cheating him out of his substance through a false oath.

Ver. 5. *He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, &c.*] Or *who receives*[l]; the future for the present; and so is a continuation of the description of a person proper to enter and abide in the church of God, as the following verse seems to require; even one who has received every spiritual blessing in Christ in general, special grace out of his fulness; particularly the blessing of pardon, as also adoption, and a right to eternal life; though it may be that the following clause is explanative of this. *And righteousness from the God of his salvation*; from Christ, who is God his Saviour, the author of salvation; and who has brought in an everlasting righteousness, which is in him, and is a gift of his grace, and is received from him by faith, and is a great blessing indeed; it secures from condemnation and death, and entitles to eternal life.

Ver. 6. *This is the generation of them that seek him, &c.*] The persons above described are such, who in every age are the generation of the children of God, and are accounted by him for a generation; they are such that seek him, in the first place, with their whole hearts, and in Christ, where they find him. *That seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.* By the *face* of God is meant the favour of God, the discoveries of his love, the light of his countenance, than which nothing is more desirable to gracious souls, or more sought after by them; and by Jacob is meant the God of Jacob; and so Apollinarius has it in his metaphrase; see Psal. x. 1. unless Christ should be intended, one of whose names is Israel, Isa. xlix. 3. or the words may be supplied, as they are by some Jewish writers[m], *this is Jacob*; or the persons before described are the seed of Jacob, and who are called by his name: and it may be observed, that the church of God often bears the same name, Isa. xliii. 1. and xliv. 1, 5. and then the sense is, the persons whose characters are given above are fit to ascend, and stand in the holy hill of God, are Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile.

Ver. 7. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates, &c.*] By which the gates of hell are not meant; nor are the words to be understood of the descent of Christ thither,

[g] לא נשא לשוא נפשו non inhiat, aut intentus est, Vatablus, Amama; so Gejerus, Michaelis.
[h] So Pagninus.
[i] Animam meam, Montanus, Vatablus, Hillerus.

[k] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.
[l] ישא qui accipit, Cocceius.
[m] Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.

to fetch the souls of Old-Testament saints from thence; who the Papists dream were detained in an apartment there, as in a prison, called by them *limbus patrum*; seeing these, immediately upon their separation from the body, were in a state of happiness and glory, as the parable of the rich man and Lazarus shews; and since Christ, at his death, went, in his human soul, immediately into heaven, or paradise, where the penitent thief was that day with him: nor do the words design the gates of heaven, and Christ's ascension thither, shut by the sins of men, and opened by the blood of Christ, by which he entered himself, and has made way for all his people; though this sense is much preferable to the former. The Jewish interpreters understand the phrase of the gates of the temple, which David prophetically speaks of as to be opened, when it should be built and dedicated by Solomon, and when the ark, the symbol of Jehovah's presence, was brought into it, and the glory of the Lord filled the house; so the Targum interprets this first clause of *the gates of the house of the sanctuary*; though the next of, *the gates of the garden of Eden*; but the words are better interpreted, in a mystical and spiritual sense, of the church of God, the temple of the living God, which is said to have gates, Isa. lx. 11. and is itself called a door, Cant. viii. 9. where the open door of the Gospel is set, or an opportunity of preaching the Gospel given, and a door of utterance to the ministers of the word, and the doors of men's hearts are opened to attend to it; and indeed the hearts of particular believers, individual members of the church, may be intended, or at least included in the sense of the passage; see Rev. iii. 20. and it may be observed, that the new Jerusalem is said to have gates of pearl, through which Christ, when he makes his glorious appearance, will enter in his own glory, and in his father's, and in the glory of the holy angels. *And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors*; or *the doors of the world* [a]; which some understand of the kingdoms and nations of the world, and of the kings and princes thereof, as called upon to open and make way for, and receive the Gospel of Christ into them, and to support and retain it; but it is best to interpret it of the church and its members, whose continuance, perpetuity, and duration, are here intimated, by being called *everlasting doors*; which may be said to be *lifted up*, as it may respect churches, when those things are removed which hinder communion with Christ; as their sins, which separate between them and their God, and the wall of unbelief, behind which Christ stands; and sleepiness, drowsiness, coldness, lukewarmness, and indifference; see Isa. lix. 2. Cant. ii. 9. and v. 2. and when public worship is closely and strictly attended on, as the ministration of the word and ordinances, prayer to God, which is the lifting up the heart with the hands to God, and singing his praise: and as it may respect particular believers; these doors and gates may be said to be lifted up, when their hearts are enlarged with the lo[ve] of God; the desires and affections of their souls are drawn out towards the Lord, and the graces of the spirit are in a lively exercise on him; and when they lift up their heads with joy in a view of Christ coming to them. This must not be understood as if they could do all this of themselves, any more than gates and doors can be thought to open and lift up themselves. *And the King of glory shall come in*; the Lord Jesus Christ, called the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. ii. 8. James ii. 1. who is glorious in himself, in the perfections of his divine nature, as the Son of God; being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; and in his office as Mediator, being full of grace and truth, and having a glory given him before the world was; and which became manifest upon his resurrection, ascension to heaven, and session at God's right hand; and particularly he is glorious as a King, being made higher than the kings of the earth, and crowned with glory and honour; and so the Targum renders it מלך יקרא, *the glorious King*; and he is moreover the author and giver, the sum and substance, of the glory and happiness of the saints: and now, as the inhabitants of Zion, and members of the church, are described in the preceding verses, an account is given of the King of Zion in this and the following; who may be said to *come into* his churches, when he grants his gracious presence, shews himself through the lattices, and in the galleries of ordinances, in his beauty and glory; takes his walks there, and his goings are seen, even in the sanctuary; and where he dwells as King in his palace, and as a son in his own house; and he may be said to come into the hearts of particular believers, when he manifests himself, his love and grace, unto them, and grants them such communion as is expressed by supping with them, and by dwelling in their hearts by faith.

Ver. 8. *Who is this King of glory?* &c.] Which question is put by the church, or particular believers; not through ignorance, as the daughters of Jerusalem, Cant. v. 9. or the Pharisees, when Christ made his public entrance into Jerusalem, Matt. xxi. 10. much less in pride and haughtiness, in scorn and derision, as Pharaoh, Exod. v. 1. and the Capernaites, John vi. 42. but as wondering at the glories and excellencies of his person, and as desirous of knowing more of him. The answer to the question is, *the Lord strong and mighty*; he whose name alone is Jehovah; the most high in all the earth; the everlasting I AM; Jehovah our righteousness; the mighty God, even the Almighty; the Son of man, whom God has made strong for himself: his strength and might have been seen in the creation of all things out of nothing, in upholding all things by his power, in the redemption of his people, in the resurrection of himself, in dispossessing the strong man armed out of the hearts of his chosen ones, in the government of his church, and the care of all his saints, and in keeping them from a final and total falling away. From the first of these words, which is only h[er]e used, Mars, because of his strength, has the name of Azizus; which name of his Julian [o] makes mention of; and very probably Hesus, also a deity of the ancient Gauls, spoken of by the poet [p], and by Lactantius [q]; but to none does it belong as to our Jehovah. *The Lord*

[a] עולם פתחי ostia mundi, Gejerus, Schmidt.

[o] Orat. 4. in solem, p. 281.

[p] Teutates horrensque feris altaribus Hesus. Lucan.

[q] De Fals. R[eli]g. l. 1. c. 21.

mighty in battle; as he was when he was upon the cross; when he made an end of sin, spoiled principalities and powers; abolished death, and destroyed him that had the power of it; and as he will be at the last day, when the kings of the earth shall make war with him, and he shall overcome them; when the beast and false prophet shall be taken, and cast alive into the lake of fire; and the remnant shall be slain with the sword of his mouth; see Rev. xvii. 14. and xix. 11—21. and who is now the Captain of salvation to his people, their Leader and Commander; who furnishes them with weapons of warfare, which are mighty through God; who teaches their hands to war, and their fingers to fight the good fight of faith; and makes them more than conquerors, through himself, that has loved them.

Ver. 9. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates*, &c.] This is repeated on account of the backwardness and negligence of churches, and particular believers, to open and let Christ in; as may be seen in the case of the church in Cant. v. 2, 3. as well as the more to set forth the greatness and glory of Christ, about to make his entrance, and to command a proper awe and reverence of him: some think respect is had to the two-fold coming of Christ; first into the second temple, and next at the last judgment; though rather the certainty of his coming, in a spiritual manner, to his church and people, is here designed.

Ver. 10. *Who is this King of glory?* &c.] This is repeated, because of the preceding words, and in order to have a further account of this glorious Person, as follows: *the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.* He who is the Lord of sabaoth, the Lord of the armies, both of the heavens and the earth; at whose dispose and control all things are in both worlds, above and below: this is the great and glorious Person that condescends to dwell in his churches, and in the hearts of his people; and this honour have all his saints.

PSALM XXV.

A Psalm of David.

THIS is the first of the psalms which is written in an alphabetical order, or in which the first word of every verse begins with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in order, though it is not strictly and regularly observed; the reason of this manner of writing is not very obvious; the [r] Jews confess their ignorance of it; it may be to engage the attention to what is said, or to assist the memory in laying it up, and retaining it there. The occasion of the psalm seems to be the troubles David was in on account of an unnatural rebellion raised against him by some of his subjects, at the head of which was his own son Absalom; he speaks of himself as in a net, and in great affliction, distress, and trouble, by reason of his enemies, ver. 15, 16, 17, 18. and as being brought to a sense of his former sins, for which he desires pardon, ver. 7, 11.

Ver. 1. *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.*] Either *in prayer*, as the Chaldee paraphrase adds [s]; and denotes sincere, affectionate, hearty prayer to God, a drawing nigh to him with a true heart: for unless the heart is lifted up, the lifting up of the eyes or hands in prayer is of no avail; see Lam. iii. 41. or by way of offering to the Lord, as some Jewish writers [t] interpret it; David not only presented his body in public worship, but his soul also as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which was his reasonable service; or else as a depositum, which he committed into the hands of God, to be under his care and protection; and then the sense is the same with Psal. xxxi. 5 [u]. the phrase is sometimes used to express earnest and vehement desire after any thing; see the note on Psal. xxiv. 4. and may here intend the very great desire of the psalmist after communion with God; which is elsewhere by him expressed by panting after him, and by thirsting for him in a dry and thirsty land, Psal. xlii. 1. and lxiii. 1. the desires of his soul were not to vain things, the vanities and idols of the Gentiles, but to God only, and to the remembrance of his name.

Ver. 2. *O my God, I trust in thee*, &c.] He claims his interest in God, and expresses his faith and confidence in him, in the midst of all his troubles; see the note on Psal. vii. 1. *Let me not be ashamed*; meaning of his trust in God, by being disappointed of the help, deliverance, and salvation from him, which he trusted in him for; and the believer, as he has no reason to be ashamed of God, the object of his trust; so neither of the act of his hope or trust in him; nor shall he; for hope makes not ashamed; see Psal. cxix. 116. Rom. v. 5. *Let not mine enemies triumph over me*; either his temporal enemies, his subjects that were risen up against him; or his spiritual enemies, Satan, and the men of the world, who rejoice and triumph when the saints are forsaken by God; and they are ready to say, as David's enemies did of him, there is no help or salvation for him in God, Psal. iii. 2. and when they fall into their hands, or fall by them.

Ver. 3. *Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed*, &c.] David not only prays for himself, but for other saints, as it becomes the people of God to do; for them they waited on the Lord in public worship, attended his house and ordinances, and waited on him for the discoveries of his love, the enjoyment of his gracious presence, and were looking for his salvation, for the Messiah; for those the psalmist prays, that they might not be ashamed of their expectation and hope, by the delay of those things, or the denial of

[r] Kimchi in loc.
[s] So Kimchi & Ben Melech.
[t] R. Moseh in Aben Ezra in loc.
[u] Midrash Tillim.

them. *Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause*; or *act treacherously without cause* [w]; as David's subjects did, who were risen up in rebellion against him, and acted the perfidious part, contrary to their allegiance, and without any just reason, they not being ruled with rigour, and oppressed; but were guided and governed by him according to the laws of God, in the integrity of his heart, and by the skilfulness of his hands; he being a king that reigned in righteousness, and a prince that decreed judgment: and such are those who are now risen up against our rightful sovereign King George [x], a parcel of perfidious treacherous wretches; some of them who were in the last rebellion, and obtained his father's pardon; others that have partook yearly of his royal bounty, for the instruction of their children; and all have enjoyed the blessings of his mild and gentle government; and therefore are without cause his enemies: and for such we should pray, as David did for his enemies, that they might be ashamed; that they may fail in their attempts and designs, and be brought to deserved punishment; see Psal. vii. 4. or *let transgressors be ashamed*, and *be empty* [y]; in a state of emptiness and want; lose their wealth, honour, and credit.

Ver. 4. *Shew me thy ways, O Lord*, &c.] Either those which the Lord himself took and walked in; as those of creation and providence, in which he has displayed his power, wisdom, and goodness; and which are desirable to be known by his people, and require divine instruction and direction; and particularly his ways of grace, mercy, and truth, and the methods he has taken for the salvation of his people, both in eternity and in time; or those ways which he orders and directs his people to walk in; namely, the paths of duty, the ways of his worship and ordinances; a greater knowledge of which good men desire to have, as well as more grace to enable them to walk more closely and constantly in them. *Teach me thy paths*: a petition the same with the other, in different words.

Ver. 5. *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me*, &c.] Meaning the word of God, the Scriptures of truth; and the Gospel, which is the word of truth, and truth itself, John xvii. 17. and the sense is, either that God would lead him by his spirit more and more into all truth, as contained in his word; or that he would lead him by it and according to it, that he might form his principles and his conduct more agreeably to it, which is the standard and rule of faith and practice: which leading is by teaching; and reasons urged for granting all the above petitions follow, *for thou art the God of my salvation*: who, in infinite wisdom, contrived the scheme and method of it in his Son, and by him effected it, and by his Spirit had made application of it to him: and since the Lord had done such great things for him, he hoped the requests he had made would be granted: he adds, *on thee do I wait all the day*; or continually, in public and in private, attending to all the duties of religion, yet not trusting in them, but in the Lord; and therefore he entreated he might not be ashamed of his hope and expectation for deliverance and salvation.

Ver. 6. *Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses*, &c.] Not the providential mercy and kindness of God, in the care of him in his mother's womb, at the time of his birth, in his nurture and education, and in the preservation of him to the present time; but the special mercy, grace, and love of God in Christ: the sense of the petition is the same with that of Psal. cvi. 4. which are expressed in the plural number, because of the largeness and abundance of it, and because of the various acts and instances of it; the Lord is rich and plenteous in mercy, abundant in goodness; his love is exceeding great, and numerous are the ways and methods in which it is declared, both in eternity and in time; and though he can never forget his love, nor the people whom he loves, for they are engraven on his hand, and set as a seal on his heart; yet he sometimes seems, by the conduct of his providence, as if he did not remember it, and had no tender affection for them; and their unbelief is ready to say, the Lord has forgotten to be gracious; and the design of such a petition as this is to entreat a fresh discovery and application of the grace, mercy, and loving-kindness of God, and which he allows his people to put him in remembrance of. *For they have been ever of old*; meaning not only from the time of his birth, and in after-appearances of God for him, nor the favours shewn to the people of Israel in former times at the Red sea, and in the wilderness and elsewhere, and to the patriarchs from the beginning of the world; but the love of God from everlasting, which appears in the choice of his people in Christ, before the foundation of the world, in the everlasting covenant of grace made with him, and in the setting of him up as the Mediator of it, and in putting his people into his hands, with all grace and spiritual blessings for them before the world began; and which love as it is from everlasting it is to everlasting, and remains invariably the same.

Ver. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth*, &c.] Original sin, in which he was born, and the breakings forth of corrupt nature in infancy, he brought into the world with him, together with all the youthful lusts and vanities to which that age is addicted; and sometimes the sins of youth are in some persons remembered by God, and punished in old age; and if not, they are brought to remembrance through the dispensations of Providence: and the people of God are chastised for them then, and are ready to fear it is in a way of wrath; see Job xiii. 26. which the psalmist here deprecates: for this is not said in order to extenuate his sins, they being but youthful follies, imprudencies, and inadvertencies, sins committed through ignorance, when he had not the knowledge of things he now had; nor as if he had lived so holy a life, that there were no sins of his to be taken notice of but what he had committed in his younger days; but rather this is to be considered as a confession of his having sinned from his youth upwards unto that time, as in Jer. iii. 25. and therefore entreats that God would not remember his sins, so as to correct him for them in wrath and hot displeasure; nei-

[w] הבוגדים qui perfide agunt, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis; so Amama & Ainsworth.

[x] This was written December 2, 1745.

[y] ריקם in statu vacuitatis ac egestatis, Gussetius, p. 790.

ther the sins he had formerly been guilty of, nor those of a later date; which he next mentions. *Nor my transgressions*; his more notorious and glaring ones; such as murder and adultery, in the case of Uriah and Bath-sheba, and which now stared him in the face; and on account of these, and as a chastening for them, this unnatural rebellion of his son's, which was now raised against him, was suffered to befall him, as had been foretold to him, 2 Sam. xii. 11. *According to thy mercy remember thou me, for thy goodness sake, O Lord*: he pleads no merit nor goodness of his own, but casts himself upon the mercy, grace, and goodness of God; in which he was certainly right; and on that account prayed and hoped for deliverance from his present troubles, and for discoveries of the pardon of his sins unto him, which is what he means by remembering him.

Ver. 8. *Good and upright is the Lord, &c.*] He is essentially, originally, and independently *good* of himself in his own nature, and he is providentially good to all his creatures; and he is in a way of special grace and mercy good to his own people: and he is *upright*, just in himself, righteous in all his ways and works, and faithful in all his promises; and the consideration of these excellent perfections of his encouraged the psalmist to entertain an holy confidence, that his petitions, respecting instruction and guidance in the ways of the Lord, ver. 4, 5. would be heard and answered, notwithstanding his sins and transgressions. *Therefore will he teach sinners in the way*; such who are in sinful ways, he will teach them by his word and spirit the evil of their ways, and bring them out of them, and to repentance for them; and he will teach them his own ways, both the ways and methods of his grace, in saving sinners by Christ, and the paths of faith and duty in which he would have them walk; see Psal. li. 13.

Ver. 9. *The meek will he guide in judgment, &c.*] Or *the miserable*[a], and afflicted; such as see themselves to be wretched and miserable, lost and undone; and cry out, What shall we do to be saved? and who are meek and lowly, are humbled under a sense of their sins, are poor in spirit, and of broken and contrite hearts; these the Lord will guide by his spirit into the truth, as it is in Jesus; even the great truth of salvation by him; and in the way of his judgments, statutes, and ordinances; and will give them a true judgment and a right discerning of things that differ; and he will lead them on in judgment, or gently; see Jer. x. 24. into every truth of the Gospel by degrees, and as they are able to bear them. *And the meek will he teach his way*; of justifying sinners by the righteousness of his son; for such who are humble and confess their sins and unworthiness, and throw themselves on the mercy of God in Christ, are declaratively justified by the Lord, when the proud boasting Pharisee is an abomination to him.

Ver. 10. *All the paths of the Lord* are *mercy and truth, &c.*] By which are meant, not the paths in which the Lord would have his people walk; though these are good and gracious, right and true; his commandments are not grievous, his yoke is easy, and burden light; his ways are ways of pleasantness, and his paths paths of peace: but rather the paths in which the Lord himself walks; not his paths of providence, though these are mercy and truth to his own people; every step he takes is in a way of goodness and kindness to them, and in truth and faithfulness to his promises; but the ways and methods he has taken towards the spiritual and eternal salvation of his people; as in his counsels and purposes, in which there is a large display of his grace and mercy; in the choice of them in Christ, as vessels of mercy, and which is of grace, and not of works; in determining to send his son to die for them, which springs from the tender mercy of our God; in resolving to call them by his grace, and to adopt them into his family, and at last to glorify them; all which proceed from his merciful loving-kindness; and all these, his counsels of old, are faithfulness and truth, since they can never be frustrated, but are always accomplished; as also in his covenant, which springs from grace, is built upon mercy, and contains the sure mercies of David, and is ever fulfilled; the faithfulness of God is engaged to keep it, and its promises are yea and amen in Christ; and likewise the steps he has taken in Christ, the Mediator of the covenant, who is full of grace and truth; *mercy* appears in the mission of him, and redemption by him; and *truth*, in fulfilling the promise of him; and both mercy and truth meet together in him: and so they do in the various blessings of grace which come by him; as particularly justification and pardon of sin, in both which there is a display of grace and mercy; and also of the truth of holiness and justice; and the mercy and truth of God appear in these paths of his, *unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies*; by which are designed, not the covenant of works, and the precepts of the law, which are sometimes called the testimonies of God, because they testify what is his will that should be done: but these are broke, and not kept perfectly by any; nor is it any favour or high privilege to be shewn this covenant and the duties of it, as is suggested of the covenant here meant, as appears from ver. 14. wherefore the covenant of grace must be intended, which is made with Christ, and his people in him; and the *testimonies* are the promises of it, which testify of the grace, mercy, truth, and faithfulness of God; and the keeping of these is done by faith: faith lays hold on the covenant, its blessings and promises, and claims an interest in them, as David did, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. see Isa. lvi. 4, 6. and it keeps or retains its hold; it will not let go its hold of the covenant and its testimonies, but asserts its interest, even when things are at the worst with it; and it holds fast the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end; and to such all the steps the Lord takes appear to be in mercy and truth.

Ver. 11. *For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, &c.*] Which to do is one of the promises and blessings of the covenant. The psalmist may have reference to his sin with Bath-sheba, as Kimchi observes; since it was foretold to him, that, on account of that sin, evil should arise to him out of his own house, 2 Sam. xii. 11. meaning that his son should rise up in rebellion against him; which was now the

[a] עניים miseros, Gejerus, Michaelis.

case, and which, no doubt, brought afresh this sin to his mind; and the guilt of it lay heavy upon his conscience; and therefore he prays for an application of pardoning grace and mercy; or he may have respect to original sin, the sin of his nature, which so easily beset him; the loathsome disease his loins were filled with; the law in his members warring against the law of his mind; and which a view of every actual sin led him to the consideration and acknowledgment of, as did that now mentioned, Psal. li. 4, 5. or, *iniquity* may be put for *iniquities*, and the sense be, that he desired a manifestation of the pardon of all his sins; for when God forgives sin, he forgives all iniquities: and David here prays for pardon in a way of mercy, and upon the foot of satisfaction; for he prays that God would *mercifully pardon* [a], as the word signifies; or, according to his tender mercies, blot out his transgressions, and cleanse him from his sins: or that he would be *propitious* [b] to him; or forgive him in a propitiatory way, or through the propitiation of Christ, whom God had set forth in his purposes and promises to be the propitiation for the remission of sins; and therefore he entreats this favour *for his name's sake;* not for his own merits and good works, but for the Lord's sake, for his mercy's sake, or for his son's sake; see Isa. xliii. 25. compared with Eph. v. 32. The argument or reason he urges is, *for it is great;* being committed against the great God, against great light and knowledge, and attended with very aggravating circumstances; or *much* [c], he being guilty of many sins; his sins were great, both as to quality and quantity: this seems to be rather a reason against than a reason for the pardon of sin; it denotes the sense the psalmist had of his iniquity, and his importunity for the pardon of it; just as a person, sensible of the violence and malignity of his disease, entreats the physician with the greater eagerness and importunity to do his utmost for him; see Psal. xli. 4. or the words may be rendered, *though it is great* [d]; so Aben Ezra understands them; "though "it is so very heinous and provoking, yet since forgive- "ness is with thee, and thou hast promised it in cove- "nant, and hast proclaimed thy name, a God gracious "and merciful, pardon it;" unless the words are to be connected, as they are by some Jewish [e] interpreters, with the phrase *thy name's sake, for it is great;* that is, thy name is great, and that it may appear to be so, as it is proclaimed, forgive mine iniquity.

Ver. 12. *What man is he that feareth the Lord? &c.*] That is, how happy a man is he! and one that fears the Lord is one that has the fear of God put into his heart, as a blessing of the covenant of grace before spoken of; who fears the Lord, not on account of the punishment of sin, but under the influence of the pardon of it, and for his goodness-sake; who loves the Lord, trusts in him, is careful not to offend him, hates sin, and avoids it, and has a strict regard to the worship of God in all its parts and branches, and performs it in fear; or who serves the Lord with reverence and godly fear. The description of this man's happiness follows in this and the next verse: *him shall he teach in the way* that *he shall choose;* either which the man that fears God shall choose, which is the way of truth and duty, Psal. cxix. 30, 173. or the way which God prescribes to him, and is well-pleasing in his sight, who teaches to profit, and leads in the way his people should go; and a great happiness it is for a man to have his steps ordered by the Lord and his goings directed by him.

Ver. 13. *His soul shall dwell at ease, &c.*] Or in *goodness* [f], enjoying an affluence of good things, of spiritual blessings in Christ, in whom he dwells by faith; and where he has peace and safety, amidst all the troubles, afflictions, and exercises, he meets with; and where with godliness he has contentment, which is great gain indeed; for, though he may seem to have nothing, he possesses all things; and has all things given him richly to enjoy, even all things pertaining to life and godliness; and at death, when his soul is separated from his body, it shall enter into rest, and be in perfect peace; it shall lie in Abraham's bosom, and in the arms of Jesus, during the night of the grave, until the resurrection-morn, when the body will be raised and united to it, and both will dwell in perfect happiness to all eternity. *And his seed shall inherit the earth;* that is, those who tread in the same steps, and fear the Lord as he does; these shall possess the good things of this world, which is theirs, in a comfortable way, as their father's gift, as covenant-mercies, and in love; though it may be but a small portion that they have of them; or rather they shall inherit the new heavens and earth, wherein will dwell only righteous persons, meek ones, and such as fear the Lord, Matt. v. 5. 2 Pet. iii. 13. and this they shall inherit for a thousand years, and afterwards the land afar off, the better country, the ultimate glory to all eternity.

Ver. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, &c.*] The secret of his purposes with them; as his purpose according to election; his resolution to redeem his chosen ones by his Son; his design to call them by his grace; his predestination of them to the adoption of children, and eternal life; which are the deep things of God the Spirit of God reveals; and all which are made manifest to them in effectual vocation; and the secret of his providences is with them; some are made known to them that fear the Lord before they come to pass; as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham, with many other instances in the Old Testament; see Amos iii. 7. and what is the book of the Revelation but a revelation of the secrets of Providence, from the time of Christ and his apostles, to the end of the world? some they observe and take notice of whilst they are performing, and see the gracious designs of God in them, for their good and his glory; and though some of his ways of Providence are past finding out, and his footsteps are not known as yet; hereafter his judgments will be made manifest, and the whole scene will be opened to the saints, and be clear to their view: the secret of his love, free grace, and favour, is with them, which was in his heart from everlasting, and lay hid in his thoughts, which are as

[a] סלחת mercifully pardon; so Ainsworth.
[b] Ἱλάσῃ, Sept. propitiaberis, V. L. propitius esto, Musculus.
[c] רב multum, V. L. multa, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version.
[d] כי quamvis, Gejerus, Schmidt.
[e] Vide Abendana Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.
[f] בטוב in bono, Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, &c. so Ainsworth.

much higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth; and which is made manifest in regeneration, and then shed abroad in the hearts of his people: secret communion with God is enjoyed by those that fear him, which is what the world knows nothing of, and the joy that results from it is what a stranger intermeddles not with; the Lord has his chambers and secret places, into which he brings them, and where they dwell. The secret of his Gospel is with them; and the mysteries of it, which were kept secret since the world began; as the mystery of a trinity of Persons in the Godhead; the union of the two natures in Christ; the regeneration of the Spirit; the union of the saints to Christ, and their communion with him; the calling of the Gentiles; the resurrection of the dead; and the change of living saints. *And he will shew them his covenant*: the covenant of grace, which was made with Christ for them from eternity, is made known to them in time, when they are called by the grace of God, and made partakers of the grace of the covenant, then the Lord reveals himself as their covenant God and Father; shews them that his Son is their surety, Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour; puts his Spirit into them to implant covenant-grace in them, to seal up the blessings of it to them, and bear witness to their interest in them, as pardon, justification, and adoption; and to apply the exceeding great and precious promises of it to them.

Ver. 15. *Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord*, &c.] Not only as the God of nature and providence, for his daily support and supply, in which sense the eyes of all creatures wait upon him; but as his covenant God and Father, having the eyes of his understanding opened to see and know him as such, and the eye of his faith directed to him, to believe in him, and make him his hope and trust; and his eye was single to him; it was to him, and him only, that he looked; and it was constant, it was ever to him, he set the Lord always before him; and such a look was well-pleasing to God: it may also respect the lifting up of his eyes to God in prayer for all mercies temporal and spiritual, and his prayer was the prayer of faith; as follows: *for he shall pluck my feet out of the net*: of the corruption of nature, and the lusts of it, as Aben Ezra interprets it; by which the saints are sometimes insnared and taken captive, and out of which they cannot make their escape of themselves; but there is a deliverance from it by Jesus Christ their Lord: or out of the temptations of Satan, called his devices, and wiles, and the snares of the devil; and as the Lord knows how to deliver his out of temptations, he does deliver them in his own time; or rather out of the nets and snares laid for him by wicked men; as by his son Absalom, Ahithophel, and others, in which his feet were as a bird in the snare of the fowler; but he believed the net, or snare, would be broken, and he should escape, as he did.

Ver. 16. *Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me*, &c.] Or *look unto me*, or *upon me* [f]; which suggests that the Lord had turned himself, and hid his face from him; and expresses a desire that he would look upon him with a look of love and mercy, and arise to help and deliver him out of the hands of his enemies; he pleads no merits nor works of righteousness of his, but casts himself upon the mercy of God. *For I am desolate and afflicted*; or *alone and poor* [g]; not that he was quite alone, and had none with him; for though he was obliged to quit his palace, and the city of Jerusalem, yet he was accompanied by his servants, and a large number of his people; and could not be poor, in a literal sense, being King of Israel; yet he put no trust in men, nor in riches, but wholly depended on the Lord, as if he had none with him, nor any thing to subsist with: and his case was indeed very deplorable, and called for pity and assistance; his own son was risen up against him, and the hearts of the men of Israel went after him; and he was obliged to flee from the city, and leave his house and family.

Ver. 17. *The troubles of my heart are enlarged*, &c.] His enemies being increased, which troubled him; the floods of ungodly men made him afraid; the waters of affliction were come into his soul, and spread themselves, and threatened to overwhelm him: or it may be rendered, as by some, *troubles have enlarged my heart* [h]; made him wiser, increased his knowledge and experience; see Psal. cxix. 67, 71. but the former seems better to agree with what follows. *O bring thou me out of my distresses*; or *straits* [i]; for the enlargement of his troubles was the straitening of his heart; and therefore he applies to the Lord to bring him out of his afflicted circumstances, in which he was penned up, as in a strait place, on every side, and which were such that he could not free himself from; but he knew that God could deliver him.

Ver. 18. *Look upon mine affliction and my pain*, &c.] The *affliction* was the rebellion of his subjects against him, at the head of which was his own son; and the *pain* was the uneasiness of mind it gave him; or the *labour* [k], as the word may be rendered; the toil and fatigue of body he was exercised with, he flying from place to place; and he desires that God would *look* upon all this with an eye of pity and compassion to him, and arise to his help and deliverance; as he looked upon the affliction of the children of Israel in Egypt, and delivered them, Exod. iii. 7, 8. Deut. xxvi. 7. *And forgive all my sins*; or *lift up, bear*, or *take away* [l], as the word signifies; sins are burdens, and they lay heavy at this time on David's conscience, being brought to mind by the affliction he laboured under, not only his sin with Bath-sheba, but all others; and these were on him as a heavy burden, too heavy to bear; wherefore he entreats that the Lord would lift them off, and take them away from him, by the fresh discoveries of pardoning grace to him. The sins of God's people are removed from them to Christ, by his Father, on whom they have been laid by his act of imputation; and he has bore them, and all the

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[f] פנה אלי respice ad me, Montanus, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, &c.

[g] יחיד ועני solitarius & pauper, Junius & Tremellius; & miser, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[h] הרחיבו dilataverunt cor meum, Vatablus; reddiderunt cor meum latius, Gussetius, p. 726.

[i] ממצוקותי ab angustiis meis, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius; so Musculus, Piscator, Michaelis.

[k] עמלי laborem meum, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, &c.

[l] ושא Heb. tolle, Piscator; aufer, Michaelis.

punishment due unto them, and has taken them away, and made an end of them; and through the application of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, they are caused to pass from the consciences of the saints, and are removed as far from them as the east is from the west; and this is what the psalmist here desires, and this he requests with respect to all his sins, well knowing that, if one was left upon him, it would be an insupportable burden to him.

Ver. 19. *Consider mine enemies*, &c.] Or *look*[m] upon them; but with another kind of look; so as he looked through the pillar of fire upon the Egyptians, and troubled them, Exod. xiv. 24. with a look of wrath and vengeance. The arguments he uses are taken both from the quantity and quality of his enemies, their number and their nature. *For they are many*; the hearts of the people of Israel, in general, being after Absalom, 2 Sam. xv. 12, 13. and so the spiritual enemies of the Lord's people are many; their sins and corruptions, Satan, and his principalities and powers, and the men of this world. *And they hate me with cruel hatred*; like that of Simeon and Levi, Gen. xlix. 7. their hatred broke out in a cruel manner, in acts of force and cruelty; and it was the more cruel, inasmuch as it was without cause: and such is the hatred of Satan and his emissaries against the faithful followers of Christ; who breathe out cruelty, thirst after their blood, and make themselves drunk with it; even their tender mercies are cruel, and much more their hatred.

Ver. 20. *O keep my soul*, &c.] Or *life*[n], which was in danger, his enemies seeking for it; wherefore he applies to God that gave it, and who had hitherto held him in it, to preserve it. God is the keeper of his people in a spiritual sense; they cannot keep themselves from sin, Satan, and the world; but he is able to keep them from falling, and therefore they pray to him that he would keep them; and they have reason to believe they shall be kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation. *And deliver me*; as out of the hands of his present enemies, so from all evil, from the evils of the world, from the evil one, Satan, from the evil of sin, and out of all affliction and troubles. *Let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee*; see the note on ver. 2.

Ver. 21. *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me*, &c.] Meaning either his own, as in Psal. vii. 8. and xxvi. 1. and then the sense is, either that God would preserve him, seeing he had acted the faithful and upright part in the government of the people of Israel, and they had rebelled against him without a cause; see Psal. lxxviii. 72. or that those might be continued with him, that he might not be led aside by the corruptions of his heart, and the temptations of Satan, and by the provocations of his rebellious subjects, to act a part disagreeable to his character, as a man of integrity and uprightness; but that these remaining with him, might be a means of keeping him in the ways of God, Prov. xiii. 6. or else the integrity and uprightness of God are designed, which are no other than his goodness and grace to his people, and his faithfulness in his covenant and promises, or his loving-kindness and his truth; see Psal. xl. 11. *For I wait on thee*; in the use of means for deliverance and safety; the Targum is, *for I trust in thy word*.

Ver. 22. *Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles*.] David was not only concerned for himself, but for the whole nation of Israel, which was involved in trouble through this unnatural rebellion of his son, and many of his subjects; and no doubt he may have a further view to the redemption of the church of God, the spiritual Israel, by the Messiah; and his sense may be, that God would send the promised Redeemer and Saviour, to redeem his people from all their iniquities; from the law, its curses and condemnation; to ransom them out of the hands of Satan, that is stronger than they; and to deliver them from all their enemies, and from death itself, the last enemy, which will put an end to all their troubles, Isa. xxxv. 10.

PSALM XXVI.

A Psalm of David.

THE occasion of this psalm seems to be the quarrel between Saul and David, the former listening to calumnies and reproaches cast upon the latter, and persecuting him in a violent manner. The argument of it is the same, in a great measure, with the seventh psalm, and is an appeal made to God, the Judge of the whole earth, by the psalmist, for his innocence and integrity; Theodoret thinks it was written by David when he fled from Saul.

Ver. 1. *Judge me, O Lord*, &c.] Meaning not that God would enter into judgment with him, in respect to the justification of his person in his sight, which he knew was not by his own righteousness and integrity, but by the righteousness of God; but his view is, to the justification of his cause before men; and particularly to the difference between Saul and him; and entreats that God would interpose, take his cause in hand, judge between them, and vindicate him. *For I have walked in mine integrity*; or *perfection*[o]; not that he thought himself free from sin; this would be contrary to the complaints, confessions, and petitions frequently made by him; but that in the affair with which he was accused, of seeking Saul's hurt, 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. he was quite innocent: by his *integrity* he means the purity of his intentions and designs; the uprightness of his conduct, the simplicity and sincerity of his conversation towards all men, and especially his fidelity to his prince; but though he knew nothing by himself, and could not charge himself with any wrong action in this respect, and therefore ought

[m] ראה vide, Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Cocceius, Michaelis; aspice, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; intuere, Gejerus.

[n] נפשי animam meam, h. e. vitam meam, Gejerus.

[o] בתמי in perfectione mea, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; so the Targum, Ainsworth.

to be acquitted before men; yet he did not expect hereby to be justified in the sight of God. *I have trusted also in the Lord*: not in himself, in the sincerity of his heart, and the uprightness of his life; nor did he trust to the goodness of his cause; but he committed it to the Lord, who judgeth righteously; and trusted in him that he should not be ashamed and confounded: this shews from whence his integrity sprung, even from faith unfeigned; for, where that is true and genuine, there are works of righteousness, and integrity of life. Therefore *I shall not slide*; these words may be connected with the former, thus; *I have trusted also in the Lord, that I shall not slide*[r]; that is, shall not fail in judgment, or lose the cause; but shall stand and carry it, and not be confounded or condemned. Our version supplies the word *therefore*, making these words to be an inference from the former, that because he trusted in the Lord, therefore he should not slide, slip, and fall; not but that true believers may not only have their feet well nigh slipped, but altogether; yea, fall, and that sometimes into great sins, to the breaking of their bones; but then they shall not totally and finally fall; for they stand by faith, and are kept through it by the power of God. The words may be considered as a prayer, *let me not slide*[s]; being sensible of his own weakness, and of the necessity of being upheld in his uprightness, and in the ways of the Lord by him, that his footsteps might not slip; for though he walked in his uprightness, he was not self-sufficient and self-confident, but dependent on the Lord.

Ver. 2. *Examine me, O Lord*, &c.] His cause, his integrity, and trust in the Lord, as silver and gold are examined by the touchstone, the word of God, which is the standard of faith and practice. *And prove me*: or *tempt me*[t]; as Abraham was tempted by the Lord; and his faith in him, and fear of him, and love to him, were proved to be true and genuine. *Try my reins and my heart*: the thoughts, desires, and affections of it, as gold and silver are tried in the furnace; and so God sometimes tries the faith and patience of his people by afflictive providences; and this examination, probation, and trial, are made by him, not for his own sake, who knows the hearts and ways of all men; but for the sake of others, to make known either to themselves or others the truth of grace that is in them, and the uprightness of their hearts and ways; and it was on this account the psalmist desired to pass under such an examination.

Ver. 3. *For thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes*, &c.] The special loving-kindness of God, shewn in the choice of him in Christ, in the provision of a Saviour for him, and in the effectual vocation of him; which loving-kindness is unmerited, free, and sovereign, is from everlasting and to everlasting; it is better than life, excellent beyond expression, and marvellous: and this may be said to be *before* his *eyes*; because it was now in sight; he had a comfortable view of interest in it, and was persuaded nothing should separate him from it; it was upon his heart, shed abroad in it, and he was affected with it; it was in his mind, and in his thoughts, and they were employed about it; he had it in remembrance, and was comfortably refreshed with it: and this he mentions as the reason of his laying his cause before the Lord, as the ground of his trust in him, and why he desired to be examined, proved, and tried by him. *And I have walked in thy truth*; by faith in Christ, who is the truth of all promises, prophecies, types, and figures; in the word of truth, by abiding by it, and walking according to it; and in the truth of worship, in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord; and to walk herein he used himself to, and was constant in, as the word[u] signifies: and nothing more engages to walk on in Christ, as he has been received, and to walk as becomes his Gospel, and in all holy conversation and godliness, than the love of God manifested to the soul; this being set continually before our eyes encourages faith and hope, and influences a holy life and cheerful obedience to the will of God.

Ver. 4. *I have not sat with vain persons*, &c.] Or *men of vanity*[w]; who are full of it; who are addicted to the vanities of the world; who pursue the riches, honours, pleasures, and profits of it; which is no other than walking in a vain shew: whose thoughts, words, and actions are vain; who are vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind, and walk in the vanity of it; who take the name of God in vain, and whose common discourse is foolish, frothy, light, and empty: and who are men of a vain conversation, and are rash, imprudent, and deceitful: men of bad principles may very well go by this name, who are vain and unruly talkers, and whose doctrines are doctrines of vanity, and no other than vain babbling; and also men guilty of idolatrous practices, who observe lying vanities, and worship them, and lift up their souls unto them; with such vain men, in any of these senses, the psalmist would have nothing to do; he would not keep company with them, nor have any communion, consultation, and conversation with them; it may be, he may have some respect to the men that were about Saul, to whom such a character agreed; or he may say this, and what follows, to remove a calumny cast upon him and his friends; as if they that were with him were such men as here described, and in the next verse. *Neither will I go in with dissemblers*: or *hidden* or *unknown persons*[x], who lie in private lurking-places, to murder the innocent, or secretly take away the good names and characters of men, and it is not known who they are; or who commit sin secretly; go into secret places to do their works in the dark, and hide themselves to do evil; as the Targum, Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret it; who love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; or who cover themselves with lying and flattering words, that it is not known what their real intentions be; they speak one thing, and mean another; are an assembly of treacherous men: such are all deceitful workers, who lie in wait to deceive, and walk in craftiness; and hypocrites, who have the form of religion, but are strangers to the power of it; and who are to be turned

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[r] לא אמעד me non vacillaturum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[s] Ne nutare me patiaris, Gejerus.
[t] נסני tenta me, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, &c.
[u] התהלכתי ambulavi indesinenter & sedulo, Gejerus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[w] עם מתי שוא cum hominibus vanitatis, Gejerus, Michaelis.
[x] עם נעלמים cum occultis, Vatablus, Michaelis; absconditis, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

away from, and avoided; the houses, assemblies, cabals, and company of such, are to be shunned; see Gen. xlix. 6. Jer. ix. 2. or such as are *signed*, or *marked*; that is, infamous persons [*].

Ver. 5. *I have hated the congregation of evil-doers*, &c.] That do hurt to the persons, characters, or properties of men; and who meet together in bodies, to consult and form schemes to do mischief, and have their assemblies to encourage each other in it; these, their works and actions, the psalmist hated, though not their persons; and shewed his displicency at them, and dislike and disapprobation of them, by absenting from them; see Jer. xv. 17. *And will not sit with the wicked*; ungodly and unrighteous men, sons of Belial; for with such what fellowship and concord can there be? 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. the word [x] signifies restless and unquiet persons, who cannot rest unless they do mischief; are like the troubled sea, continually casting up mire and dirt, Isa. lvii. 20, 21. now, by all this the psalmist means not that good men should have no manner of conversation with the men of the world: for then, as the apostle says, we must needs go out of the world, 1 Cor. v. 9, 10. Conversation in civil things, in matters of trade and business, is lawful; though all unnecessary conversation in things of civil life is to be shunned; no more should be had than what natural relation and the business of life require; but all conversation in things criminal is to be avoided; company is not to be kept with them, so as to join them in any thing sinful; this is to harden them in their evil ways, and it brings into danger and into disgrace: a man is known and is judged of by the company that he keeps; and evil communications corrupt good manners.

Ver. 6. *I will wash my hands in innocency*, &c.] The Vulgate Latin version renders it, *among innocent persons*; men of a holy harmless life and conversation; with these he determined to converse in common, and not with such as before described; or the sense is, that he would wash his hands, in token of his innocence, integrity, and uprightness, he had before spoke of, and of his having nothing to do with such evil men as now mentioned; see Deut. xxi. 6, 7. Matt. xxvii. 24. *hands* are the instrument of action, and to *wash* them may design the performance of good works, Job ix. 30. and to do this *in innocency*, or *purity*, may signify the performance of them from a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned; and particularly may have some respect to the lifting up of holy hands in prayer to God, previous to public worship; there seems to be an allusion to the priests washing their hands before they offered sacrifice, Exod. xxx. 19, 20, 21. *So will I compass thine altar, O Lord*; frequent the house of God, where the altar was, and constantly attend the worship and ordinances of God; the work of the altar being put for the whole of divine service; the altar of burnt-offering is here meant, which was a type of Christ; see Heb. xiii. 10. reference is had to the priests at the altar, who used to go round it, when they laid the sacrifice on the altar, and bound it to the horns of it, at the four corners, and there sprinkled and poured out the blood; compare Psal. xliii. 4. in order to which they washed their hands, as before; and in after-times it was usual with the Heathens [y] to wash their hands before divine service.

Ver. 7. *That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving*, &c.] Or *cause to hear with the voice of confession* [z]: the meaning is, that the view of the psalmist, in compassing the altar of God in the manner he proposed, was not to offer upon it any slain beast; but to offer the sacrifices of praise upon that altar, which sanctifies the gift, and from whence they come with acceptance to God; even for all mercies, both temporal and spiritual, and that with a confession and acknowledgment of sin and unworthiness; all this is agreeable to the will of God; it is well-pleasing in his sight, what glorifies him, and is but our reasonable service. *And tell of all thy wondrous works*; of creation and providence; and especially of grace and redemption; this is the business of saints in God's house below, and will be their employment in heaven to all eternity. Jarchi on the place says, that this song of praise has in it what relates to future times, to Gog, to the days of the Messiah, and to the world to come.

Ver. 8. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house*, &c.] Meaning the tabernacle, for as yet the temple was not built; which was an habitation for the saints, where they chose to dwell, and reckoned it their happiness, and was the habitation of the Lord himself: the sanctuary was built for that purpose; and between the cherubim, over the mercy-seat, he took up his residence: hence it follows, *and the place where thine honour dwelleth*; or *glory* [a]: when the tabernacle was set up, the glory of the Lord filled it, as it did the temple, when it was dedicated, Exod. xl. 34, 35. The psalmist expresses his love to this place, in opposition to the congregation of evil-doers, which he hated, ver. 5. and to remove a calumny from him, that being among the Philistines, and at a distance from the house of God, his affections were alienated from it; whereas it was his greatest concern that he was debarred the privileges of it; see Psal. xlii. 1, 2. and lxiii. 1. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. besides, he had shewed his great regard to it by his constant attendance before his exile, as he did after it, Psal. xlii. 3. and lv. 14. and it was out of pure love to the worship of God, and with real pleasure and delight, that he did attend; and not through custom, and in mere form, Psal. cxxii. 1. and lxxxiv. 1, 2, 10. The Lord's house is loved by his people, because of his word and ordinances, which are ministered there, and because of his presence in it: or else what was typified by the tabernacle is here designed; either the tabernacle of Christ's human nature, called the true tabernacle, Heb. viii. 2. in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells; which the Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, inhabits; and in the redemption and salvation wrought

[*] Vide Schultens de def. Hod. ling. Heb. s. 198.

[x] רשע significat inquietum esse, ceu patet ex Isa. xlviii. 22. Gejerus.

[y] —— pura cum veste venito, & manibus puris sumite fontis aquam, nunc lavabo ut rem divinam faciam, Tibull. l. 2. eleg. 1. Plautus in Aulular. Act. 3. Sc. 6. Vide Homer. Odyss. 12. v. 336, 337.

[z] בקול תודה voce confessionis, Montanus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[a] כבודך gloria tua, Musculus, Piscator; tabernaculum gloriæ tuæ, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

out in it the glory of all the divine attributes is displayed; and Christ incarnate is the mercy-seat from which God communes with his people, and is their way of access unto him, and whereby they have fellowship with him; and who is loved by the saints sincerely, above all creatures and things, and in the most ardent and affectionate manner: or heaven itself, of which the tabernacle was a figure, Heb. ix. 24. which is the habitation of the holiness and glory of God, and in which are many mansions or dwelling-places for his people; and is the continuing city they seek, the heavenly and better country they are desirous of, and where their hearts and affections are; because there their God, their Saviour, and their treasure be; which sense seems to be confirmed by what follows.

Ver. 9. *Gather not my soul with sinners*, &c.] Profligate and abandoned ones, such as are notoriously profane, and who live and die impenitent ones; otherwise all men are sinners: the sense is, either that he desires that he might not, by any means, be brought into the company of such persons, be joined unto them, and have a conversation with them, which would be uncomfortable, dishonourable, and dangerous; or that God would not destroy him with them; and that he might not die the death of the wicked, nor be gathered with them at death: death is often expressed by a man's being gathered to his people, and to his fathers; see 2 Kings xxii. 20. the body is gathered to the grave, the soul returns to God that gave it, and has its place assigned by him; the souls of the righteous are gathered into heaven, Christ's garner; the souls of the wicked into hell; the psalmist deprecates being gathered with them. *Nor my life with bloody men*; that thirst after blood, lie in wait for it, shed it, and are drunk with it, as the antichristian party; these God abhors and detests; nor shall they live out half their days, and their end is miserable.

Ver. 10. *In whose hands is mischief*, &c.] Every abominable wickedness; as idolatry, adultery, murder, *&c.* the word signifies and is sometimes used for mischief conceived in the mind, artificially devised and contrived there; here mischief committed, the hand being the instrument of action, and intends whatever is prejudicial to the person, character, and properties of men. *And their right hand is full of bribes*; whereby the eyes of judges are blinded, the words of the righteous perverted, men's persons respected, and judgment wrested, Deut. xvi. 19.

Ver. 11. *But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity*, &c.] In which he had hitherto walked, ver. 1. or it may express his faith, that after he was gathered by death he should walk in uprightness and righteousness, in purity and perfection, with Christ in white, and behold the face of God in righteousness; see Isa. lvii. 1, 2. *Redeem me*; from the vain conversation of the wicked, from all troubles, and out of the hands of all enemies. *And be merciful unto me*; who was now in distress, being persecuted by Saul, and at a distance from the house of God: this shews that mercy is the source and spring of redemption, both temporal and spiritual; and that the psalmist did not trust in and depend upon his present upright walk and conversation, but in redemption by Christ, and upon the mercy of God in Christ.

Ver. 12. *My foot standeth in an even place*, &c.] Or *in a plain*[b]; in a sure place; on Christ the sure foundation, and who is the plain way and path to eternal life; see Psal. xxvii. 11. or in the ways and worship of God, prescribed by his word; and so denotes steadfastness and continuance in them. *In the congregations will I bless the Lord*; in the assemblies of the saints, in the churches of Christ below, and in the great congregation above, in the general assembly and church of the first-born; where it is the work of saints now, and will be hereafter, to praise the Lord, for all his mercies temporal and spiritual.

PSALM XXVII.

A Psalm of David.

THE Septuagint interpreters add to this title, *before he was anointed.* David was anointed three times, first when a youth in his father's house; but this psalm could not be written before that time, because he had not had then any experience of war, nor could be in any immediate apprehension of it, as here suggested; he was anointed a second time, after the death of Saul at Hebron, by the men of Judah; before that time indeed he had been harassed by Saul, and distressed by the Amalekites, and was driven from the public worship of God, to which he has a respect, ver. 4. and he was a third time anointed, by the elders of Israel, king over all Israel; and between the death of Saul and this unction there was a war between the house of David and the house of Saul; but what is referred to is not certain, nor is it of moment, since these words are neither in the Hebrew text, nor in the Chaldee paraphrase. Theodoret is of opinion this psalm was written by David when he fled from Saul, and came to Ahimelech the priest.

Ver. 1. *The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?* &c.] The Targum in the king of Spain's Bible explains it, *the Word of the Lord is my light*; and so Ainsworth cites it; that is, Christ the eternal Word, in whom *was life, and that life was the light of men*, John i. 4. and the psalmist is not to be understood of the light of nature and reason, with which the Logos, or Word, enlightens every man that comes into the world; nor merely in a temporal sense, of giving him the light of prosperity, and delivering him

[b] במישור in plano, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Coccejus, Michaelis; in planitie, Gejerus.

from the darkness of adversity; but of the light of grace communicated to him by him who is the sun of righteousness, and the light of the world; and by whom such who are darkness itself, whilst in an unregenerate state, are made light, and see light; all the light which is given to men at first conversion is from Christ; and all the after-communications and increase of it are from him; as well as all that spiritual joy, peace, and comfort they partake of, which *light* sometimes signifies, Psal. xcvii. 11. and which the psalmist now had an experience of; enjoying the light of God's countenance, and having discoveries of his love, which made him fearless of danger and enemies: and such who are made light in the Lord have no reason to be afraid of the prince of darkness; nor of the rulers of the darkness of this world; nor of all the darkness, distress, and persecutions they are the authors of; nor of the blackness of darkness reserved for ungodly men: for their light is an everlasting one, and they are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light: and the more light they have, the less fear; and what made the psalmist still more fearless was, that Christ was his *salvation;* by the light which the Lord was to him, he saw his need of salvation, he knew that his own righteousness would not save him; he was made acquainted with the design and appointment of the Lord, that Christ should be salvation to the ends of the earth; he had knowledge of the covenant of grace, and faith in it, which was all his salvation, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Salvation was revealed to the Old-Testament saints, in the promises, sacrifices, types, and figures of that dispensation; and they looked through them to him for it, and were saved by him, as New-Testament believers are; and they had faith of interest in Christ, and knew him to be their Saviour and Redeemer, as did Job, and here the psalmist David: and such who know Christ to be their salvation need not be afraid of any person or thing; not of sin, for though they fear, and should fear to commit it, they need not fear the damning power of it, for they are saved from it; nor of Satan, out of whose hands they are ransomed; nor of the world, which is overcome by Christ; nor of the last enemy, death, which is abolished by him; nor of hell, and wrath to come, for he has delivered them from it. *The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?* meaning not of his natural life, though he was the God of his life, who had given it to him, and had preserved it, and upheld his soul in it; but of his spiritual life: Christ is the author of spiritual life, he implants the principle of it in the hearts of his people, yea, he himself is that life; he lives in them, and is the support of their life; he is the tree of life, and the bread of life, by which it is maintained; and he is the security of it, it is bound up in the bundle of life with him, it is hid with Christ in God; and because he lives they live also; and he gives unto them eternal life, so that they have no reason to be afraid that they shall come short of heaven and happiness; nor need they fear them that kill the body and can do no more; nor any enemy whatever, who cannot reach their spiritual life, nor hurt that, nor hinder them of the enjoyment of eternal life.

Ver. 2. *When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me,* &c.] They are wicked men, men of malignant spirits, and evil-doers, who are the enemies and foes of the people of God, and who hate them with an implacable hatred, and do every thing they can to distress and afflict them; and such enemies David had, who were many and mighty; and these *came upon* him, or *approached against* him[*], they drew near to him to make war with him, as the word signifies[§]; they attacked him in an hostile manner; and their view was, as he says, *to eat up my flesh,* as they eat bread, Psal. xiv. 4. to devour him at once, to make but one morsel of him, to destroy his life, to strip him of his substance, to take away his wives and children, as the Amalekites at Ziklag, 1 Sam. xxx. 1—6. *They stumbled and fell;* the Lord put stumbling-blocks in their way, and retarded their march, and hindered them from executing their designs; and they fell into the hands of David, and were subdued under him, or fell by death; and these past instances of divine goodness the psalmist calls to mind, to keep up his heart and courage, and animate and strengthen him against the fears of men, of death and hell.

Ver. 3. *Though an host should encamp against me,* &c.] An host of the ungodly, as the Targum; though ever so many of them, even ten thousands of them, as in Psal. iii. 6. should beset him on every side. *My heart shall not fear:* for not only the angels of the Lord encamped about him, as they do about all that fear the Lord; but salvation was appointed for walls and bulwarks about him; yea, the Lord himself was a wall of fire around him, and he was kept as in a garrison by the power of God. *Though war should rise against me;* in all its terrible shapes: *in this will I be confident;* either in this war, in the midst of it; or in this that he had expressed, ver. 1. that the Lord was his light, his salvation, and the strength of his life; so the Jewish writers[e]: or as others[f], in this one thing, desired in the next verse; but either of the former senses is best, especially the latter of them. Saints need not be afraid, though there is a war within them between the flesh and spirit; and though without are fightings with Satan and his principalities and powers; since they may be confident of victory, and that they are more than conquerors, through Christ that has loved them.

Ver. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord,* &c.] Not to be returned to Saul's court; nor to his own house and family; nor to have an affluence of worldly riches and honours; but to have constant abode in the house of the Lord; an opportunity of attending continually on the public worship of God; which is excused and neglected by many, and is a weariness to others, but was by the psalmist preferred to every thing else; he being now deprived of it, as it seems. *That will I seek after;* by incessant prayer, until obtained; importunity and perseverance in prayer are the way to succeed, as appears from the parable of the widow and unjust judge. *That I may dwell in the house of the*

[*] בקרב עלי cum appropinquaverint adversum me, Pagninus; so Gejerus.

[§] Belligerantibus contra me, Junius & Tremellius; so Piscator & Ainsworth.

[e] Jarchi, Kimchi, & Aben Ezra in loc.

[f] Some in Aben Ezra in loc.

Lord all the days of my life: not in heaven, Christ's Father's house, where he dwells, and where the saints will dwell to all eternity; though to be clothed upon with the house from heaven is very desirable; rather, in the church of the living God, which is the house of God, and pillar of truth, where true believers in Christ have a place and a name, and are pillars that will never go out; but here the place of divine worship seems to be meant, where the Lord granted his presence, and where to dwell the psalmist counted the greatest happiness on earth; he envied the very sparrows and swallows, that built their nests on the altars in it; and reckoned a day in it better than a thousand elsewhere; and to have the privilege of attending all opportunities in it, as long as he lived, is the singular request he here makes: the ends he had in view follow. *To behold the beauty of the Lord*, or *the delight* and *pleasantness of the Lord*[g]; to see the priests in their robes, and doing their office, as typical of Christ the great High-priest; and the Levites and singers performing their work in melodious strains, prefiguring the churches in Gospel times, singing to the Lord with grace in their hearts, and the four-and-twenty elders, and one hundred and forty-four thousand, with the Lamb on Mount Zion, singing the song of redeeming love; and all the tribes and people of Israel, assembled together to worship God, representing the church of Christ as a perfection of beauty, having the beauty of the Lord upon her, and made perfectly comely through his comeliness; as it is a most delightful sight to see a company of saints attending Gospel worship, meeting together to sing, and pray, and hear the word, and wait upon the Lord in all his appointments; to see them walking in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, and according to the order of it; this is next to the desireable sight of the bride, the Lamb's wife, in the New-Jerusalem state, having the glory of God upon her: moreover, it was a pleasant sight to a believer in those times to behold the sacrifices of slain beasts, which were figures of the better sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world: to which may be added other things that were to be seen by priests; as the ark of the Lord, which had the two tables in it, typical of Christ, the fulfilling end of the law for righteousness; and the table of shewbread, which pointed out Christ the bread of life, and his perpetual intercession for his people; and the golden candlestick, a type of the church, holding forth the word of life to others; with many other things, which, with an eye of faith, the saints of those times could look upon with delight and pleasure: also the presence of the Lord may be intended by his beauty, than which nothing is more desirable to the people of God, even to behold his smiling countenance, to see his face, and enjoy his favour, and to have fellowship with him, and with one another; and particularly the beauty and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ may be designed, represented by the Shechinah, or glory, which filled both the tabernacle and the temple; who being the brightness of his father's glory, and fairer than the children of men, and altogether lovely and full of grace, is a very desirable object to be beheld by faith. *And to inquire in his temple*; to seek the face of the Lord, to consult him in matters of difficulty and moment; to search after the knowledge of divine things, and to ask for blessings of grace, for which he will be inquired of by his people, to bestow them on them.

Ver. 5. *For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion*, &c.] This, with what follows, is given as a reason why the psalmist desired to dwell in the house of the Lord; because he considered it as a pavilion or booth, as the word[h] signifies, in which he should be hid by the Lord, in times of trouble and distress, either through the heat of persecution, or of inward anxiety of mind, caused by the working of a fiery law; the allusion being, as some think, to the shepherd's tent or booth, into which he sometimes takes a poor sheep, and protects it from the scorching heat of the sun at noon: and of such use is the tabernacle of the Lord; see Isa. iv. 6. *In the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me*: alluding either to the tents of generals of armies, who receive into them those whom they would protect from the insults and injuries of others; or rather to the most holy place in the tabernacle, called the secret place, Ezek. vii. 22. typical of Christ, the hiding-place of his people, in whom their life is hid, and where it is safe and secure. *He shall set me up upon a rock*; where he would be above and out of the reach of his enemies; meaning Christ, comparable to a rock for its height, he being higher than the kings of the earth, than the angels in heaven, than the heavens themselves, and much more than the sons of men; see Psal. lxi. 2. and for shelter and safety, he being a munition of rocks, a strong tower, a place of defence, and rock of refuge; and for firmness, solidity, and strength, he being able to bear the whole weight of the building of the church, and every believer laid upon him; and for duration, he being more immovable than rocks and mountains; so that such who are set up upon him are in the most safe and secure state imaginable.

Ver. 6. *And now shall mine head be lifted up*, &c.] That is, when brought into the house of the Lord, hid in the secret of his tabernacle, and set upon the rock Christ; by this phrase he means, either that he should be then restored to his former happy and comfortable condition, as it is used in Gen. xl. 13. or that he should overcome all his enemies, and triumph over them, being exalted, as he adds, *above mine enemies round about me*; so that not only they should not be able to come at him, but should be subdued under him. *Therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy*: attended with shouting and sounding of trumpets: in allusion to the blowing of trumpets at the time of sacrifice, Numb. x. 10. Sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, with a joyful heart, for mercies received, offered up publicly in the house of the Lord, are here intended. *I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord*: for whom praise waits in Zion, to whom it is due; he being the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, and the author and giver of all blessings, temporal and spiritual.

[g] בנעם יהוה amœnitatem Jehovæ, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus; so Ainsworth; suavitatem Jehovæ, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[h] בסכה in tugurio suo, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.

Ver. 7. *Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice*, &c.] Which is to be understood of prayer, and that in the time of distress; and of vocal prayer, as distinguished from mental prayer; and the phrase denotes the vehemency and intenseness of it: and the request is, that the Lord would hear it: not only as he is omniscient and omnipresent, and so hears the prayers of all, good and bad; but as a God gracious and merciful, who sometimes very quickly hears, and answers in a gracious way, and sometimes seems to turn a deaf ear, to shut out the prayers of his people, and cover himself with a cloud, that they should not pass through, or, however, defers an answer to it for a little while; yet, sooner or later, he always shews himself a God hearing prayer. *Have mercy also upon me*; by delivering him out of his temporal distresses, and by forgiving his iniquities. *And answer me*; by speaking a word in season; commanding off the affliction he lay under, and by saying to him that his sins were forgiven him.

Ver. 8. When thou saidst, *seek ye my face*, &c.] To seek the face of the Lord is to attend his house and ordinances, where he grants his presence; and with this view to enjoy his gracious presence, and the light of his countenance, not being content with bare attendance without it; it is to seek the Lord himself, and communion with him through Christ, the brightness of his glory, and the Angel of his presence; for the right way of seeking the Lord is in Christ, who is the way of access to him, and of acceptance and fellowship with him; and that by prayer and supplication for his sake, and with all the heart and soul; and this the Lord calls upon his people to do, in his word, in his providences, and by his spirit moving upon their hearts, and inclining them to it, as follows. *My heart said unto thee, thy face, Lord, will I seek*; it is an encouragement to believers to seek the Lord when he calls them to it; for it is a command with promise, that they shall find him, see his face, and enjoy his favour; and he never says to any, *seek ye my face, in vain*; and they always find it good for them to draw nigh to him: and as it is the best way of seeking God, when the heart is engaged in it, so it is a token for good; and it looks as though the Lord had a mind to manifest himself, and grant the favour sought for, when he inclines the hearts of his people to pray unto him for it; and this the psalmist makes mention of as taking encouragement from it, to hope and believe that the Lord would hear and answer him, and have mercy on him; because he had bid him seek his face, and he found his heart ready to do it.

Ver. 9. *Hide not thy face* far *from me*, &c.] Yea, not at all from him; for the word *far* is not in the text: this is sometimes the case of the best of men, and was of the psalmist at times, and might be now, notwithstanding his strong expressions of faith and joy in the preceding verses; for frames are very changeable things; and this case is consistent with the everlasting and unchangeable love of God to his people: though they are ready to impute it to wrath and anger, and is what is very cutting and grievous to them; and therefore deprecate it as the psalmist does here, *put not thy servant away in anger*; either cast him not away from thy presence, as being angry with him, though there is just reason for it; or suffer him not to go away angry, fretting and murmuring: he makes mention of his relation to God as a servant, as he was; not only by creation as a man, and by his office as a king, but by efficacious grace as a converted man; and this only as descriptive of himself, and as acknowledging his dependence on the Lord, and his obligation to him; but not as a reason why he should be regarded by him, for he knew he was but an unprofitable servant. *Thou hast been my help: leave me not, neither forsake me*: which request, as the rest, he might put up in faith; for God will not leave his people destitute of his presence finally and totally; nor to themselves and the corruptions of their hearts, nor to the temptations of Satan; nor will he forsake the work of his hands, the work of grace upon their hearts; or so forsake them as that they shall perish: and that the Lord would not leave nor forsake him in such sense, the psalmist had reason to conclude; since he had been his *help* in times past, a present help in time of trouble; and his arm was not shortened, his power was the same to help as ever, and so were his inclination and will; since he could also call unto him, and upon him, as follows: *O God of my salvation*; the author both of his temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation; and what might he not hope for from him? salvation includes all blessings, both for soul and body, for time and eternity.

Ver. 10. *When my father and my mother forsake me*, &c.] Which is not to be understood strictly and literally of his parents, that were in that near relation to him according to the flesh, nor of any thing that had past; not of his parents leaving him to shift for himself, after having brought him up; nor of his father being unmindful of him, when Samuel came to anoint one of his sons to be king; nor of any slight and neglect of him by them when persecuted by Saul; nor of their inability to help him then; see 1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4. but this is to be understood of something supposed yet to come; and it seems best to interpret it of his nearest and dearest friends, his closest adherents, best counsellors, and most firm allies; that when they should fail and drop him, his God would not leave him: the design of it is to set forth the love and care of God, as superior to that of the most affectionate friends; see Isa. xlix. 14, 15, 16. *Then the Lord will take me up*; like a foundling in the street, and such are called, in the Talmudic language, *persons gathered up*[i]; and so the words may be rendered here, *then the Lord will gather me*[k]; into his arms and bosom, and under the wings of his protection, and at last to himself in glory.

Ver. 11. *Teach me thy way, O Lord*, &c.] Of providence, grace, and duty; see the note on Psal. xxv. 4. *And lead me in a plain path*; as the path of truth is to those that understand and find knowledge; and as the way of holiness is, even to such who in other things are fools, but shall not err therein, Prov. viii. 9. Isa. xxxv. 8. or the path of righteousness, in which Christ, the wisdom of God, and shepherd of his people, leads them, Psal. xxiii. 3. Prov. viii. 20. *Because of mine*

[i] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 69. 1.

[k] יאספני colligет me, Pagninus, Montanus; collegit me, Musculus, Vatablus, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

enemies, or those that observe me; who eyed him as Saul did, 1 Sam. xviii. 9. and waited for his halting, as Jeremiah's familiars did for him; and lay in wait to deceive him, and lead him out of the way, as false teachers do; and come upon him at an unawares, and take every advantage against him, as Satan does.

Ver. 12. *Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies,* &c.] It is a dreadful thing for a man to be given up to his own heart's lusts, and to be delivered up into the hands of Satan; who would fain have even the people of God themselves in his hands, that he might distress them at pleasure, if not destroy them; and also to be suffered to fall into the hands of wicked men, whose tender mercies are cruel. *For false witnesses are risen up against me;* laying to his charge, that he sought to take away from Saul his crown and kingdom, and even his life, 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. *And such as breathe out cruelty;* as Doeg the Edomite, whose tongue was as a sharp razor, and by whose hands four score and five priests were slain, on account of David's being supplied with bread by Ahimelech; the word is in the singular number: see Psal. lii. 1—4. and 1 Sam. xxii. 18. compare with this clause Acts ix. 1. and Horace's phrase, *Spirabat amores*[l].

Ver. 13. I had fainted, &c.] When false witnesses rose up against him, and threatened to take away his life, and the life of his friends, in the most barbarous and cruel manner: the people of God are subject to faintings, in the present state of things, by reason of afflictions; because of the nature, number, and continuance of them; and especially when they apprehend them to be in wrath and sore displeasure: and on account of their sins, and the corruptions of their hearts; fearing lest there should be no pardon for them; or that the true work of grace is not in them: or that they shall fall, to the dishonour of the name of God, and to the reproach of his cause and interest; or that they shall perish eternally: likewise, by reason of Satan's temptations, which are sometimes so grievous, that if Christ did not pray for them, their faith would fail; and also on account of the hidings of God's face, which they cannot bear: they are sometimes ready to faint in the way of their duty, in the course of their profession, because of the difficulties and discouragements, reproaches and persecutions, they meet with; and sometimes in the expectation of blessings, and of the fulfilment of promises, and of answers of prayer, which have been long deferred. This clause is not in the original text, but is a supplement of our translators; and it is generally agreed there is a defect of expression, which must be supplied in some way or other: the Jewish interpreters generally refer it to the preceding words; one supplies thus[m], *those false witnesses would have rose up against me, and consumed me;* another[n] after this manner, *mine enemies had almost got the dominion over me;* a third[o], *I had almost perished at their sayings;* and a fourth[p], *and they would have destroyed me.* Perhaps it may be as well supplied from Psal. cxix. 92. *I should then have perished in mine affliction;* it follows, *unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living:* both the providential goodness of the Lord, in supplying him with the necessaries of life, and in delivering him out of the hands of his enemies; and his special goodness, which he has laid up in his covenant, and in his son; even all spiritual blessings in Christ, in whom he causes all his goodness to pass before his people. The psalmist believed that he should *see;* that is, enjoy all these, or whatever was needful for him; all the good things of life, all special favours; as supports under afflictions, views of pardoning grace under a sense of sin, strength against Satan's temptations, and deliverance out of them; the discoveries of the love of God, and the light of his countenance, after desertions, and divine refreshments in his house, from his word and ordinances; and at last all the glories of the other world; and faith in these things is the best antidote against faintings. By *the land of the living* may be meant either the land of Canaan, where the living God was worshipped, and living saints dwelt, in opposition to other lands, the habitations of men dead in sins; and at a distance from which David now might be; or else the world in general, in opposition to the place and state of the dead; or, as some think, heaven, or the life of the world to come, as Kimchi expresses it; and so Apollinarius paraphrases it, "I shall see the blessed God with my " eyes in the land of the blessed." The word לולא, rendered *unless,* is one of the fifteen words which are extraordinarily pointed in the Hebrew Bible.

Ver. 14. *Wait on the Lord,* &c.] This, with what follows, is spoken by the psalmist either to himself or to others, or it may be to both, upon the rich experience he declares in the preceding verse: it becomes believers to wait on the Lord for the common blessings of life, for even the eyes of all wait upon him for their daily food; and for the light of his countenance, when it is withdrawn from them, for he will return again at the set time; and for answers of prayer, which will be given sooner or later; and for the performance of his promises, which are yea and amen in Christ: they should wait upon him in his house and ordinances constantly, with reverence and godly fear; they should wait upon him as servants on their masters, observe his orders, and diligently execute them; and, as beggars for their alms, they should knock and wait at Wisdom's gates, tell their case and wait, take repulses and wait, and, when they succeed, give thanks. It is good to wait upon the Lord; many are the favours and blessings such receive now, and eye has not seen what God has prepared for them that wait for him. *Be of good courage;* the saints have need of courage, considering the enemies they have to grapple with; the corruptions of their own hearts, the enemies of a man's own house; the worst of all, Satan, and his principalities and powers; and men of the world, and a world of them: and they have great reason, notwithstanding, to be of good courage, since God is for them; Christ is the Captain of their salvation; the Holy Spirit, that is in them, is greater than he that is in the world; angels encamp around them; they are provided with the

[l] Carmin. l. 4. Ode 13. v. 19.
[m] Jarchi.
[n] Aben Ezra.
[o] Kimchi.
[p] Abendana, Not. in Miclol Yophi in loc.

whole armour of God: they are engaged in a good cause, are sure of victory, and shall wear the crown of righteousness; and it follows, *and he shall strengthen thine heart*: that is, the Lord will do it, as he has promised to them that wait on him, Isa. xl. 31. and xli. 10. or *let thine heart be strengthened*: as the Septuagint render it; and so the Chaldee paraphrase, *strengthen thine heart*: taking it for an exhortation; as indeed it seems to be by what goes before and follows; see Josh. i. 6, 9. *Wait, I say, on the Lord*: this is repeated, to express the importance of this duty, and to encourage to it.

PSALM XXVIII.

A Psalm of David.

THIS psalm, Aben Ezra says, David either composed himself, or one of the singers for him; the former seems most likely; and it might be made by him when he was persecuted by Saul, or when delivered from him; or at least when he had faith and hope that he should be delivered: the psalm consists of two parts, petitions and thanksgivings.

Ver. 1. *Unto thee will I cry*, &c.] This denotes the distress the psalmist was in, fervency and ardour in prayer, resolution to continue in it, and singularity with respect to the object of it; determining to cry to the Lord only; to which he was encouraged by what follows. *O Lord my rock*; he being a strong tower and place of defence to him, in whom were all his safety, and his trust and confidence, and in whom he had an interest. *Be not silent to me*; or *deaf*[e]; persons that do not hear are silent, and make no answer; as the Lord seems to be, when he returns no answer to the cries of his people; when he does not arise and help them; when he seems not to take any notice of his and their enemies, but stands at a distance from them, and as if he had forsaken them; see Psal. xxxix. 12. and xxxv. 22, 23. and l. 3, 21. Isa. lxv. 6. the words may be considered, as they are by some, as an address to Christ his rock, his advocate and intercessor; that he would not be silent, but speak for him, and present his supplications to God, with the much incense of his mediation; see 1 Sam. vii. 8. *Lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit*; either like such that fall into a ditch, and cannot help themselves out, and they cry, and there is none to take them out from thence; or like such that die in battle, and are cast into a pit, and there buried in common with others; which David might fear would be his case, through Saul's violent pursuit after him; or lest he should be like the dead, who are not regarded, and are remembered no more: or lest he should really die by the hands of his enemies, and so be laid in the grave, the pit of corruption; or be in such distress and despair as even the damned in hell be, the pit out of which there is no deliverance.

Ver. 2. *Hear the voice of my supplications*, &c.] Which proceed from the spirit of grace and of supplication, and are put up in an humble manner, under a sense of wants and unworthiness, and on the foot of grace and mercy, and not merit. *When I cry unto thee*; as he now did, and determined he would, and continue so doing, until he was heard. *When I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle*: the holy of holies, in the tabernacle and in the temple, which was sometimes so called, 1 Kings vi. 23. compared with 2 Chron. iii. 10. where were the ark, the mercy-seat, and cherubim, between which the Lord dwelt, and gave responses to his people; or heaven itself, which the holy of holies was a figure of; where is the throne of God, and from whence he hears the prayers of his people directed to him; or else Christ himself, who is the most Holy, and the *Debir*, or Oracle, who speaks to the Lord for his people; and by whom the Lord speaks to them again, and communes with them. The oracle had its name, *debir*, from speaking. Lifting up of the hands is a prayer-gesture, and here designs the performance of that duty to God in heaven, through Christ; see Lam. iii. 41. 1 Tim. ii. 8. it was frequently used, even by the Heathens, as a prayer-gesture[f]; see Psal. cxli. 2.

Ver. 3. *Draw me not away with the wicked*, &c.] That is, with those who are notoriously wicked; who are inwardly and outwardly wicked; whose inward part is very wickedness, and who sell themselves and give up themselves to work wickedness: the sense is, that God would not suffer him to be drawn away, or drawn aside by wicked men, but that he would deliver him from temptation; or that he would not give him up into their hands, to be at their mercy; who he knew would not spare him, if they had him in their power; or that he might not die the death of the wicked, and perish with them; see Psal. xxvi. 9, 10. *And with the workers of iniquity*; who make it the trade and business of their lives to commit sin; and which may be applied, not only to profane sinners, but to professors of religion, Matt. vii. 23. since it follows, *which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts*; hypocrites, double-minded men, who have a form of godliness, but deny the power of it; pretend to religion, and have none; and speak fair to the face, but design mischief and ruin; as Saul and his servants did to David, 1 Sam. xviii. 17, 22.

Ver. 4. *Give them according to their deeds*, &c.] According to the demerit of them, which is death, even death eternal. *And according to the wickedness of their endeavours*; for though wicked men do not always succeed; yet their want of success does not excuse their wickedness. *Give them after the work of their hands*; see 2 Tim. iv. 14. *Render to them their desert*;

[e] אל תחרש ne obsurdescas, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Gejerus; so Ainsworth, Junius & Tremellius, Michaelis.

[f] Duplices manus ad sidera tendit—& paulo post—& ambas ad cœlum tendit palmas, Virgil. Æneid. 10. vid. Æneid. 2. Ad cœlum manibus sublatis, Horat. Satyr. l. 2. satyr. 5. v. 97. Cœlo supinas si tuleris manus, ib. Carmin. l. 3. Ode 23. v. 1. Et pandere palmas ante Deum delubra, Lucretius l. 5. prope finem. αν χειρας ανεσχων, Homer. Iliad. 3. v. 174.

what their iniquities, in thought, word, and deed, deserve: such petitions are not contrary to that Christian charity which the Gospel recommends; nor do they savour of a spirit of revenge, which is condemned by the word of God; for it should be observed, that these things are said with respect to men given up to a reprobate mind; and that the psalmist does not seek to avenge himself, nor to gratify his own mind; but he sought the glory of God, and moreover spoke by a prophetic spirit, knowing what was the will of God in this case; see ver. 5. and therefore these petitions of his are not to be drawn into an example in common and ordinary cases.

Ver. 5. *Because they regard not the works of the Lord*, &c.] Neither the work of creation, as if there was no first cause of all things; nor the work of Providence, taking no notice either of the judgments or of the mercies of God; as though they believed that God had forsaken the earth, and would do neither good nor evil; and still less the work of redemption, which in covenant, promise, and prophecy, was appointed for the Messiah to work out; and as for the work of the Spirit of God upon the soul, they had no notion of that, of the nature and necessity of it; the things of the Spirit of God being foolishness to them, and undiscernible by them; see Isa. v. 12. Perhaps the psalmist may have some regard to his being anointed by Samuel, according to the will of God, and to the victory which he obtained over Goliath, and over others, which justly gained him great esteem among some, and created envy in others; and also the wonderful protection of him from time to time; the Chaldee paraphrase is, *because they do not understand the law of the Lord*. It follows, *nor the operation of his hands*; in which his hand was so very apparent, that nothing less could be said than that this was the finger of God; wherefore, *he shall destroy them, and not build them up*: that is, they shall be irrecoverably lost; they shall be punished with everlasting destruction; there will be no help or remedy for them: some[s] understand this as a prayer, that God would destroy them in such a manner, and render it, *let him destroy them*, &c.[t].

Ver. 6. *Blessed be the Lord*, &c.] Which must be understood, not as invoking nor as conferring a blessing on him, neither of which can be done by a creature; nor does he stand in need of any, he being El-shaddai, God all-sufficient, God over all, blessed for ever; but as ascribing all blessedness to him, congratulating his greatness and happiness, and giving him praise and glory for mercies received; and particularly for the following: *because he hath heard the voice of my supplications*: what he had prayed for, ver. 2. an answer was quickly returned, even whilst he was speaking, Isa. lxv. 24. though this may be an expression of faith, being fully persuaded and assured that he was heard, and would be answered, and may be said by a prophetic spirit; knowing that what he had humbly asked for would be granted; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi understand it in a way of prophecy.

Ver. 7. *The Lord is my strength*, &c.] That is, the author both of natural and spiritual strength; that gave him strength of body, and fortitude of mind, to bear up under all the exercises he was tried with; the strength of his life, spiritual and temporal, and of his salvation; the strength of his heart under present distresses, and who he knew would be so in the hour of death, when his heart and strength would fail. *And my shield*; to protect and defend him; as were the love, power, and faithfulness of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, his power and fulness, his blood, righteousness, and salvation. *My heart trusted in him*; in the Lord as his strength and shield; not in any creature, nor in his own strength and righteousness; but in the Lord God, in whom are righteousness and strength: and it is plain he did not trust in his own heart, since his heart trusted in the Lord; and which shews that his trust was an hearty one, his faith was a faith unfeigned, he believed with the heart unto righteousness. *And I am helped*: this was the fruit of his trust, even a gracious experience of divine assistance; saints are helpless in themselves, and are also as to the help of man; God is the only helper of them; he helps them out of all their troubles; in whatsoever he calls them unto, and to what they want; and the help he affords is sometimes quick, and always seasonable, and sometimes by means, and sometimes without them. *Therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth*; that is, in the Lord, the ground of which was the help he had from him; and this joy was very great, a joy unspeakable, and full of glory; it was not carnal, but spiritual, a heart-joy, joy in the Holy Ghost. *And with my song will I praise him*: praise is due to God, what glorifies him, and is acceptable to him; it becomes the saints, is comely for them, and it is pleasant work to them, when grace is in exercise; see Psal. lxix. 30, 31. this may be understood of one of his songs, and one of the best of them, and of one better than this, as a Jewish writer[u] observes.

Ver. 8. *The Lord is their strength*, &c.] The strength of his people, mentioned in the next verse; not only the strength of David in particular, but of all his people in general; see Psal. xxxvii. 39. *And he is the saving strength of his anointed*; meaning either himself, as before, who was anointed by Samuel king of Israel, and therefore had not invaded and thrust himself into an office he had no call and right unto; or the Messiah, the Lord's Anointed, whom he heard, helped, and strengthened in the day of salvation, and delivered him from the power of death and the grave, and raised him from thence, and gave him glory; see Psal. xx. 6.

Ver. 9. *Save thy people*, &c.] The psalmist begins the psalm with petitions for himself, and closes it with prayers for the people of God; whom God has chosen for his people, taken into covenant to be his people, and given them to his son as such; these he has resolved to save, and has appointed Christ, and sent him into the world, to be the Saviour of them; and to them he makes known and applies the great salvation by his Spirit: so that this prayer was a prayer of faith, as are also the following petitions. *And bless thine inheritance*: the people whom the Lord has chosen for his

[s] Kimchi in loc. Vid. Aben Ezram in loc.

[t] יהרסם destruat eos, Vatablus; so the Arabic version.

[u] R. Mosch in Aben Ezra in loc.

inheritance, and has given to Christ as his portion, and are his peculiar possession; and these he blesses with all spiritual blessings, with grace here, and glory hereafter, as is requested. *Feed them also;* as the shepherd does his flock, by leading them into green pastures, by giving them the bread of life, by nourishing them with the word and ordinances, by the means of his ministering servants, who are under-shepherds appointed to feed the saints with knowledge and understanding. *And lift them up for ever;* above their enemies, and out of the reach of them; bear and carry them now, as the shepherd does his lambs, in his arms and bosom; and raise them out of their graves, and give them the dominion in the morning of the resurrection, and cause them to reign as kings and priests with Christ, as they ever will.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL THE TANJORE

PSALM XXIX.

A Psalm of David.

IN the Vulgate Latin version is added, *at the finishing of the tabernacle;* suggesting that this psalm was composed at that time, and on that occasion: not at the finishing of the tabernacle by Moses, but at the finishing of the tent or tabernacle which David made for the ark in Zion, 2 Sam. vi. 17. The title in the Arabic version is, "a prophecy concerning the incarnation, ark, and tabernacle." In the Septuagint version, from whence the Vulgate seems to have taken the clause, it is, at the *exodion, exit,* or *going out of the tabernacle;* that is, of the feast of tabernacles; and which was the eighth day of the feast, and was called עצרת, which word the Septuagint render ἐξόδιον, the word here used, Lev. xxiii. 36. Numb. xxix. 35. though it was on the first of the common days of this feast that this psalm was sung, as Maimonides * says. Some think it was composed when the psalmist was in a thunder-storm, or had lately been in one, which he in a very beautiful manner describes. Kimchi thinks it refers to the times of the Messiah; and it may indeed be very well interpreted of the Gospel, and is very suitable to Gospel times.

Ver. 1. *Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty,* &c.] The Targum refers this to the angels, "give praise before "the Lord, ye companies of angels, sons of the Mighty;" these are mighty ones, and excel all other creatures in strength; and are the sons of the Mighty, or of God; it is their duty and their business to glorify and to worship him and his Son Jesus Christ, as they do continually; but rather the princes and great men of the earth are here meant, who are so called, Psal. lxxxii. 1, 6, 7. and lxxxix. 6, 7. 1 Cor. i. 26. and these, as they receive much honour and glory, both from God and man; and because they are apt to seek their own glory, and ascribe too much to themselves, are called upon particularly to give glory to God; and the more, inasmuch as they may be the means of engaging their subjects, by their influence and example, to do the same, and who may be included in them; for this is not to be understood of them exclusive of others, as appears from Psal. xcvi. 7, 8, 9. moreover, all the saints and people of God may be intended, who are all princes and kings; and may be said to be mighty, especially those who are strong in faith; and these are they who give most glory to God. *Give unto the Lord glory and strength;* give glory to Jehovah the Father, by celebrating the perfections of his nature; by commending the works of his hands, the works of creation; by acquiescing in his providential dispensations; by returning thanks to him for mercies received, temporal and spiritual; particularly for salvation by Christ, and, above all, for Christ himself; by exercising faith in him as a promising God; by living becoming his Gospel, and to the honour of his name: give glory to the Son of God, by ascribing all divine perfections to him, by attributing salvation to him, and by trusting in him alone for it: give glory to the Spirit of God, by asserting his deity, by referring the work of grace and conversion to him, and by depending upon him for the performance of the good work begun: *give strength* to each person, by acknowledging that power belongs to them, which is seen in creation, redemption, and effectual vocation; or else strength may mean the same thing as praise and glory; see Psal. viii. 2, compared with Matt. xxi. 16. and both may design strong praise and glory, expressed in the strongest and with the greatest vigour and vehemency of spirit.

Ver. 2. *Give unto the Lord the glory due to his name,* &c.] Or *the glory of his name* *: which is suitable to his nature, agreeable to his perfections, and which belongs unto him on account of his works. *Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;* the Lord is only to be worshipped, and not any creature, angels or men; not Jehovah the Father only, who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; but the Son of God, and the Holy Ghost also, being of the same nature, and possessed of the same perfections; and that with both internal and external worship; and in true holiness, in which there is a real beauty: holiness is the beauty of God himself, he is glorious in it; it is the beauty of angels, it makes them so glorious as they are; and it is the beauty of saints, it is what makes them like unto Christ, and by which they are partakers of the divine nature; and in the exercise of holy graces, and in the discharge of holy duties, should they worship the Lord; unless this is to be understood of the place of worship, the sanctuary, or holy place in the tabernacle; or rather the church of God, which holiness becomes; but the former sense seems best.

Ver. 3. *The voice of the Lord is upon the waters,* &c.] What follows concerning thunder, the voice of the Lord, gives so many reasons why he should have

* Hilchot Tamidin, c. 10. s. 11.

* כבוד שמו gloriam nominis ejus, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.

glory given him and be worshipped; the Heathens [y] paid their devotion to thunder and lightning: but this should be done to the author of them; which may be literally understoood of thunder, and is the voice of the Lord; see Psal. xviii. 13. Job xl. 9. and which is commonly attended with large showers of rain, Jer. x. 13. and is very terrible upon the waters, and has its effect there, Psal. civ. 7. and this is the rather mentioned, because that there is a God above, who is higher than the mighty, who are called upon to give glory to him, and because that thunder has been terrible to kings and great men of the earth; or this may be figuratively interpreted of the voice of Christ in the Gospel, which reaches to many nations and people, compared to waters, Rev. xvii. 15. The disciples had a commission to preach it to all nations, and the sound of their words went into all the world, Rom. x. 18. *The God of glory thundereth*; this shews that thunder may be meant by the voice of the Lord, who is glorious in himself, and in all his works; and may be applied to the Gospel of Christ, who is the Lord of glory, and whose ministers, at least some of them, are sons of thunder; see 1 Cor. ii. 8. Mark iii. 17. *The Lord is upon many waters*: that is, his voice is, as before, which is thunder; and that this belongs to God, the Heathens were so sensible of, that they called their chief deity Jupiter Tonans [z].

Ver. 4. *The voice of the Lord is powerful*, &c.] Or *with power* [a]; as thunder, in the effect of it, shews; and so is the Gospel, when it comes, not in word only, but is attended with the power of God to the conversion and salvation of souls; it is then quick and powerful, Heb. iv. 12. and the word of Christ personal, when here on earth, was with power, Luke iv. 32. *The voice of the Lord is full of majesty*; Christ, in his state of humiliation, spake and taught as one having authority; and now, in the ministration of his Gospel by his servants, he goes forth with glory and majesty, Psal. xlv. 3, 4.

Ver. 5. *The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars*, &c.] Such an effect thunder has upon the tallest, strongest, and largest trees, as to break them into shivers. *Yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon*; a mountain in the north part of the land of Judea, so called from its whiteness, both by reason of the snow with which some part of it is covered in summer, as Tacitus observes [b]; and partly from the colour of the earth that has no snow on it, which looks as white as if it was covered with white tiles, as Maundrell [c] says; and where the goodliest cedars grow; and to which may be compared proud, haughty, lofty, and stout-hearted sinners, who are broken, brought down, and laid low, by the voice of Christ in his Gospel, his power attending it. The Targum renders it, *the Word of the Lord*.

Ver. 6. *He maketh them also to skip like a calf*, &c.] That is, the cedars, the branches being broken off, or they torn up by the roots, and tossed about by the wind; which motion is compared to that of a calf that leaps and skips about. *Lebanon and Sirion, like a young unicorn*: that is, these mountains move and skip about through the force of thunder, and the violence of an earthquake attending it; so historians report that mountains have moved from place to place, and they have met and dashed against one another [d]. Sirion was a mountain in Judea near to Lebanon, and is the same with Hermon; which was called by the Sidonians Sirion, and by the Amorites Shenir, Deut. iii. 9. This may regard the inward motions of the mind, produced by the Gospel of Christ under a divine influence; see Isa. xxxv. 6. and xl. 4—8.

Ver. 7. *The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.*] Or *cutteth with flames of fire* [e]; that is, the thunder breaks through the clouds with flames of fire, or lightning, as that is sometimes called, Psal. cv. 32. and with which it cleaves asunder trees and masts of ships, cuts and hews them down; and divides them into a thousand shivers. Some refer this, in the figurative and mystical sense, to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai [f], on which the Lord descended in fire, and from his right hand went a fiery law; but rather this may be applied to the cloven or divided tongues of fire which sat upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost, as an emblem of the extraordinary gifts of the spirit bestowed on them; though it seems best of all, as before, to understand this of the voice of Christ in the Gospel, which cuts and hews down all the goodliness of men, and lays them to the ground, Hos. vi. 5. and is of a dividing nature, and lays open all the secrets of the heart, Heb. iv. 12. and, through the corruption of human nature, is the occasion of dividing one friend from another, Luke xii. 51, 52. and like flames of fire it has both light and heat in it; it is the means of enlightening men's eyes to see their sad estate, and their need of Christ, and salvation by him; and of warming their souls with its refreshing truths and promises, and of inflaming their love to God and Christ, and of setting their affections on things above, and of causing their hearts to burn within them.

Ver. 8. *The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness*, &c.] The ground of it, the trees in it, and the beasts that harbour there; and causes them to be in pain, and to bring forth their young, as the [g] word signifies, and as it is rendered in the next verse; all which effects thunder produces, and may mystically signify the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles, and the consequence of it. The Gentile world may be compared to a wilderness, and is called the wilderness of the people, Ezek. xx. 35. the inhabitants of it being ignorant, barren, and unfruitful; and the conversion of them is expressed by turning a wilderness into a fruitful land, Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, 6, 7. and xli. 18, 19. and the Gospel being sent thither has been the means of shaking the minds of many with strong and saving convictions, which made them tremble and cry out, what shall we do to be saved? *The Lord shaketh the*

[y] Pausan. Arcad. sive l. 8. p. 509.
[z] Horat. Epod. l. 5. Ode 2. v. 29. Martial. l. 2. Ep. 93.
[a] בכח in potentia, Pagninus, Montanus; cum potentia, Cocceius, Michaelis; with able power, Ainsworth.
[b] Hist. l. 5. c. 6.
[c] Travels, p. 176.

[d] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 2. c. 83. Joseph. Antiqu. l. 9. c. 11.
[e] חצב להבות אש caedit cum flammis ignis, Cocceius, Gejerus.
[f] Jarchi in loc.
[g] יחיל parturire faciet, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Michaelis; dolore parturientis afficit, Piscator.

wilderness of Kadesh; which was the terrible wilderness that the children of Israel passed through to Canaan's land; the same with the wilderness of Zin, Numb. xxxiii. 36. and was called Kadesh from the city of that name, on the borders of Edom, Numb. xx. 1, 16. the Targum paraphrases it, "The word of the "Lord shaketh the wilderness of Rekam;" in the Targum in the king's Bible it is, "makes the serpents "in the wilderness of Rekam to tremble;" but that thunder frightens them, I have not met with in any writer.

Ver. 9. *The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve*, &c.] Which being timorous creatures, the bringing forth of their young, which is naturally very painful and difficult, is lessened and facilitated by thunder; they being either so frighted with it that they feel not their pains; or their pains, being hastened by it, become more easy; and naturalists observe, that the time of bringing forth their young is at that season of the year when thunder is most frequent; see Job xxxix. 1—4. Thunder has a like effect on sheep, and makes them abortive[g]: this may be applied to the Gospel, which is the means of bringing forth souls to Christ by his churches and ministers; who may very fitly be compared to hinds for their love and loveliness, their swiftness and readiness to do the will of Christ, and their eager desires after communion with him, Prov. v. 19. Psal. xviii. 33. and xlii. 1. *And discovereth the forests*; or *maketh bare*[h]: by beating off the leaves and branches of trees, and them to the ground; or by causing the wild beasts that frequent them to retire to their holes and dens; which effects are produced by thunder; and this aptly agrees with the Gospel, which is a revelation of secrets, of the thickets and deep things of God; of his council, covenant, mind, and will; and of the mysteries of his grace to the sons of men, and generally to babes, or men of their capacities; and of its stripping them of all their own righteousness, and dependence on it. *And in his temple doth every one speak of his glory*; either in heaven, where angels and glorified saints are continually employed in speaking of his glorious name, nature, and works; or in the temple, or tabernacle at Jerusalem, where the Levites stood to praise the Lord morning and evening, and where the tribes went up to worship, and to give thanks unto the Lord, 1 Chron. xxiii. 30. Psal. cxxii. 4. or the church of God, which is the temple of the living God, whither saints resort, and where they dwell, and speak of the glory of God, of his divine perfections, and of his works of creation and providence; and of the glory of the person of Christ, and salvation by him; and of the glorious work of grace begun in their souls by the blessed Spirit; for hither such as have heard the voice of Christ, and have felt the power of it, and have found it to be a soul-shaking, an heart-breaking, and an illuminating voice, come, and declare it to the glory of the grace of God.

Ver. 10. *The Lord sitteth upon the flood*, &c.] Noah's flood; which is always designed by the word here used, the Lord sat and judged the old world for its wickedness, and brought a flood upon them, and destroyed them; and then he abated it, sent a wind to assuage the waters, stopped up the windows of heaven, and the fountains of the great deep, and restrained rain from heaven; and he now sits upon the confluence of waters in the heavens, at the time of a thunder-storm, which threatens with an overflowing flood; and he remembers his covenant, and restrains them from destroying the earth any more: and he sits upon the floods of ungodly men, and stops their rage and fury, and suffers them not to proceed to overwhelm his people and interest; and so the floods of afflictions of every kind, and the floods of Satan's temptations, and of errors and heresies, are at his control, and he permits them to go so far, and no farther. *Yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever*: he is King of the whole world, over angels and men, and even the kings of the earth; and he is also King of saints, in whose hearts he reigns by his spirit and grace; and the Gospel dispensation is more eminently his kingdom, in which his spiritual government is most visible; and this will more appear in the latter-day glory, when the Lord shall be King over all the earth; and after which the Lord Christ will reign with his saints here a thousand years, and then with them to all eternity, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Ver. 11. *The Lord will give strength unto his people*, &c.] His special people, his covenant-people, whom he has chosen for himself; these are encompassed with infirmities, and are weak in themselves; but there is strength for them in Christ: the Lord promises it unto them, and bestows it on them, and which is a pure gift of his grace unto them; this may more especially regard that strength, power, and dominion, which will be given to the people of the most High in the latter day; since it follows, upon the account of the everlasting kingdom of Christ. *The Lord will bless his people with peace*; with internal peace, which is peculiar to them, and to which wicked men are strangers; and which arises from a comfortable apprehension of justification by the righteousness of Christ, of pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice; and is enjoyed in a way of believing; and with external peace in the latter day, when there shall be no more war with them, nor persecution of them; but there shall be abundance of peace, and that without end; and at last with eternal peace, which is the end of the perfect and upright man; and the whole is a great blessing.

[g] Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 9. c. 5. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 47.

[h] ויחשף & denudat, Musculus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus; so Cocceius, Michaelis, Ainsworth.

PSALM XXX.

A Psalm and Song at the dedication of the house of David.

THIS is the first time that a psalm is called a song; some psalms are called by one name, some by another, and some by both, as here; and some are called hymns: to which distinction of them the apostle refers in Eph. v. 19. A psalm was sung upon musical instruments, a song with the voice; it may be this psalm was sung both ways: the occasion of it was the dedication of David's house: the Targum interprets it of the house of the sanctuary, the temple; and so most of the Jewish commentators [i]; which might be called his house, because it was his intention to build it; his heart was set upon it, he provided materials for it, and gave his son Solomon the form of it, and a charge to build it; and, as is thought, composed this psalm to be sung, and which was sung by the Levites at the dedication of it: others, as Aben Ezra, are of opinion it was his own dwelling-house, made of cedar, which he dedicated according to the law of Moses, with sacrifices and offerings, prayer and thanksgiving, 2 Sam. v. 11. and vii. 2. Deut. xx. 5. so Apollinarius calls it a new house David built; but since there is nothing in the whole psalm that agrees with the dedication, either of the temple, or of David's own private house, it seems better, with other interpreters, to understand it of the purgation of David's house from the wickedness and incest of his son Absalom, upon his return to it, when the rebellion raised by him was extinguished; which might be reckoned a new dedication of it; see 2 Sam. xx. 3. and to a deliverance from such troubles this psalm well agrees. Theodoret interprets it of the restoration of the human nature by Christ, through his resurrection from the dead.

Ver. 1. *I will extol thee, O Lord,* &c.] Or *lift thee up on high* [k]. The Lord is high in his name, he is the most High; and in his nature, there is none besides him, nor like unto him; and in place, he dwells in the high and holy place; he is above all, angels and men; he is above all gods; he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords; he cannot be higher than he is: to extol him, therefore, is to declare him to be what he is; to exalt him in high praises of him, which the psalmist determined to do, for the following reasons. *For thou hast lifted me up;* or *drawn me up,* or *out* [l]; from the pit of nature; the low estate of unregeneracy; the pit wherein is no water: the horrible pit, the mire and clay of sin and misery, in which all men, whilst unconverted, are; and out of which they cannot lift themselves, being strengthless, yea, dead in sin: this is God's work; he takes out of this pit, he draws out of it by his efficacious grace; he raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill; and this is an instance of his grace and mercy, and requires a new song of praise: or this may regard some great fall by sin, from which he was restored, through the grace and power of God; or deliverance from great troubles, compared to waters, out of which he was drawn, Psal. xviii. 16. and was lifted up above his enemies; and agrees very well with his being brought to his palace and throne again, upon the defeat of Absalom. *And hast not made my foes to rejoice over me;* as Satan does over unregenerate sinners, when he possesses their hearts, and keeps the house and goods in peace; and as the men of the world do over fallen saints, when forsaken by the Lord, and afflicted by him, and are under the frowns of his providence; but the conspirators against David were not suffered to succeed and rejoice over him, which they otherwise would have done; and for this he praises the Lord.

Ver. 2. *O Lord my God, I cried unto thee,* &c.] In the time of his distress and trouble; and whither should he go but unto his covenant God and Father? *And thou hast healed me:* either of some bodily disease that attended him; for the Lord is the physician of the body, as well as of the soul; and that either immediately, or by giving a blessing to means used; and the glory of such a mercy should be given to him: or else of soul-diseases, which are natural and hereditary, epidemical, nauseous, mortal, and incurable, but by the grace of God and blood of Christ; and the healing of them either respects the pardon of them at first conversion; for healing diseases, and forgiving iniquities, signify one and the same thing; or else fresh discoveries and applications of pardoning grace, after falls into sin, which are an healing backslidings, and restoring comforts; and this is God's work; none can heal but himself, and he does it effectually, universally, and freely, and which calls for thankfulness, Psal. ciii. 1—3. or this may be understood in a civil sense, of restoring him to his house, his throne and kingdom, and the peace of it.

Ver. 3. *O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave,* &c.] When his life being in danger, was near unto it, Job xxxiii. 22, 28. otherwise the soul dies not, nor does it lie and sleep in the grave; or *thou hast brought up my soul from hell* [m]; that is, delivered him from those horrors of conscience and terrors of mind, by reason of sin, which were as hell itself unto him; see Psal. cxvi. 3. Jonah ii. 2, 4. *Thou hast kept me alive:* preserved his corporeal life when in danger, and maintained his spiritual life; and quickened him by his word, under all his afflictions, and kept him from utter and black despair. *That I should not go down to the pit;* either of the grave or hell. There is in this clause a Keri and a Cetib; a marginal reading, and a textual writing: according to the latter it is, *from them that go down to the pit:* which some ver-

[i] Jarchi, Kimchi, & Abendana.
[k] ארוממך superexaltabo te, Cocceius; elevabo te, Michaelis.
[l] דליתני me sursum extraxisti, Cocceius; so Michaelis; thou hast drawn up me, Ainsworth.

[m] מן שאול ab inferno, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

sions [a] follow; that is, thou hast preserved me from going along with them, and being where and as they are: our version follows the former; the sense is the same.

Ver. 4. *Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his*, &c.] Such to whom he has been gracious and merciful, and has blessed with pardoning grace, and justifying righteousness, adoption, and a right to eternal life; and who are holy godly persons; in whose hearts principles of grace and holiness are formed; and who are kind and bountiful to others: all which the word [b] here used signifies: and these are the Lord's; they are set apart for him, and they are sanctified by him; and therefore should sing his praises, both vocally, and with melody in their hearts. *And give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness*; which is essential to him, and in which he is glorious; and which appears in all his ways and works of providence and grace, and both in the redemption and sanctification of his people: and besides this, there is the holiness of Christ, which is imputed to his saints, and the sanctification of the spirit, which is wrought in them; and at the remembrance of each of these it highly becomes them to give thanks to the Lord, since hereby they are made meet to be partakers of his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 5. *For his anger* endureth but *a moment*, &c.] Anger is not properly in God, he being a simple, uncompounded, immovable, and unchangeable being; nor is it ever towards his people in reality, unless anger is distinguished from wrath, and is considered as consistent with his everlasting and unvariable love to them; but only in their apprehension, he doing those things which in some respects are similar to those which men do when they are angry; he turns away from them and hides his face, he chides, chastises, and afflicts, and then they conclude he is angry; and when he returns again and takes off his hand, manifests his pardoning love, and comforts them, then they understand it that his anger is turned away from them; for in this improper sense of it, and as his children conceive of it, it is but for a moment, or a very short time: he forsakes them but for a moment, and their light afflictions endure no longer, Isa. liv. 7, 8. 2 Cor. iv. 17. *In his favour* is *life*; by which is meant his free love and favour in Christ towards his people; and designs either the duration of it, that it lives and always is, even when he seems to be angry, and that it lasts as long as life does, yea, to all eternity; neither death nor life can separate from it; or the object of it, God delighting not in the death but the life of a sinner; or rather the effects of it, it is what makes the present life to be properly life, and really comfortable; without it men may be said rather to be dead than to live, notwithstanding all enjoyments; and therefore it is better than life, abstracted from it, Psal. lxiii. 3. it quickens the soul in a spiritual sense, and makes grace lively; it invigorates faith, encourages hope, and makes love to abound, and it issues in eternal life. *Weeping may endure for a night*: the allusion is to the time when afflictions are usually most heavy and pressing upon persons, when they most feel them, or, however, are free from diversion, and at leisure to bemoan themselves; and may point at the season of weeping, and cause of it, the night of affliction, or of darkness and desertion, and denotes the short continuance of it; weeping is here represented as a person, and as a lodger, for the word may be rendered *lodge* [c]; but then it is as a wayfaring man, who continues but for a night; see Isa. xvii. 14. *But joy* cometh *in the morning*; alluding to the time when all nature is fresh and gay, when man rises cheerful from his rest, darkness removes, light breaks forth, and the sun rises and sheds its beams, and every thing looks pleasant and delightful; moreover, the mercies of God are new every morning, which cause joy, and call for thankfulness; and especially it is a time of joy after weeping and darkness, when the sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings; as it will be to perfection in the resurrection-morn, when the dead in Christ will rise first, and be like to him, and reign with him for evermore.

Ver. 6. *And in my prosperity*, &c.] Either outward prosperity, when he was settled in his kingdom, and was acknowledged king by all the tribes of Israel, and had gotten the victory over all his enemies, and was at rest from them round about; or inward and spiritual prosperity, having a spiritual appetite for the word, being in the lively exercise of grace, growing in it, and in the knowledge of Christ; favoured with communion with God, having fresh discoveries of pardoning grace and mercy, corruptions being subdued, the inward man renewed with spiritual strength, and more fruitful in every good word and work. This being the case, *I said, I shall never be moved*; so in outward prosperity men are apt to sing a requiem to themselves, and fancy it will always be thus with them, be in health of body, and enjoying the affluence of temporal things, and so put away the evil day in one sense and another from them; and even good men themselves are subject to this infirmity, Job. xxix. 18—20. and who also, when in comfortable frames of soul, and in prosperous circumstances in spiritual things, are ready to conclude it will always be thus with them, or better. Indeed they can never be moved as to their state and condition with respect to God; not from his heart, where they are set as a seal; nor out of the arms of Christ, and covenant of grace; nor out of the family of God; nor from a state of justification and grace; but they may be moved as to the exercise of grace and discharge of duty, in which they vary; and especially when they are self-confident, and depend upon their own strength for the performance of these things, and for a continuance in such frames, which seems to have been David's case; and therefore he corrects himself, and his sense of things, in the following verse.

Ver. 7. *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong*, &c.] The psalmist found himself mistaken, and acknowledges it; that as it was not owing to his own merit that he enjoyed the prosperity that he did, so neither was the continuance of

[a] So Sept. V. L. Pagninus, Musculus, Gejerus, Michaelis, Ainsworth.
[b] חסידיו quos ipse benignitate prosequitur, Junius & Tremellius; so Tigurine version.

[c] ילין diversetur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; lodgeth, Ainsworth.

it owing to his goodness, power, and strength, but to the free grace and favour of God; as the church of God is compared to a mountain, and the several individuals of believers are like to Mount Zion, so the soul of a child of God may be called his mountain, which is made strong by the Lord as to its state in Christ, being set on him, the Rock of ages, and sure foundation, where it is safe and secure; and as to its grace, whenever it is in any strong exercise, which is altogether owing to the favour of God, and continues as long as he pleases. *Thou didst hide thy face*, and *I was troubled*; the Lord may hide his face from his people, and yet their state be safe; their mountain stands strong in that respect; yet this generally produces a change of frames; it gives trouble, and faith and hope become feeble and languid in their acts and exercises; this shews the changeableness of frames, that they are not to be depended upon; that they are entirely owing to the pleasure of God, and that rejoicing only should be in him: very likely some regard is had to the affair of Absalom's rebellion, which came unawares, unthought-of, when David was in the greatest prosperity and security.

Ver. 8. *I cried to thee, O Lord*, &c.] In his trouble, when the Lord had hid his face from him, and he was sensible that he had departed from him: he was not stupid and unaffected with it; nor did he turn his back upon God, and seek to others; but he cried after a departing God, which shewed love to him, and some degree of faith in him, by looking again towards his holy temple, and waiting upon him until he returned. *And unto the Lord I made supplication*; in the most humble manner; entreating his grace and mercy, and that he would again shew him his face and favour.

Ver. 9. *What profit is there in my blood?* &c.] Should that be shed, and he die by the hands of his enemies, through divine permission: death is not profitable to a man's self by way of merit; it does not atone for sin, satisfy justice, and merit heaven; even the death of martyrs, and of such who shed their blood, died in the cause of Christ, and for his sake, is not meritorious; it does not profit in such sense: there is profit in no blood but in the blood of Christ, by which peace is made, pardon procured, and redemption obtained. Indeed death is consequentially profitable to good men; it is an outlet of all sorrows and afflictions, and the inlet of joy and happiness; it is the saints' passage to heaven, and upon it they are immediately with Christ, and rest from their labours: nor is there profit in the blood of the saints to them that shed it; for when inquisition is made for it, vengeance will be taken on them who have shed it, and blood will be given them to drink, as will be particularly to antichrist: nor is there any profit in it to the Lord himself; which seems to be what is chiefly designed, since it is used by the psalmist as an argument with him in prayer, that he might not be left by him, and to his enemies, so as to perish, since no glory could accrue to God by it from them; they would not give him thanks for it, but ascribe it to themselves, and say their own hand had done it; so far, the psalmist suggests, would his death be from being profitable to God, that it would rather be a loss to the interest of religion; since he had not as yet fully restored religion, and settled the pure worship of God in order, and made the preparations for the building the house of God he intended. God may be glorified in the death of his people; either by their dying in the faith of interest in him; or by suffering death for his name's sake; but, in a strict sense, there is nothing either in life or death in which man can be profitable unto God; see Job xxii. 2, 3. and xxxv. 7, 8. some understand this of life; because the life is in the blood: as if the sense was, of what advantage is life to me? it would have been better for me if I had never been born, had had no life and being at all, if I must for ever be banished from thy presence, and go down to the pit of hell, which they suppose is designed in the following phrase. *When I go down to the pit*; though the grave seems rather to be meant, and the former sense is best. *Shall the dust praise thee?* that is, men, whose original is dust, being reduced to dust again, as the body at death, when laid in the grave, and corrupted there, is; this lifeless dust cannot praise the Lord: the soul indeed dies not with the body; nor does it sleep in the grave with it; nor is it unemployed in heaven; but is continually engaged in the high praises of God: but the sense of the psalmist is, that should he die, and be buried, and be reduced to dust, he should no more praise the Lord in the land of the living, among men, to the glory of divine grace and goodness; so that this revenue of his glory would be lost. *Shall it declare thy truth?* either the truth of the Gospel, which lies in the word of God; or rather the faithfulness of God in the performance of his promises: see Psal. xl. 10. Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19.

Ver. 10. *Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me*, &c.] By lifting up the light of his countenance again upon him; by manifesting and applying his pardoning grace to him, and by delivering him out of all his afflictions. *Lord, be thou my helper*; in this time of trouble; for he knew that vain was the help of man; and he was entirely in the right to betake himself to the Lord, who was able to help him, when none else could.

Ver. 11. *Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing*, &c.] This, with what follows, expresses the success he had in seeking the Lord by prayer and supplication; there was a sudden change of things, as it often is with the people of God; sometimes they are mourning by reason of sin, their own and others; or on account of afflictions; or because of spiritual decays; or through the temptations of Satan; or, as it was the case of the psalmist now, because of the hidings of God's face; but this mourning is exchanged for joy and gladness when the Lord discovers his pardoning love, revives his work in their souls, takes off his afflicting hand from them, rebukes the tempter, and delivers out of his temptations, and shews himself, his grace and favour. *Thou hast put off my sackcloth*; which was used in mourning for relations, and in times of calamity and distress, and as a token of humiliation and repentance, Gen. xxxvii. 34. Esth. iv. 1. Jonah iii. 8. *And girded me with gladness*; by these phrases the same thing is signified as before; see Isa. lxi. 3.

Ver. 12. *To the end that my glory may sing praise to*

thee, &c.] Meaning either his soul, the more noble and glorious part of him; or the members of his body, his tongue, which is the glory of it, and with which he glorified God; see Psal. xvi. 9. compared with Acts ii. 26. this was the end that was to be answered by changing the scene of things; and which was answered. *O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever:* to the end of life, as long as he had a being, and to all eternity, Psal. civ. 33. Jerom interprets the whole psalm of the resurrection of Christ.

PSALM XXXI.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

THIS psalm, according to Arama, was composed by David when in Keilah; but, according to Kimchi and others, when the Ziphites proposed to deliver him up into the hands of Saul; and who, upon their solicitations, came down and surrounded him with his army, from whom in haste he made his escape, and to which he is thought to refer in ver. 22. Theodoret supposes it was written by David when he fled from Absalom, and that it has some respect in it to his sin against Uriah, in that verse.

Ver. 1. *In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust*, &c.] Not in any creature, but in the Lord Jehovah; the Targum, *in thy Word*;, the essential Logos, or Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, and so an equal object of faith, trust, and confidence, as Jehovah the Father: this act includes a trusting all with God, body and soul, and the welfare of them, in time, and to eternity; and a trusting him for all things, both of providence and grace, and for both grace and glory, and is a continued act; for the psalmist does not say, *I have trusted*, or *I will trust*, but *I do*; and this was a very considerable thing to do in this time of his distress: the Lord is to be trusted in at all times. *Let me never be ashamed;* neither in this world, nor in that to come. The believer has no reason to be ashamed of any thing in this life but sin, and the imperfection of his own righteousness, and his trust in it; not of the Lord, in whom he trusts; nor of his Word, or Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom he believes as his Saviour and Redeemer; nor of the Spirit, and his work of grace upon him; nor of his faith, hope, trust, and confidence in them; nor of the Gospel, the means of faith, and of the support of it; nor of the reproaches, afflictions, and sufferings, he endures for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; nor of his ordinances and his people; nor will he be ashamed hereafter at the coming of Christ, when he will appear in his righteousness, be clothed with white robes, have palms in his hands, and shall stand at his right hand, and be received into glory. *Deliver me in thy righteousness;* not in his own, by which he knew there was no acceptance with God, no justification before him, nor any deliverance and salvation from sin and death; but by the righteousness of God, which the Son of God has wrought out, God the Father accepts of and imputes, and the Spirit of God reveals and applies; by this there is deliverance from sin, its guilt, and damning power, and from the curses and condemnation of the law, and from wrath to come, and from the second death.

Ver. 2. *Bow down thine ear to me*, &c.] Which is said after the manner of men, who, when they give attention, and listen to any thing, stoop, and incline the ear; and this for God to do, as he sometimes does, is wonderful condescending grace! *Deliver me speedily:* which shews that he was in great danger, and his case required haste: the Lord does help right early, and is sometimes a present help in time of need, and delivers at once, as soon as the mercy is asked for. *Be thou my strong rock:* for shelter and security from enemies, as well as to build his everlasting salvation on, and to stand firmly upon, and out of danger. *For an house of defence to save me;* both for an house to dwell in, the Lord being the dwelling-place of his people in all generations, and a strong habitation to which they may continually resort; and for protection and safety, their place of defence in him being the munition of rocks, a strong hold, and a strong tower from the enemy.

Ver. 3. *For thou* art *my rock and my fortress*, &c.] What he prayed for he knew him to be, and to have been in times past, and could claim his interest in him; and therefore entreats that he would appear to be to him what he was in himself, and what he had been to him. *Therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me;* either as a shepherd does his flock, gently, as they are able to bear it; into the green pastures of the word and ordinances, and beside the still waters of divine love, and to the overflowing fountain, and fulness of grace in himself; or as a general leads and guides his army; Christ being a Leader and Commander of the people, and the great Captain of their salvation, and who being at the head of them, they fear no enemy; or as a guide leads and directs such as are ignorant, and out of the way. The psalmist desires the Lord would lead him in the way of truth and paths of righteousness, according to his word; and guide him with his counsel, and by his spirit, that so he might walk in the way in which he should go; and this he entreats he would do *for* his *name's sake;* not for any merit or worthiness in him; but for the glory of his own name, and for the honour of his free grace and mercy, for which the Lord often does many things; he defers his anger, he purges away the sins of his people, he forgives their transgressions, and remembers their sins no more, for his name's sake.

Ver. 4. *Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me*, &c.] The Ziphites, and Saul, and his men; the former intending treacherously to betray him, and the latter encompassing him about in order to take him; and such was his danger and difficulty, that he saw none but God could deliver him; and he it is that breaks the nets of men, and the snares of the

devil, which they secretly lay for the people of God, that they may stumble, and fall, and be taken, and delivers them out of them. *For thou* art *my strength*: the author, giver, and maintainer, both of his natural and spiritual strength; and who was able, and was only able, to pull him out of the net, and extricate him out of the difficulties in which he was.

Ver. 5. *Into thine hand I commit my spirit*, &c.] Either his life, as to a faithful Creator and Preserver, who was the God of his life, gave him it, and upheld his soul in it; or his soul, and the eternal salvation of it, which he committed into the hand of the Lord his Redeemer, where he knew it would be safe, and out of whose hands none can pluck; or this he might say, as apprehensive of immediate death, through the danger he was in; and therefore commits his spirit into the hands of God, to whom he knew it belonged, and to whom it returns at death, and dies not with the body, but exists in a separate state, and would be immediately with him. Our Lord Jesus Christ used the same words when he was expiring on the cross, and seems to have taken them from hence, or to refer to these, Luke xxiii. 46. *Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth*: which may be understood, either of the temporal redemption of his life from destruction in times past, which encouraged him to commit his life into the hands of God now, who was the same, and changed not; or of spiritual and eternal redemption from sin by the blood of Christ, and which the psalmist speaks of as if it was past, though it was to come, because of the certainty of it; just as Isaiah speaks of the incarnation and sufferings of Christ, Isa. ix. 6. and liii. 4—6. and of which he was assured, because the Lord, who had provided, appointed, and promised the Redeemer, was the God of truth, and was faithful to every word of promise; and Christ, who had engaged to be the Redeemer, was faithful to him that appointed him; and having an interest therefore in this plenteous redemption, by virtue of which he was the Lord's, he committed himself into his hands.

Ver. 6. *I have hated them that regard lying vanities*, &c.] Soothsaying and divination, as Aben Ezra and others think; made use of by kings, and generals of armies, to know when it was proper to go out to war, and what success they should have; see Ezek. xxi. 21—23. Hos. iv. 12. but such men and their practices David abhorred; he took no such methods when in distress, but applied to the Lord, and trusted in him; or rather idol-gods, as Jarchi, and others, who are vanity, and the work of errors, and are nothing in the world; see Jon. ii. 8. all will-worship and superstition may be included in this phrase, which being not according to the will and word of God, is worshipping in vain, and carries off from true spiritual worship; and so is a lying vanity, and to be detested, and the abettors of it: as also all errors and heresies; these are great swelling words of vanity, and are lies in hypocrisy; and likewise all immorality and wickedness, which spring from the vanity of the mind, and promise much liberty and pleasure, but deceive, and therefore lying; yea, all worldly enjoyments are vanity and vexation of spirit, and are fallacious and deceitful when trusted in; and indeed every false trust and confidence may come under this name; such as trust in riches, in wisdom and knowledge, in carnal descent, and privileges, in a moral and legal righteousness, and even in a bare profession of true religion, and a subjection to Gospel ordinances; for there is no true object of trust, no Redeemer and Saviour, but the Lord: now such as regard those lying vanities are they that look to them, love them, embrace them, and put their confidence in them; and such are to be *hated*; not their persons, but their principles and practices, and they themselves are to be shunned and abstained from. *But I trust in the Lord*; the God of truth, that cannot lie, deny himself, nor deceive; who is unchangeable, and without any variableness, or shadow of turning.

Ver. 7. *I will be glad, and rejoice in thy mercy*, &c.] Both because of the nature of it, which is large and abundant, free and sovereign, from everlasting to everlasting, and is communicated in and through Christ, and is a good ground of hope and trust; and because of the effects of it, or what it has produced; for to it are owing the covenant of grace, and all the sure mercies of it; the mission of Christ, and redemption by him; regeneration, and the forgiveness of sins, and even eternal life and glory; besides a multitude of blessings, deliverances, and salvations in Providence; on account of all which there is great reason for joy and gladness; of which the following are particulars. *For thou hast considered my trouble*; inward, arising from in-dwelling sin, doubts and fears, desertions and darkness, and Satan's temptations; and outward, from the world, and the men of it, and by reason of bodily afflictions: now the Lord looks upon the troubles of his people, and upon them in them, with an eye of pity and compassion; he sympathizes with them; he considers the nature of their trouble, their weakness to bear it, and the best way, means, and time to deliver out of it; he working all things after the counsel of his own will; see Exod. iii. 7. *Thou hast known my soul in adversities*; that is, the Lord had took notice of him, approved of him, loved him, had visited him, and made known his love to him, and owned him for his own, and had chosen him in the furnace of affliction; a time and season when oftentimes friends and acquaintance are shy, and will not look upon men, know them, and own them; but the Lord does otherwise, and which is another reason of joy and gladness in his mercy.

Ver. 8. *And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy*, &c.] When in Keilah, in the wilderness of Ziph, and Maon, and encompassed about by Saul and his army, 1 Sam. xxiii. 7, 13, 14, 24, 25, 26. nor does the Lord suffer his people to be shut up under the power of sin and Satan, so that they cannot come forth in the exercise of grace, and the discharge of duty; but he brings their souls out of prison, that they may praise his name. *Thou hast set my feet in a large room*; at full liberty from his enemies; Saul and his army being called off from pursuing him, by tidings of an invasion by the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxiii. 27—29. and this is the case of the saints when they are brought to Christ, to walk by faith at large on him; when grace is drawn forth into exercise, and spiritual knowledge is increased, and they are delivered from their enemies; or, however, can look upon them as conquered

ones, and are sure of victory over them, and at last of an entire deliverance from them; see Psal. iv. 1. and xviii. 19. and cxviii. 5.

Ver. 9. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble*, &c.] A sudden change of case and frame this! and so it is with the people of God; as soon as out of one trouble, they are in another; these are what are appointed for them, and lie in their path-way to heaven, and are necessary; and under them it is quite right to betake themselves to the Lord, who is a merciful God; and it is best to cast themselves upon his mercy, having no merit of their own to plead with him; and they may freely tell him all their distresses, as the psalmist here does, and hope for grace and mercy to help them in time of need. *Mine eye is consumed with grief*; expressed by tears; through the multitude of which, by reason of trouble, his sight was much hurt; according to Jarchi, the word signifies, that his sight was so dim as is a man's when he puts a glass before his eyes, to see what is beyond the glass: this shews that the invention of spectacles was before the year 1105; for in that year Jarchi died; and proves it more early than any other writer has pretended to[a]; for the commonly received opinion is, that they were invented at the latter end of the 13th or beginning of the 14th century; but the apostle, as A-Lapide thinks, respects them, in 1 Cor. xiii. 12. and they are mentioned by Plautus[b], who lived almost two hundred years before the birth of Christ: the same Jarchi observes on Psal. vi. 7. Yea, *my soul and my belly*: perhaps he could not eat his food, or digest it, which brought upon him internal disorders, and even brought his soul or life into danger.

Ver. 10. *For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing*, &c.] Which shews the continuance of his troubles, and that his whole life had been, as it were, an uninterrupted series of sorrows. *My strength faileth because of mine iniquity*: this opens the source and spring of all his grief and trouble; his sin, and the sin of his nature, in which he was conceived and born; in-dwelling sin, which remained and worked in him; and it may be also the sin of unbelief, which beset him, and prevailed in him, notwithstanding the instances of divine goodness, the declarations of grace, the discoveries of love, and the exceeding great and precious promises he had made to him; as also his daily sins and infirmities, and very likely some great backslidings, which had brought grief of soul upon him, and which grief affected the several parts of his body. Sin was the cause of the failure of natural strength in Adam and his posterity; of diseases and death, by which their strength is weakened in the way; and was the cause of impairing moral strength in men to do that which is good, and has a very great influence on the spiritual strength of the Lord's people, in the exercise of grace. *And my bones are consumed*: which are the firmest and strongest parts of the human body, and the support of it.

Ver. 11. *I was a reproach among all mine enemies*, &c.] This is a common case of the people of God; and though it may be the least of their afflictions, yet it is not grateful to the flesh; and it is as it is made: under divine supports saints rejoice, and take pleasure in reproaches, that they are counted worthy to bear them, and esteem them as great riches; at other times they seize and feed upon their spirits, and are ready to break their hearts. *But especially among my neighbours*; who knew him, and knew he did not deserve to be so treated; and who ought, as neighbours, to have loved him, and done all good offices to him; so that this is an aggravation both of their sin and his distress. *And a fear to mine acquaintance*: not that they were afraid that he should do them any mischief; but they were afraid to own him, and to do him any service; unless the sense is, that they were afraid that evil would befall him, that he should not escape with his life; which, though it may express the affectionate concern of his friends, yet shews the danger he was exposed to. *They that did see me without fled from me*: as if he had something very pestilential and infectious about him.

Ver. 12. *I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind*, &c.] Either by his friends, being out of sight, out of mind; as even the nearest relations and acquaintance are, in process of time, when dead, Eccl. ix. 5. or by the Lord; which shews the weakness of his faith, the uncomfortable frame he was in, through darkness and desertion; see Psal. lxxxviii. 5. Isa. xlix. 14—16. *I am like a broken vessel*; or *a perishing vessel*[c]; or *a vessel of perdition*[d]: the Septuagint version renders it *a lost vessel*[e]; one entirely useless, wholly lost, and irrecoverably so; like a broken vessel, which can never be put together again, Isa. xxx. 14. Jer. xix. 11. a most sad apprehension he had of himself, as if his case was desperate, and he a vessel of wrath; compare with this Rom. ix. 22.

Ver. 13. *For I have heard the slander of many*, &c.] Both enemies and neighbours. *Fear was on every side*; his enemies were a *Magor Missabib* to him, Jer. xx. 3. encompassed him around, so that he was in fear from every quarter. *While they took counsel together against me*: how to apprehend him, and what to do with him. *They devised to take away my life*: nothing short of that would satisfy; but life is in the hand of God; men may devise, but God disappoints, and his counsel stands; hence the psalmist was encouraged, after all, to trust in him, in this time of imminent danger, as follows.

Ver. 14. *But I trusted in thee, O Lord*, &c.] His faith revived again under all the discouraging views he had of things, and was exercised upon the Lord; he committed himself to him, believing he was able to help him in his time of trouble, and deliver him. *I said, thou art my God*; he claimed his covenant-interest in him, and used it as an argument with him to have regard unto him, and as a support to his faith in his present distress; see the note on Psal. vii. 1.

Ver. 15. *My times are in thy hand*, &c.] And not in the hand of his enemies; as his time of life and death, which was only by the direction and appointment of God, was in his power, and fixed by him; nor could his enemies take away his life before his time, and

[a] See Chambers's Dictionary on the word *Spectacles*.
[b] Vid. Ainsworth's Lat. Dict. in voce *Conspicill.* & Pancirol. Rer. Memorab. par. 2. tit. 15. & Salmuth. in ib. p. 266.

[c] ככלי אבד sicut vas periens, Montanus, Coccelus, Gejerus.
[d] So Ainsworth.
[e] V. L. Pagninus, Musculus, Piscator.

without the will of his covenant-God: the time of his coming to the throne, and what was gone over him during his reign hitherto, 1 Chron. xxix. 30. and all his times of trouble in it; times of prosperity and of adversity; of darkness, desertion, and temptation; and of joy, peace, and comfort; these were all in the hands of the Lord, at his dispose, and ordered by him for the good of his servant, and for the glory of his own name; and this was a quieting consideration to the psalmist under his present trials and exercises; the Targum is, *the times of my redemption*. *Deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me;* a good man has many enemies, and even his very goodness creates him such; for wicked men are enemies to all that is good; and those are persecuting ones, in one way or other; either by words or deeds; and deliverance out of their hands is by the Lord, who sometimes gives his people rest from adversity, and suffers not the rod of the wicked to continue on them; and therefore it is best to apply to him for it.

Ver. 16. *Make thy face to shine upon thy servant,* &c.] In which he prays for the gracious presence of God, the manifestations of himself unto him, the discoveries of his love, the enjoyment of him in Christ, communion with him, the comforts of his spirit, and joys of his salvation; see Numb. vi. 25, 26. *Save me for thy mercies' sake;* not for any merit and righteousness of his own, but for the sake of the grace and goodness of the Lord; which is putting salvation, whether temporal or spiritual, upon its right foot and foundation; which is never wrought out by, or is for works of righteousness done by men, but according to the grace and mercy of God.

Ver. 17. *Let me not be ashamed, O Lord,* &c.] The same petition as in ver. 1. *For I have called upon thee;* who is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth, and is rich unto them, and has promised to help and save them; which should he not do, not only he would be made ashamed, but the promise of God would seem to fail; for the psalmist does not plead any duty of his, nor make a merit of his prayers; but has respect to the promise and faithfulness of God. *Let the wicked be ashamed;* as they will be, sooner or later, of their wickedness, and of their false trust and confidence; of their being incensed against Christ, and their rage against his people, and persecution of them. And *let them be silent in the grave;* as all are that are there; and the sense is, let them be brought to the grave, where they will be silent, or cease[f]; that is, from their evil words and works, and particularly from troubling the saints, Job iii. 17.

Ver. 18. *Let the lying lips be put to silence,* &c.] Being convicted of the lies told by them, and so silenced and confounded; or being cut off and destroyed, as all such will be in the Lord's own time, Psal. xii. 3. It is very likely the psalmist may have respect either to Doeg the Edomite, who loved lying rather than righteousness; or to others that were about Saul, who lying said to him that David sought his hurt, even to take away his kingdom and his life, Psal. lii. 3. 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. *Which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous;* meaning himself; not that he thought himself righteous in the sight of God by any righteousness of his own, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; see Psal. cxliii. 2. Rom. iv. 6. Though he may have regard here to the righteousness of his cause before men, and assert himself righteous, as he might with respect to the *grievous things*, the hard and lying speeches, which were spoken against him, in a proud, haughty, and contemptuous manner. And it is no unusual thing for such false charges to be brought against righteous men; nay, such hard speeches were spoken by ungodly men against Jesus Christ the righteous himself, Jude 15. The Targum interprets it of *reproaches*.

Ver. 19. *O how great is thy goodness,* &c.] Not the natural and essential goodness of God; for though that is large and abundant, yea, infinite, as every perfection of his is, yet it cannot with propriety be said to be laid up and wrought out; but rather the effects of his goodness, and not those which appear in Providence, for they, though very large and plenteous, are common to all, and are not restrained to them that fear the Lord, and trust in him; but such as are displayed in a way of special grace and favour to his own people, and which the psalmist saw his interest in and was affected with; and which supported his faith under his present troubles, and appeared to be so great, both for quality and quantity, that he could not well say how great the blessings of his goodness were. *Which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee;* both grace and glory; the blessings of grace were laid up in God's heart, in his thoughts and purposes, from everlasting; and in Christ, in whom the fulness of all grace dwells; he was prevented with the blessings of goodness, and his people were blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, and had all grace given them in him before the world was; and these were likewise laid up in the covenant of grace, ordered in all things, and sure; eternal glory is the hope and crown of righteousness laid up in heaven, where it is reserved for the saints, who are heirs of it: and the laying up of all this goodness shews it to be a treasure, riches of grace, and riches of glory; and that it is an hidden treasure, and riches of secret places, which are out of the view of carnal men, and not perfectly seen and enjoyed by the people of God themselves as yet; and also that it is safe and secure for them, and can never be lost; and it expresses the paternal care of God, his great love and affection for them, to lay up so early so much goodness for them: and this is said to be *for them that fear* him; not naturally, but by his grace; for the fear of God is not in man naturally, but is put there by the grace of God; and such who have it are those who are brought to a true sight and sense of sin, so as to loathe it and forsake it; for the fear of the Lord is to hate evil, and by it men depart from it, and because of it cannot sin as others do; such have an humble sense of themselves, their own insufficiency and weakness, and trust in the grace of God and righteousness of Christ; they have a filial reverence of God, and worship him in spirit and in truth: but now this fear of the Lord is not the cause of goodness being laid up for them, for that only is the will of God; and besides the

[f] Verbum est דמם quod significat cessare ab aliquo opere, vel sermone, Psal. iv. 5. Gejerus.

fear of God is a part of the goodness which is laid up in promise in the covenant of grace, Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. and it is the goodness of God displayed in the blessings of it, such as pardon of sin, &c. which influences, promotes, and increases the fear of God, Hos. iii. 5. Psal. cxxx. 4. but, goodness being manifested to and bestowed upon them that fear the Lord, it appears eventually to be laid up for them. Which *thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!* by which may be meant the work of redemption, in which the goodness of God greatly appears; in calling and appointing Christ unto it, in sending him to effect it, in strengthening him as man and Mediator to do it; and in the work itself, in which many things are wrought, the law is fulfilled, justice satisfied, a righteousness brought in, peace made, pardon procured, and everlasting salvation obtained. And whereas this is said to be *wrought for them that trust in* the Lord, it is not to be understood as if trusting in the Lord was the cause of this work being wrought out, which is the love of God and grace of Christ; but inasmuch as those that trust in the Lord have openly an interest in redemption, and they that believe in Christ shall be saved; therefore it clearly appears in the issue of things to be wrought out for them. The phrase, *before the sons of men*, may be connected either with the goodness wrought, and so signifies that the work of redemption was done in a most public manner, openly before men, even the enemies of God's people; nor was it in the power of men and devils to hinder it; or else with trusting in the Lord, and so is expressive of a public profession of faith and confidence in the Lord before men, which ought to be done: moreover this goodness wrought may include the good work of grace upon the soul; and the Lord's fulfilling the good pleasure of his goodness in the hearts of his people, and the work of faith with power on them; and also the many deliverances of them out of afflictions and temptations, and the many salvations from their enemies he works for them in the earth, before the sons of men.

Ver. 20. *Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence*, &c.] That is, those that fear the Lord and trust in him; and therefore they are called his *hidden ones*, Psalm. lxxxiii. 3. these the Lord preserves in times of trouble and danger, and when his indignation is out against others; and so the Targum is, *in the time of thine anger;* see Isa. xxvi. 20. the presence of God is their protection, he himself is a wall of fire round about them, his favour compasses them as a shield, and they are kept as in a garrison by his power; see Psal. xci. 1. and that *from the pride of man*, which otherwise would at once oppress, bear them down, and destroy them, Psal. cxxiv. 1—5. *Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues;* which are as a sharp sword, and from whence proceed devouring words, such contradiction of sinners as Christ endured; not that the saints are kept free from the reproaches of men, from the lash of their tongues, but from being hurt by them; and sometimes, through the strivings and contentions of men with one another, they privately escape and are preserved, as the Apostle Paul was, Acts xxiii. 9, 10.

Ver. 21. *Blessed* be *the Lord*, &c.] A form of thanksgiving, in which the psalmist calls upon himself and others to bless and praise the Lord for the singular mercy granted him, expressed in the next clause; see the note on Psal. xviii. 46. *For he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong city;* either in the city Keilah, so Jarchi; a city which had gates and bars, where Saul thought he had David safe, and he could not escape his hands; but notwithstanding that, and though the inhabitants of that place intended to deliver him up, yet he was marvellously saved; as he also was from the Ziphites; and when Saul and his army had encompassed him about, by a surprising incident, a messenger coming to Saul just as he was about to seize him, informing him that the Philistines had invaded the land, 1 Sam. xxiii. 7—29. Or the city of Jerusalem, which was fortified both by nature and art, whither he was brought and placed as king, and enjoyed rest from all his enemies round about him, 2 Sam. v. 6—9. and vii. 1. Or this may spiritually design the church of God, which is called a strong city, being built on Christ the Rock, and having salvation for walls and bulwarks, Isa. xxvi. 1. where the Lord displays his banner of love, makes discoveries of his marvellous kindness, and commands his blessing for evermore. Some render it *as in a strong city* [g], and take the sense to be, that he was safe through the kindness of God shewed to him in the salvation of him, as if he was in a fortified city [h], and this was marvellous in his eyes, as every instance of providential goodness is to the people of God; especially his loving-kindness shewed in spiritual things, in choosing them in Christ, saving them by him, regenerating them by his Spirit, and taking them into his family; which love is free and sovereign, distinguishing, unchangeable, from everlasting to everlasting; and so wonderful and astonishing; and which was hid in God until revealed; and sometimes the manifestations of it are withdrawn, and then it is shewed again, and fresh discoveries of it are made, and effects of it applied, and the blessings of it bestowed, which occasion thankfulness.

Ver. 22. *For I said in my haste*, &c.] When he made haste to get away for fear of Saul, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. and so the Targum renders it, *I said when I sought to flee away;* or else he said this hastily and rashly, in the hurry of his mind, being in the utmost confusion and distress, as in Psal. cxvi. 11. *I am cut off from before thine eyes;* his case was very bad, he was reduced to the utmost extremity, and his faith was as low; he thought it was all over with him, and there was no way of escape, nor hope of it; and that he was like a branch cut off, ready to be cast into the fire; that he was cut off from the house of God, and from communion with him; that he would never look upon him more, and he should never enjoy his presence: this instance of weakness and unbelief is mentioned to illustrate the goodness of God, and to make his kindness appear to be the more marvellous in the salvation

[g] בעיר מצור ut in civitate munita, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Michaelis.

[h] Aben Ezra, Kimchi, & Ben Melech in loc.

of him; so sometimes the Lord suffers his people to be in the utmost distress, and their faith to be at the lowest ebb, when he appears to their help, and makes it manifest that their salvation is by his own arm, and of his own good will, and not by them, or for any goodness of theirs. *Nevertheless, thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee;* for though faith was very low, and unbelief strongly prevailed, yet he was not so far gone as to leave off praying; for though he saw no rational way of escape, and feared the Lord would take no notice of him; yet he knew that nothing was impossible with him, and therefore he still looked up to him, as Jonah did when he thought himself in a like condition, Jonah ii. 4. and such was the grace and goodness of God, that he did not despise but regard his prayer, though attended with so much weakness and unbelief.

Ver. 23. *O love the Lord, all ye his saints,* &c.] To whom his goodness extends; who are favoured with the blessings of his grace, as pardon, peace, and righteousness; and who particularly are sanctified by his spirit, and have principles of grace and holiness wrought in their hearts: these, even all of them, are called upon to love the Lord, having that grace implanted in their souls; that is, to express it, not by words, but by deeds, under a sense of the love and kindness of God to them; and to join with the psalmist in an affectionate reverence of him, trust in him, and thankfulness to him, on account of his marvellous kindness shewed him. For *the Lord preserveth the faithful;* such as trust in him, believe in Christ, and are faithful to his word and ordinances, abide by them, and keep close with his people; these he not only preserves in a providential way, but he preserves them in a way of special grace; he keeps them *from evil,* as the Targum; from the evil of sin; from a total and final falling away by it; from the evil of the world, so as not to be drawn off from Christ and his ways, either by its frowns or flatteries; and from the evil one, Satan, from being destroyed by him and his temptations; and these are preserved safe to the kingdom and glory of Christ, by the mighty power of God: some render the words, *the Lord keepeth faithfulness*[i]; he will never suffer his own faithfulness to fail; he is a covenant-keeping God, and is always true to his word and promise. *And plentifully rewardeth the proud doer;* such as all self-righteous persons are, and all that speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the truly righteous, ver. 18. who bear hard upon them, and oppress them; and such as antichrist and his party, who exalts himself above all that is called God; but in what those deal proudly, God is above them, an overmatch for them, and he sets himself against them; he resists them, and will reward them according to their works.

Ver. 24. *Be of good courage, and he shall strenghten your heart,* &c.] See the note on Psal. xxvii. 14. by this instance of God's wonderful kindness to the psalmist, he would have the saints take heart, and be of good cheer, even in the greatest distresses, since their case cannot be worse than his was; and yet he had deliverance out of it. *All ye that hope in the Lord;* for the eye of the Lord is on such, and he takes delight in them, Psal. xxxiii. 18. and cxlvii. 11. The Targum is, *who hope for,* or *trust in the word of the Lord;* the essential Word, the promised Messiah.

PSALM XXXII.

A Psalm of David, Maschil.

THIS is the first of the psalms that bears this title; some think it is the name of a musical instrument, on which this psalm was sung; others the first word of a song, to the tune of which it was sung, as Aben Ezra; some say it is so called, because it was explained by an interpreter, as Jarchi; and the Rabbins[k] say, that every psalm that is called *Maschil* was dictated by an interpreter: the Targum renders it *a good understanding;* and the word properly signifies *instruction,* or *causing to understand*[l]; and it may be the apostle has some reference to this title in 1 Cor. xiv. 15. It is an instructive psalm; a didascalic ode, as Junius renders it: it gives an account how the psalmist was instructed under a dispensation of Providence; and was brought to a sense of sin, and acknowledgment of it; and was favoured with a discovery of pardoning grace; and in it he takes upon him to instruct others, ver. 8, 9. and does instruct in the doctrine of the pardon of sin by the grace of God.

Ver. 1. *Blessed* is he whose *transgression* is *forgiven,* &c.] Or *lifted up*[m]; bore and carried away: sin is a transgression of the law; the guilt of it charged upon the conscience of a sinner is a heavy burden, too heavy for him to bear, and the punishment of it is intolerable: forgiveness is a removal of sin, guilt, and punishment. Sin was first taken off, and transferred from the sinner to Christ, the surety; and was laid upon him really and judicially, as the sins of the people of Israel were put upon the scape-goat typically; and was bore by him, both guilt and punishment, and taken away, finished, and made an end of; and by the application of his blood and sacrifice it is taken away from the sinner's conscience; it is caused to pass from him, and is removed afar off, as far as the east is from the west; it is so lifted off from him as to give him ease and peace, and so as never to return to the destruction of him; wherefore such a man is a happy man; he has much peace, comfort, calmness, and serenity of mind now, can appear before God with intrepidity, and serve him without fear; no bill of indictment can hereafter be

[i] אמונים נצר fidelitatem, Gejerus; or fidelities, Ainsworth.
[k] Elias Levita in Tishbi, p. 271.
[l] משכיל erudiens, Musculus, Munster, Vatablus, Montanus; informans, Gejerus; an instructing psalm, Ainsworth.
[m] Verbum נשא elevavit quandoque idem est ac condonavit, Gejerus; נשוי ablata est, Piscator, Cocceius.

found against him; no charge will be exhibited, and so no condemnation to him. The same is expressed, though in different words, in the next clause. *Whose sin is covered;* not by himself, by any works of righteousness done by him: for these are a covering too narrow; nor by excuses and extenuations; for prosperity and happiness do not attend such a conduct, Prov. xxviii. 13. but by Christ; he is the mercy-seat, the covering of the law; who is the covert of his people from the curses of it, and from the storm of divine wrath and vengeance, due to the transgressions of it; his blood is the purple covering of the chariot, under which the saints ride safe to heaven; the lines of his blood are drawn over crimson and scarlet sins, by which they are blotted out, and are not legible; and being clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness, all their sins are covered from the eye of divine Justice; not from the eye of God's omniscience, which sees the sins of all men, and beholds those of his own people; and which he takes notice of, and corrects for, in a fatherly way; but from vindictive justice, they are so hid as not to be imputed and charged, nor the saints to be condemned for them; such are unblamable and unreprovable in the sight of God, and are all fair in the eyes of Christ; and their sins are caused to pass away from themselves, and they have no more sight and conscience of them; and though sought for at the last day, they will not be found and brought to light, nor be seen by men or angels. There is something unseemly, impure, nauseous, abominable, and provoking in sin; which will not bear to be seen by the Lord, and therefore must be covered, or the sinner can never stand in his presence and be happy.

Ver. 2. *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity,* &c.] Or *does not think of it*[o]; with respect unto men, at least to the hurt of them; his thoughts are thoughts of peace, and not of evil; their sins and iniquities he remembers no more; he does not charge them with them, he does not reckon them, or place them to their account, having imputed them to his son; see 2 Cor. v. 19. The Apostle Paul interprets this as inclusive of the imputation of righteousness without works; even of the righteousness of Christ, in which the blessedness of a man lies, Rom. iv. 6—8. for such an one is accepted with God, is justified in his sight, and is secure from condemnation and wrath; it is well with him at all times, in life, at death, and at judgment; he is an heir of eternal life, will enter into it, and be for ever glorified. *And in whose spirit there is no guile;* for being thoroughly convinced of sin, he is sincere in his repentance for it, without deceit and hypocrisy in his confession of it; as David, the Apostle Paul, and the publican were, when they acknowledged themselves sinners; his faith, in looking to Christ for pardon and righteousness, is from the heart, and is unfeigned; and so is his profession of it before God, angels, and men; and whatever hypocrisy and guile are remaining in the old man, there is none in the new spirit put into him; in the new man, which is created in him, and which sinneth not: as the other phrases are expressive of pardon and justification, this points at internal sanctification, and which serves to complete the description of the happy man; such an one as David himself was; and this happiness he illustrates from his own experience in the following verses.

Ver. 3. *When I kept silence,* &c.] Was unthoughtful of sin, unconcerned about it, and made no acknowledgment and confession of it to God, being quite senseless and stupid; the Targum adds, *from the words of the law;* which seems to point at sin as the cause of what follows. *My bones waxed old; through my roaring all the day long;* not under a sense of sin, but under some severe affliction, and through impatience in it; not considering that sin lay at the bottom, and was the occasion of it; and such was the violence of the disorder, and his uneasiness under it, that his strength was dried up by it, and his bones stuck out as they do in aged persons, whose flesh is wasted away from them; see Psal. cii. 3, 5.

Ver. 4. *For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me,* &c.] Meaning the afflicting hand of God, which is not joyous, but grievous, and heavy to be borne; especially without his gracious presence, and the discoveries of his love: this continued night and day, without any intermission; and may design some violent distemper; perhaps a fever; since it follows, *my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.* That is, the radical moisture in him was almost dried up, as brooks in the summer-season; his body was parched, as it were, with the burning heat of the disease; or with an apprehension of the wrath of God under it, or both: and so he continued until he was brought to a true sense of sin, and an acknowledgment of it, when he had the discoveries of pardoning love, as is expressed in the next verse. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions read, *I am turned into distress, through a thorn being fixed;* and so Apollinarius paraphrases the words, "I am become mise-" "rable, because thorns are fixed in my skin;" reading קוץ for קיץ; and which Suidas[p] interprets *sin,* that being like the thorn, unfruitful and pricking; see 2 Cor. xii. 7.

Ver. 5. *I acknowledged my sin unto thee,* &c.] The sin of Adam, in which he was concerned; original sin, the corruption of his nature, the sin that dwelt in him, his private and secret sins, which none knew but God and himself; even all his sins, which were many, with all their aggravated circumstances; wherefore he uses various words to express them by, in this and the following clauses; as *sin, iniquity,* and *transgressions;* the same that are used in the doctrine of pardon in the preceding verses; his confession being of the same extent with pardon: and all these he calls his own; as nothing is more a man's own than his sins are; and these the psalmist acknowledged to the Lord; or *made,* or *will make known*[q] to him: not that any sin is unknown to God, even the most secret ones; but they may be said to be made known to God, when a sinner makes a sincere and hearty acknowledgment of them before

[o] יחשב cogitat, Piscator; cogitando reputavit, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.
[p] In voce Ἄκανθα.

[q] אודיעך cognoscere feci te, Pagninus, Montanus; so Musculus, Vatablus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, & Gejerus, to the same purport.

him, and expresses his own sense of them; how that they are with him, and ever before him, what knowledge rather he has of them, how much he is affected with them, and concerned for the commission of them; and such an acknowledgment the Lord expects and requires of his people, Jer. iii. 12, 13. *And mine iniquity have I not hid;* by retaining it as a sweet morsel under his tongue; for he not only acknowledged it, but forsook it; or by not confessing it, as Achan; for non-confession of sin is hiding it; or by denying it, as Gehazi, Ananias and Sapphira; or by palliating and extenuating it; or by casting the blame on others, as did Adam and his wife; see Job xxxi. 33. or by covering it with a guise of sanctity and religion. *I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord;* not unto men, though in some cases confession of sin is to be made to men; a confession of it in general is to be made to the churches, and administrators of ordinances, in order to admission into a church-state, and to the ordinances of Christ, Matt. iii. 6. Acts ii. 37, 41. and in case of private offences, faults are to be confessed one to another, and forgiveness granted; and in case of public offences, a confession should be made to a church publicly; partly for the satisfaction of the church, and partly for the glory of divine grace; but confession is not to be made to a priest, or to a person in a ministerial character, in order for absolution; but to the Lord only, against whom sin is committed, and who only can pardon it: and this the psalmist saith in his heart he would do, and did do it; he not only confessed facts, but the fault of them; with their evil circumstances, and that he justly deserved punishment for them; and this he did from his heart, with abhorrence of the sins committed by him, and in faith, with a view to the pardoning mercy of God in Christ. *And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.* That is, either the guilt of his sin, which he took away from him; or the punishment of it, which he delivered him from: moreover, this phrase may denote the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and so may both express the sense which the psalmist had of it, and exalt the grace of God in the forgiveness of it; by which must be meant a fresh manifestation and application of pardon to his soul: now, when confession of sin, and remission of it, are thus put together, the sense is not that confession of sin is the cause of pardon; it is not the moving cause of it, that is the grace and mercy of God; nor the procuring and meritorious cause of it, that is the blood of Christ: it is not for the sake of a sinner's confession of sin, but for Christ's sake, that sin is forgiven; but this is the way in which it is enjoyed; and such as truly repent of sin, and sincerely confess it, are the persons to whom the Lord manifests his forgiving love; such may expect it, Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 9.

Ver. 6. *For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee,* &c.] Meaning either that the success he had met with, in acknowledging his sin, would encourage others also to take a like step, and make their supplications to the Lord also; or that every godly person should pray to God for the same blessing of pardoning grace likewise. Pardon of sin is to be prayed for; not only Moses, David, Daniel, and other Old-Testament saints, prayed for it; but Christ has directed his disciples and followers, under the Gospel dispensation, to do the same, Luke xi. 4. and which must be understood of praying for the manifestation of it to their consciences; for God has by one eternal act forgiven all trespasses at once, for Christ's sake; nor can any new act of pardon arise in the mind of God, or a fresh one pass in the court of heaven, nor the blood of Christ be shed again for the remission of it. Moreover, godly men will, in this sense, pray for it, as they have daily occasion to do: a godly man is a man that is created after the image of God, is born of him, and is possessed of internal powerful godliness, and has all things pertaining to it; and particularly has a godly sorrow for sin, and the fear of God in his heart, and before his eyes: and such a man is a praying one; having the spirit of grace, he has the spirit of supplication, and prays with the spirit and with the understanding; and his praying for the pardon of sin shews that he is not without it, but daily commits it, and so needs fresh discoveries of forgiving love: and which he prays for *in a time when thou mayest be found;* which is to be understood, not of any particular stated times of prayer, as morning, noon, and night; for the throne of grace is always open, and God is to be found, and grace and mercy with him at all times; and much less does this respect a day of grace for particular persons, which, if improved, and the opportunity taken, they may have pardon; but if neglected till it is over, then there is no pardon for them; for there is no such day of grace: the whole Gospel dispensation is a day of grace; and that will not be over until all the elect of God are gathered in; and until then it is, and will be; now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation; but it designs a time of need, of soul-distress, in which, when persons call upon God in truth, and seek him with their whole heart, he is found by them, and they find grace and mercy with him to relieve them in their distress; the Targum is, "in an acceptable time." *Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him;* that is, unto the godly man; not but that afflictions, which are comparable to great floods of waters, do reach godly persons; but not so as to overwhelm them and destroy them; they are delivered out of them. The phrase seems to denote safety in the greatest calamities; that though even a deluge of vengeance and awful judgments should come upon the world, yet the godly man is safe; his place is the munition of rocks; he is in the hands of Christ, and is enclosed in the arms of everlasting love, from whence he can never be taken by men or devils: the Targum interprets these *waters* of *many people;* and adds, so as *to do any evil,* or *hurt.*

Ver. 7. *Thou art my hiding-place,* &c.] In time of trouble; see Psal. xxvii. 5. so Christ is said to be, Isa. xxxii. 2. *Thou shalt preserve me from trouble;* not from having it; for in this world the saints must have tribulation, and through it enter the kingdom, but from being swallowed up with it; the Lord will bring them safe out of it, and of them it shall be said, *these are they that came out of great tribulation,* Rev. vii. 14. *Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah;* or gird with gladness, as in Psal. xxx. 11. the meaning is, that God would give him abundant reason for praise and thankfulness; and an opportunity of attending him with songs of praise for deliverance out of

the hands of his enemies, and from trouble; and that both in his house below, where the saints, his loving people and faithful subjects, would join with him, in the midst of whom he should stand encompassed with their songs of praise; or in heaven above, where he should sing the song of Moses, and of the Lamb, and be surrounded with the hallelujahs of angels and glorified saints; Aben Ebra interprets these songs of the voices of angels.

Ver. 8. *I will instruct thee*, &c.] Or *cause thee to understand*[q]. These are by many thought to be the words of the Lord, who gives to a man an understanding of spiritual things; he instructs by his providence, and even by afflictive dispensations of providence; and by his word, which is written for the learning of men, and is profitable for doctrine and instruction in righteousness, and by the ministers of it, who are therefore called instructors in Christ; and by his Spirit, when he instructs effectually and to purpose; by him he instructs men in the knowledge of themselves, and of himself in Christ, and of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; and leads into all truth as it is in Jesus; and opens the understanding to understand the Scriptures, and the doctrines contained in them. *And teach thee in the way which thou shalt go*: the path of duty, from whence men are apt to wander; when the Lord hedges up the way they would go with thorny providences, and by his ministers, word, and spirit, directs them in the right way; saying, this is the way, walk in it; and the way of truth, which is clearly pointed to in the Scriptures of truth, and by the spirit of truth; and also the way of life and salvation by Christ, revealed in the Gospel, and which the preachers of it shew to the sons of men. *I will guide thee with mine eye*; as a master guides his scholar; or *as mine eye*[r]: with as much care and tenderness as if thou wert the apple of mine eye; see Deut. xxxii. 10. Zech. ii. 8. or the words may be rendered, *I will counsel*, or *give counsel*; as he does, who is wonderful in counsel, and that by his Son, who is the wonderful Counsellor; and by his word and testimonies, which are the delight of his people, and the men of their counsel: *mine eye is upon thee*[s]; as the eye of the Lord is upon the righteous, to watch over them for good, to provide for them, guide and direct them. These words may very well be considered as the words of David, in which he determines to act a part, agreeable to the title of the psalm, *Maschil*, which signifies instructing, or causing to understand; and as he thought himself bound in duty to do, under the influence of the grace and mercy he had received from the Lord, in the forgiveness of his sins; and which he elsewhere resolved to do in a like case, and which is an instance parallel to this, Psal. li. 13. he here promises to *instruct* men in the way of attaining to the blessedness he had been speaking of, by directing them to take the steps he did; namely, to go to the Lord, and acknowledge and confess their sins before him, when they might expect to find pardoning mercy and grace, as he did; and to *teach* them the way of their duty upon this, to fear the Lord and his goodness, and to serve him in righteousness and holiness all the days of their lives; and to *guide* them *with his eye*; by declaring to them the gracious experiences he had been favoured with, by telling them what he himself had seen and known.

Ver. 9. *Be ye not as the horse*, or *as the mule*, which *have no understanding*, &c.] The design of this exhortation is to direct men how to behave under the instructions given; not as brutes, which have no rational faculties, but as men; that they should not shew themselves thoughtless, stupid, and unteachable, as these animals, or worse than they; nor stubborn and obstinate, refractory and untractable, resolving not to be taught, stopping the ear, and pulling away the shoulder; nor ill-natured and mischievous; not only hating instruction, casting away the law of the Lord, but kicking and spurning at, and persecuting such who undertake to instruct them; as these creatures sometimes attempt to throw their riders, and, when down, kick at them. *Whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee*; to do mischief, bite or kick; or *because they do not come near to thee*[t]; and that they may come near, and be brought into subjection, and become obedient; therefore such methods are used; see Jam. iii. 3. there is in the words a tacit intimation, that men are commonly, and for the most part, like these creatures, stupid, stubborn, and mischievous; and therefore severe methods are used by the Lord, sore chastenings, to humble and instruct them; see Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. the mule, more especially, is remarkable for its stupidity[u]; and though the horse is docible, yet he is sometimes stubborn and refractory.

Ver. 10. *Many sorrows* shall be *to the wicked*, &c.] Who will not be instructed and reformed, but are like the horse and mule, without understanding; many outward sorrows or afflictions attend them; loathsome and consuming diseases come upon their bodies by intemperance and debauchery; and they and their families are brought to a piece of bread, through their vicious courses; and inward sorrows, horror and terror of mind, seize them when their consciences are at any time awakened, and are open to conviction; when a load of guilt lies on them, what remorse of conscience do they feel! and what severe reflections do they make! and how are they pierced through with many sorrows! And though indeed, for the most part, wicked men have their good things in this life, and are in prosperous circumstances, and are not in trouble, as other men; yet what they have is with a curse; and they have no true peace, pleasure, and satisfaction in what they enjoy; they are under the wrath of God, and the curses of a righteous law; and everlasting destruction is prepared for them in the other world, when they will have many sorrows indeed; their worm will not die, and the fire of divine fury will not be quenched; there will be for ever indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that does evil. *But he that trusteth in the Lord*; not in his wealth and riches, in his wisdom and strength, in him-

[q] אשכילך intellectum tibi dabo, V. L. Musculus; intelligere faciam te, Pagninus, Montanus; so Ainsworth.

[r] איעצה עליך עיני consulam tibi sicut oculo meo, Drusius.

[s] Consulam, super te est oculus meus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Ainsworth; so the Targum.

[t] בל קרב אליך quia non accedunt ad te, Grotius.

[u] Mule, nihil sentis — Catullus.

self, and his own righteousness; for such are wicked persons; but in the Lord; in his righteousness to justify him, in his blood to pardon him, in his strength to support him, and in his grace to supply him with every thing necessary for him. *Mercy shall compass him about*; not only follow him and overtake him, but surround him; he shall be crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies: the phrase denotes the abundance of mercies that shall be bestowed upon him here and hereafter, as both grace and glory.

Ver. 11. *Be glad in the Lord*, &c.] The Targum renders it, *in the Word of the Lord*; in Christ the essential Word; in him as the Lord their righteousness, and because of his righteousness imputed to them, by which they become righteous; and in him as their Saviour and Redeemer, and because of the salvation which he has wrought out for them; see Isa. lxi. 10. *And rejoice, ye righteous*; in the Lord, as before; for this is not a carnal, but spiritual joy, which is here exhorted to, the same as in Phil. iv. 4. and *righteous* ones, who are excited to it, are such who are not righteous in appearance only, or in their own conceit, or by the deeds of the law, or in and of themselves; for there is none righteous this way; but who are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, and are righteousness itself in him; under a sense of which grace they live soberly, righteously, and godly; and these have great reason to rejoice and be glad. *And shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart*; who have the truth of grace, and the root of the matter in them, oil in the vessels of their hearts, with their lamps; whose faith is unfeigned, whose hope is without hypocrisy, and whose love is without dissimulation; and who worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, and draw nigh to him with true hearts, and call upon him in the simplicity of them; these ought to rejoice, and even shout for joy, because of the grace that is wrought in them, and bestowed upon them, and the glory they shall be partakers of; for both grace and glory are given to these, and no good thing is withheld from them; the end of these upright souls is peace; and when they have done their work, they shall lie down and rest in their beds, and each one shall walk in his uprightness, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. and xxxvii. 37. Isa. lvii. 2.

PSALM XXXIII.

THOUGH this psalm has no title to it, it seems to be a psalm of David, from the style and matter of it; and indeed begins with the same words with which the preceding psalm is ended. Theodoret is of opinion it was written by David as a prophecy concerning Hezekiah, as a song to be sung by the people after the destruction of the Assyrian army.

Ver. 1. *Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous*, &c.] See the note on Psal. xxxii. 11. For *praise is comely for the upright*; it becomes them; it is their duty; they are bound unto it by the mercies and favours they have received; should they not give praise to God, the stones of the wall would cry out, and rebuke them for their ingratitude: it is beautiful, and looks lovely in them; it is an ornament to them, and is, in the sight of God, of great esteem: it is very acceptable to him, and when grace is in exercise, and their hearts in tune, being sensibly touched and impressed with the goodness of God, it is desirable by them, and is pleasant and delightful to them.

Ver. 2. *Praise the Lord with harp*, &c.] An instrument David was well-skilled in the use of, the inventor of which was Jubal, Gen. iv. 21. *Sing unto him with the psaltery*; the name of this instrument is in the Hebrew language *nebel*: the account which Josephus* gives of this, and of the former, is, "the harp is extended with ten strings, and is stricken with a quill; "the *nabla*, or psaltery, has twelve sounds, and is "played upon with the fingers;" some make this and the next to be the same: *and an instrument of ten strings*; and read them together thus, *with the psaltery of ten strings*; and so the Targum, Septuagint, and other versions*; but it seems from Josephus that it was not a stringed instrument, but had holes, and those twelve; and besides is distinguished from the instrument of ten strings, Psal. xcii. 3. it was in the form of a bottle, from whence it had its name.

Ver. 3. *Sing unto him a new song*, &c.] One newly composed on account of late mercies received; and as the mercies of God are new every morning, there ought to be a daily song of praise to him; and so a new song is a continual song, as Christ is called the *new and living way*, Heb. x. 20. because he is the ever-living way; or the constant and only one, which always was, is, and will be. Or it may denote some famous and excellent song, as a new name is an excellent name, an unknown and unspeakable one; see Rev. ii. 17. compared with Rev. xiv. 2, 3. or respect may be had to the New-Testament dispensation, in which old things are passed away, and all things become new; a new covenant is exhibited, a new and living way opened, and new ordinances instituted, and at the end of it there will be new heavens and a new earth; and so here is a new song made mention of, as suited to it. *Play skilfully with a loud voice*; either with the quill upon the harp, and the instrument of ten strings; or with the fingers upon the psaltery, at the same time, vocally, and aloud, expressing the new song.

Ver. 4. *For the word of the Lord is right*, &c.] The revealed word of God: the law of God is right; its precepts are holy, just, and good; its sanction or penalty is righteous; it is impartial unto all; it is just in condemning the wicked, and in acquitting believers on the account of Christ's perfect righteousness, by which it is magnified and made honourable: the Gospel part of the word is right; it publishes right and good things; it directs to the right way, to heaven and happiness; it makes men right when it works effectually in them; it engages them to walk in right ways; and its doctrines are right or plain to them that have a spiritual understanding given them; and all this is matter of joy and praise. *And all his works are done in truth*; his works of creation are done in the truth of things, with the utmost exactness and accuracy, and

* Antiqu. l. 7. c. 12. s. 3.

* Vid. Jarchium in loc. & R. Mosem in Aben Ezra in loc.

are a wonderful display of his power, wisdom, and goodness: his works of providence are according to the counsel of his own will, and are done in the wisest and best manner; and his work of redemption is a proof of his veracity and faithfulness to his covenant oath and promise; and his work of grace upon the hearts of his people is truth in the inward parts; and which, as he has promised to carry on and finish, he is faithful and will do it; in short, his way of acting both towards the godly and ungodly agrees with his promises to the one and his threatenings to the other, and so is in truth; and the whole of this is a reason why the saints should praise the Lord.

Ver. 5. *He loveth righteousness and judgment*, &c.] Or *righteous judgment*[y]; he delights in the administration of it himself, Jer. ix. 24. and he is well-pleased with acts of righteousness done by others, when done according to his word, from love to him, by faith in him, and with a view to his glory; especially he loves the righteousness of his son, being satisfactory to his law and justice, and his people, as clothed with it; and he delights in the condemnation of sin in the flesh of Christ, and in the righteous judgment of the world, and the prince of it, by Christ. *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord*: of the providential goodness of God, of which all creatures partake; and of the special goodness or grace of God manifested in Christ Jesus; it was full of it particularly when Christ was here on earth, who is full of grace and truth; and when the Gospel of the grace of God was preached everywhere by his apostles, according to his order, and appeared to all men; and so it will be especially in the latter day, when multitudes will be called by grace and converted, and when the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord; and still more when it will become a new earth, wherein only righteous men will dwell.

Ver. 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made*, &c.] The aërial and starry heavens, and the heaven of heavens, the third heaven, the seat of the divine Majesty, and the habitation of angels and glorified saints; these were *made* even out of nothing, not out of any pre-existent matter, nor were they eternal; and being made are creatures, and so not to be worshipped, neither they nor their hosts after mentioned; angels, sun, moon, and stars, these were made by the Word of God, the essential Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who often goes by this name, John i. 1, 14. Heb. iv. 12. 1 John v. 7. Rev. xix. 13. and very fitly agrees with him, who spoke for all his people in the council and covenant of grace, and undertook to be their surety; is the Word spoken of by all the holy prophets since the beginning of the world; is the interpreter of his Father's mind and will, of which he must be capable, since he lay in his bosom; and now he speaks for his saints in heaven, whose advocate he is; and especially he may be so called because he so often spake on the six days of creation, and said, let this and the other thing be, and it was so; and to him, as the Word of God, is the creation of all things frequently ascribed, John i. 1—3. Heb. xi. 3. 2 Pet. iii. 5. and particularly the heavens, Heb. i. 10. This is a proof of the deity of Christ, and of the dignity of his person; and shews how fit he is to be the Saviour of men; how safe the saints are in his hands; and that he ought to be trusted in, adored, and worshipped. *And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth*: by *the host* of the heavens are meant the angels of heaven, who dwell in the third heaven, and are the militia of it; they are called the heavenly host, Luke ii. 13. these are under Jehovah, as their Lord and King, and are the army among whom he does according to his will, 1 Kings xxii. 19. Dan. iv. 35. these attended him whenever he has made any remarkable appearance; and they have been employed by him against his enemies, and in defence of his people, about whom they encamp, 2 Kings xix. 35. Matt. xxvi. 53. Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. Psal. xxxiv. 7. The sun, moon, and stars, are the host of the next heaven, these are ranged in their proper order by the Lord, and he keeps the muster-roll of them, Isa. xl. 26. Psal. cxlvii. 4. and these are used by him as his militia; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera, Judg. v. 20. and the winged tribe are the host of the lower heaven; and even the lower class of these, as the locusts and grashoppers, go forth in bands and troops, and encamp in the hedges, and at the command of God pass through and devour whole countries, Prov. xxx. 27. Nah. iii. 17. Psal. cv. 34, 35. and all these are made by *the breath* or *spirit*[z] *of* Jehovah's *mouth*; that is, by the Spirit of God, the third Person in the Trinity; a name which is suitable to him who is breathed forth, and proceeds from the Father and the Son, and to whom creation is ascribed, Gen. i. 2. Job xxxiii. 4. and xxvi. 13. and which is no inconsiderable proof of his deity; and shews that he must be equal to the work of sanctification, which he begins and carries on. Now though the creation of the heavens is attributed to the Word, and the host of them to the Spirit, yet we are not to suppose that one Person took one part, and another Person another part of the creation; but they were all, Father, Word, and Spirit, jointly concerned in the whole.

Ver. 7. *He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap*, &c.] Which was done on the third day of the creation, by means of which the dry land appeared, Gen. i. 9, 10. when the waters of the sea were piled up as an heap, and stood higher than the earth, as they now do; and which is a wonderful instance of the power and providence of God, to bound them, and preserve the earth from being overflowed by them, Job xxxviii. 9—11. *He layeth up the depth in storehouses*; that is, large quantities of water, for which he has his treasure-houses, as for the wind, hail and snow, Psal. cxxxv. 7. Job xxxviii. 16, 22. and these are the clouds of heaven above, and the fountains of the great deep below, which the Lord opens and stops at his pleasure; see Gen. vii. 11. and viii. 2.

Ver. 8. *Let all the earth fear the Lord*, &c.] That is, all the men that dwell upon the face of the earth. As it follows, *let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him*: which fear and awe design a reverence of the divine Majesty, whose divine perfections are so manifest in the works of creation; and a carefulness not to offend him, into whose hands it

[y] צדקה ומשפט judicium justum, Gejerus.

[z] ברוח פיו spiritu oris ejus, V. L. Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

must be a fearful thing to fall; and the whole worship of him, which is often in Scripture expressed by the fear of him: and this is to be understood either as what is the duty of all men; for to *fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man*, Eccl. xii. 13. and which is incumbent on all men, in consideration of his being the Creator of them; and the obligation to it is yet more increased through his providential care of them and goodness to them; and still more should be found in them, seeing he will be the Judge of them, and has a despotic and uncontrollable power over them; and what is it that he cannot do, who has done all this before related? though none can fear him aright but such who have the grace of fear put into their hearts by the spirit of God: or else this may be prophetically said, as what will be in the latter day, when not only the Jews shall fear the Lord and his goodness, Hos. iii. 5, but when the fulness of the Gentiles being brought into the church, it shall fear and be enlarged; yea, all nations shall fear the Lord and glorify his name, and come and worship before him, Isa. lx. 5—8. Rev. xv. 4.

Ver. 9. *For he spake, and it was* done, &c.] Or *it was*[a], it came into being by a word speaking, almighty power going along with it; see Gen. i. 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 20, 24. *He commanded, and it stood fast*; every created thing continued in its being; not only all things were produced into being by his all-commanding word and power, *nutu Jovis*, as Maximus Tyrius speaks[b]; but by the same all things are upheld and consist, Heb. i. 3. Col. i. 17. The poet[c] uses the same word of God in the creation of things; and is the phrase in Gen. i. 3. admired by Longinus[d]: or this may refer to the implantation of the grace of fear in the hearts of his people; for as he speaks life into them in regeneration, commands light to shine in their dark hearts, and says to them, when in their blood, Live; so by the mighty power of his word he commands the fear of him in them, and it continues.

Ver. 10. *The Lord bringeth the counsel of the Heathen to nought*, &c.] The psalmist having taken notice of the works of creation, in order to excite the saints to praise, proceeds to observe the providence of God, and particularly that branch of it which lies in disappointing the designs of wicked men; it is wickedness which they consult and devise, and this is against the Lord's people, his cause and interest, and so against himself; and though their schemes are formed and contrived with a great deal of subtlety, yet they are commonly blasted; whether laid by particular persons, as by Ahithophel against David; or by nations, whole bodies of men, as of the Egyptians and Assyrians against Israel; and of Jews and Gentiles against Christ and his cause. *He maketh the devices of the people of none effect*: the same thing is expressed here as before, in different words, for the further confirmation of it, and that it might be attended to. This is the Lord's doing, he is omniscient, and knows all the secret plots and designs of men; and he is omnipotent, and counteracts them, and confounds them in all their measures; and is faithful to his people, cause, and interest.

Ver. 11. *The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever*, &c.] By which are meant, not the doctrines of the Gospel, nor the ordinances of it; though these will stand firm, and remain to the end of the world; but the purposes and decrees of God, which are wisely formed in himself, are eternal and infrustrable, and relate to all things in providence and grace. The Lord does all things according to the counsel of his will in the government of the world, and in the salvation of men: the choice of persons to everlasting life is according to it; and so are their redemption, effectual vocation, and glorification. *The thoughts of his heart to all generations*; which, with respect to his own people, are thoughts of peace, grace, and mercy; these are many, and within himself, were very early, even from all eternity, and have their sure and certain effect, Isa. xiv. 24. see Prov. xix. 21. Isa. xlvi. 10.

Ver. 12. *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord*, &c.] Who have an interest in such a wonder-working God, both in creation and in providence, and especially in grace: which, though it may have a principal regard to the nation of Israel, whose God he was in a very distinguishing manner, yet must not be limited to them; for he is the God of the Gentiles also: this nation is the chosen generation, the holy nation and peculiar people, both among Jews and Gentiles; and the Lord is the God of these; not only as the God of nature and providence, but as the God of all grace; who must be happy, since he is their portion and exceeding great reward; nor shall they want any good thing, nor need they fear any evil; they are on the heart of God, and cannot be separated from his love; they are engraven on the palms of his hands, and shall be helped, strengthened, and upheld with the right hand of his righteousness; all things work together for their good; and this God of theirs will be their God and guide unto death; they may expect every needful good thing now, and all glory and happiness hereafter. *And the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance*; not Israel only, but the Gentiles also; not all mankind, but a peculiar people, whom the Lord has chosen out of the world to be his possession, and who are his jewels and peculiar treasure; these are happy, being the Lord's portion, and the lot of his inheritance; and he chooses an inheritance for them, adopts and begets them unto it, and makes them meet to be partakers of it.

Ver. 13. *The Lord looketh from heaven*, &c.] Where his throne and temple are, upon the earth and men, and things in it, as follows. *He beholdeth all the sons of men*; the evil and the good; which is contrary to the sense of many wicked men, who imagine he takes no notice of what is done here below; but his eye is upon all, upon all the workers of iniquity, how secret soever they may be; and not only his eye of Providence is upon good men, but his eye of love, grace, and mercy; and he has a special and distinct knowledge of them: agreeably to this are some expressions of Heathen writers; says one[e], "the eye of God sees all "things;" says another[f], "there is a great God in hea- "ven, who sees all things, and governs."

[a] ויהי & fuit, Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.
[b] Dissert. 25.
[c] Jussit & extendi campos, &c. Ovid. Metamorph. l. 1. Fab. 1. v. 43.
[d] De Sublimi.
[e] Πάντα ἰδὼν Διὸς ὀφθαλμὸς, &c. Hesiod. Opera & Dies, l. 1. v. 265.
[f] Ἔστι μέγας ἐν οὐρανῷ, &c. Sophoclis Electra, v. 174, 175.

Ver. 14. *From the place of his habitation,* &c.] Which is heaven, that is, the habitation of his holiness, and of his glory, Isa. lxiii. 15. *He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth:* good and bad; and not the nation of Israel only, but the Gentile world, whom in former times he overlooked, but under the Gospel dispensation visits in a way of mercy; by sending his son to die for them, by spreading his Gospel among them, by calling them by his grace, by planting churches in the midst of them, and by continuing his word and ordinances with them.

Ver. 15. *He fashioneth their hearts alike,* &c.] The Lord is the former and fashioner of the heart, spirit, or soul of man, even of all hearts and spirits; whence he is called the Father of spirits, Heb. xii. 9. see Zech. xii. 1. and he is the former of them alike; which seems to intimate as if all souls were alike, as they are made by the Lord; and it may be the difference there appears to be between them afterwards may be owing to the make and constitution of their bodies, to their education, and different situation, circumstances, and advantages in life, whereby the hearts of some may be more opened and enlarged than others. Some render it *together,* or *altogether*[g]; which must not be understood of time, as if they were all made at once, but of equality; the one was made by him as well as the other; he is the fashioner of one and all of them, every whit of them; they are wholly fashioned by him, and all that is in them, all the powers and faculties of the soul; and by him only, and not by the instrumentality of another; for souls are created, not generated; they are produced out of nothing, and not out of pre-existent matter, as bodies; parents contribute somewhat to the bodies of their children, but not any thing to their souls. God only *is the God of the spirits of all flesh,* Numb. xvi. 22. some translate the word *singly*[h]; one by one, one after another in the several ages of time; for he continues to fashion them, and is always doing it; see Zech. xii. 1. And he forms the hearts of his own people anew for himself, for his own glory; he forms Christ in them, and every grace of his Spirit; he forms them into one, and knits and unites them together in love, and makes them like to one another; for as face answers to face in water, so do the hearts and experiences of the saints one to another, Prov. xxvii. 19. all which he does wholly and alone; and since he fashions the hearts of all men in every sense, he must know them, which is the design of this expression; he knows the hearts of wicked men, and all the wickedness that is in them; he knows the hearts of good men, the worst that is in them, and also the best, which he himself has put there. *He considereth all their works:* the works of evil men, not only their more open ones, but their more secret ones, and will bring them into judgment; and the works of good men, even their good works, which he will remember and reward in a way of grace.

Ver. 16. *There is no king saved by the multitude of an host,* &c.] He may be at the head of a numerous army, and yet not get the victory over a lesser one, nor escape safe, but be taken by it: there have been such instances; and if he is saved, or gets the victory, it is not owing to the multitude with him, but to the Lord, that gives salvation to kings, Psal. cxliv. 10. Hence it appears that even such men need salvation themselves, and cannot save themselves, though they have ever so many at command, and therefore are not to be trusted in; salvation is only of the Lord. *A mighty man is not delivered by much strength:* as Goliath, with his great strength, could not deliver himself out of the hands of David, a stripling; wherefore the mighty man should not glory in his might.

Ver. 17. *A horse is a vain thing for safety,* &c.] Though it is prepared for the day of battle, and is a very warlike creature, and of great service in war, yet safety only is of the Lord, Prov. xxi. 31. this is put for all kinds of military preparations which men are apt to trust in, but should not, for they are a *lie*[i], as the horse is here said to be; that is, deceives and disappoints when trusted to; in like manner the olive is said to *lie,* Hab. iii. 17. when hope of fruit from it is disappointed; so *fundus mendax* in Horace[k]. *Neither shall he deliver* any *by his great strength:* in the time of battle; either by fighting for him, or fleeing with him.

Ver. 18. *Behold, the eye of the Lord* is *upon them that fear him,* &c.] Not with dread of his wrath, or distrust of his grace, or for sinister ends and selfish views, but with a godly fear; by which men hate evil, depart from it, are careful not to offend God by it, but to serve and worship him; on such is not only his eye of Providence to protect from danger, to supply with the necessaries of life, but of love and grace; he looks upon them with delight and pleasure; his eye is upon them to watch over them for good, to guard them from every enemy, and from all evil, and to communicate to them every needful measure of grace. *Upon them that hope in his mercy:* not his absolute mercy, but his special mercy in Christ; which appears in the provision of him as a Saviour, in the mission of him into this world, and redemption by him; and is displayed in regeneration, the pardon of sin, and eternal life: and such that hope in it are they that see themselves miserable creatures, and in need of it; and who are encouraged to hope in it from the plenty and abundance of it in the heart of God; and from the many instances of it among men, and even some the chief of sinners; and they do hope in it for the forgiveness of their sins, and for salvation and eternal glory; and on these the eye of the Lord is, as before.

Ver. 19. *To deliver their soul from death,* &c.] Not a corporeal death, for the soul dies not, and is never in any danger of death; and should life, or the whole man, be intended here, yet those that fear the Lord, and hope in his mercy, are not exempted and secured from a corporeal death, but die as other men: though sometimes indeed they are remarkably preserved from death, and even in a time of general calamity; but a spiritual death is meant, which, while in a state of nature, they are under; but, being quickened at conver-

[g] יחד simul, Musculus, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.
[h] Κατὰ μόνας, Sept. sigillatim, V. L.
[i] שקר mendacium, Pagninus, Montanus; fallax, V. L.

[k] Epod. l. 1. Ode 16. ver. 45. Carmin. l. 3. Ode 1. v. 30. Spem mentita seges, ib. Epist. l. 1. ep. 7. v. 87.

sion, they live spiritually, and are preserved from dying any more in this sense; and also from an eternal death, which shall never hurt them, nor have any power over them. *And to keep them alive in famine*: not corporeal, though the Lord does give meat to them that fear him, and sometimes in a miraculous way provides for them; as by sending ravens to feed them, and by increasing the cruse of oil; see Isa. xli. 17, 18. but spiritual, a famine of hearing the word of the Lord; the Lord prepares a place for his church and people in the wilderness, where they are privately nourished with the word and ordinances, and their souls kept alive, Rev. xii. 6, 14.

Ver. 20. *Our soul waiteth for the Lord*, &c.] This, and what follows, are the words of the church, expressing her expectation, faith, and joy, by reason of what is suggested in the preceding verses. She signifies her expectation of good by waiting for the Lord; either for his coming in the flesh, and salvation by him; for which the patriarchs, prophets, and all the Old-Testament saints, waited, Gen. xlix. 18. Isa. xxv. 9. and so the Targum paraphrases it, *our soul waiteth for the redemption of the Lord*: or for his spiritual coming, his appearance to them, and gracious presence with them, he having been for some time absent; and it is right and good so to do, and in the issue proves advantageous, Isa. viii. 17. Lam. iii. 26. and this being soul-waiting, it denotes the heartiness, sincerity, and earnestness of it. *He is our help and our shield*: the Lord is the help of his people in time of trouble, when none else is or can be; and he is a present one, and helps right early, and at the best season: and he is their shield, who encompasses them about with his love and favour, and keeps them by his power in the greatest safety; all which encourages their waiting upon him, and expectation of good things from him.

Ver. 21. *For our heart shall rejoice in him*, &c.] Not in sin, nor in themselves and in their boastings, all such rejoicing is evil; but in the Lord, *in his Word*; as the Targum is, in the essential Word of God, Christ Jesus; in his person, righteousness, and salvation; and this joy is heart-joy, inward joy, real joy, joy in the Holy Ghost; and is unspeakable and full of glory. This is what the psalmist calls upon the saints to do, in the beginning of the psalm; and so his end in composing it is answered. *Because we have trusted in his holy name*: that is, in himself, who is holy, just, and good; and so faithful to every word of promise, to every engagement of his, and therefore to be trusted in; and hence it appears that the joy before spoken of is the joy of faith.

Ver. 22. *Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us*, &c.] That is, an application of it in its effects: it is a prayer for a communication of grace and mercy to help in a time of need; and for a discovery of pardoning grace and mercy; and it is a prayer of faith; for the mercy of the Lord is upon his people in great plenty, and it continues; and they have reason to believe it ever will, Psal. ciii. 17. *According as we hope in thee*; not according to any merits of theirs, but according to the measure of grace, of the grace of hope which God had bestowed on them, and encouraged them to exercise on him, in expectation of finding grace and mercy with him.

PSALM XXXIV.

A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.

THE author of this psalm is expressed by name; and the time and occasion of it are plainly intimated: it was composed by David, *when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech*; not Ahimelech the priest, sometimes called Abimelech, 1 Chron. xviii. 16. to whom David went alone for bread, pretending he was upon a private business of the king's; to which sense the Syriac version inclines, rendering the words, *when he went to the house of the Lord, and gave the first-fruits to the priests.* But this Abimelech was king of Gath, the same with Achish, 1 Sam. xxi. 10. who either had two names; or this of Abimelech, as it should seem, was a common name to all the kings of the Philistines; see Gen. xx. 2. and xxvi. 8. as Pharaoh was to the Egyptian kings, and Cæsar to the Roman emperors: the name signifies a *father-king*, or *my father-king*, or a *royal father*; as kings should be the fathers of their country: before him *David changed his behaviour*, his taste, sense, or reason: he imitated a madman; behaved as if he was out of his senses, scrabbling on the doors of the gates, and letting his spittle fall down upon his beard; for he being known and made known by the servants of the king, he was in great fear of losing his life, being in the hands of an enemy, and who he might justly fear would revenge the death of their champion Goliath; wherefore he took this method to get himself despised and neglected by them, and escape out of their hands; and which succeeded; for Abimelech, or Achish, seeing him behave in such a manner, treated him with contempt, was displeased with his servants for bringing him into his presence, and ordered them to take him away, or dismiss him; which is here expressed by this phrase, *who drove him away*, with scorn and indignation; *and he departed* to the cave of Adullam, glad at heart he had escaped such danger: upon which, under a sense of divine goodness, and by the inspiration of the spirit of God, he composed the following psalm; see 1 Sam. xxi. 10—15. and xxii. 1.

Ver. 1. *I will bless the Lord at all times*, &c.] That is, ascribe blessing, give honour, praise, and glory to him, both as the God of nature and providence, for every temporal mercy; and that every day, and at all times in the day; since these are renewed every morning, and continue all the day long: and as the God of grace, for all spiritual blessings; and that continually, because these last always; they are irreversible, unchangeable, and without repentance; yea, saints have reason to bless God in times of adversity as well as prosperity, since it might have been worse with them than it is; they have a mixture of mercy in all, and

all things work together for their good. *His praise shall continually be in my mouth*; not the *praise* of which God is the author, but of which he is the object; which is due unto him, and is given him on account of the perfections of his nature, and the works of his hands, and the blessings of his providence and grace; this, the psalmist says, should be in his *mouth*: his meaning is, that he should not only retain in his heart a grateful sense of the divine favours, but should express it with his lips; should both make melody in his heart to the Lord, and vocally sing his praise; and that *continually*, as long as he lived, or had any being, Psal. cxlvi. 2.

Ver. 2. *My soul shall make her boast in the Lord*, &c.] Not in men, nor in any outward enjoyment, nor in any works of righteousness, but in the Lord; *in the Word of the Lord*, as the Targum; in the Lord Jesus Christ; in his wisdom, strength, riches, righteousness, redemption, and salvation; in interest in him, and communion with him: and this is not tongue but soul boasting; and not flashy and selfish, but solid, spiritual, and hearty; and with all the powers and faculties of the soul; see 1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31. *The humble shall hear* thereof; either of the deliverance the psalmist had out of the hands of his enemies; or of his blessing and praising the Lord for the same, and making his boast in him as the God of his salvation; or of both: of these humble ones, see the note on Psal. x. 12. *And be glad*; for such rejoice with them that rejoice, and are glad at heart that others share in the goodness and grace of God; and also because by such an instance of the divine power and kindness they are encouraged to hope that he will, in his own time, deliver them out of their afflictions and distresses also.

Ver. 3. *O magnify the Lord with me*, &c.] The psalmist invites the humble ones, who he knew would rejoice at the goodness of God to him, to join with him in ascribing greatness to the Lord, which is meant by magnifying him; for he cannot be made great by men, only declared how great he is, and that can only be done in an imperfect manner. *And let us exalt his name together*: by proclaiming him to be the most High; by making mention of his glorious perfections and works, that he be exalted; and by praising him in the highest strains; or by having the high praises of him in their mouths; and there is more pleasure as well as more glory brought to God by doing this in a social way, or by a number of saints joining together in such service.

Ver. 4. *I sought the Lord, and he heard me*, &c.] Not that he sought the Lord publicly in his house and ordinances, for he was now at Gath; but privately by prayer and supplication; and that not vocally, but mentally; for he was in the midst of the servants of the king of Gath; yet earnestly, diligently, and with his whole heart, being in great distress; when it was right to seek the Lord, and which shewed him to be a good man; and the Lord heard and answered even his silent groans, which could not be uttered. *And delivered me from all my fear*; of being seized on by Achish, king of Gath, and of losing his life for killing Goliath: and many are the fears of God's people, both from within and from without, by reason of sin, Satan, and the world; but the Lord saves them out of the hands of all their enemies, grants them his presence, and shews them their interest in himself, which scatters all their fears.

Ver. 5. *They looked to him, and were lightened*, &c.] That is, *the humble* ones, ver. 2. and so this is a reason why they should join in praising and magnifying the Lord; these *looked* up to God in prayer and by faith, when in distressed and uncomfortable circumstances, for help and deliverance, and a supply of every needful good thing; and they were *enlightened*; so the Targum renders it, *their faces were enlightened*; as Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret it, in opposition to what follows: they must have been enlightened before they could look, but by looking to the Lord more light was gained: this chiefly designs the light of joy, peace, and comfort, which is had in a way of believing: some render the word *and flowed*[1], as a river does, that is, to the Lord, as in Jer. xxxi. 12. So Kimchi and Ben Melech explain the word; and it denotes both the numbers of them that looked up to the Lord in their distress, and the swiftness of their motion to him, and their earnestness and fervour of mind; so faith is not only a looking to Christ, but a going forth unto him. *And their faces were not ashamed*; having what they prayed and looked for, and what they hoped and believed they should have; namely, deliverance and salvation, and so peace and pleasure.

Ver. 6. *This poor man cried*, &c.] Singling out some one person from among the humble, who was remarkably delivered; it is the common case of the people of God to be poor and afflicted, and in their afflictions they cry unto the Lord to be supported under them, and delivered out of them: or this may be understood of David himself, who was poor, not with respect to outward things, but in spirit; was much afflicted, and especially greatly distressed when in the court of Achish; at which time he cried unto the Lord, as was his usual way, and that internally, as Moses did, Exod. xiv. 15. Some think Jesus Christ is intended by this poor man, who was poor in temporals, though rich, and Lord of all; and was greatly afflicted, both in body and soul; and who, in the days of his flesh, offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, Heb. v. 7. *And the Lord heard* him, *and saved him out of all his troubles*; so the Lord always heard his son Jesus Christ, and especially in the day of salvation, and delivered him out of all his troubles, both of body and soul, when he raised him frrom the dead, and gave him glory; and he heard David his servant, as he often did; particularly when at Gath, and made way for his escape from thence; and from whence he came safe to the cave of Adullam; and the Lord hears all his poor and afflicted ones, when they cry unto him, and in the issue saves them from all their troubles, by reason of a body of sin and death, the temptations of Satan, and the persecutions of men.

Ver. 7. *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him*, &c.] By whom may be meant, either the uncreated Angel, the Lord Jesus Christ, the

[1] ונהרו & confluunt, Junius & Tremellius, Michaelis; & instar fluvii irruerint, Piscator, Amama; & confluxerunt, Gejerus.

Angel of God's presence, and of the covenant, the Captain of salvation, the Leader and Commander of the people; and whose salvation is as walls and bulwarks about them; or as an army surrounding them: or a created angel may be intended, even a single one, which is sufficient to guard a multitude of saints, since one could destroy at once such a vast number of enemies, as in 2 Kings xix. 35. or one may be put for more, since they are an innumerable company that are on the side of the Lord's people, and to whom they are joined; and these may be said to encamp about them, because they are an host or army; see Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. Luke ii. 13. and are the guardians of the saints, that stand up for them and protect them, as well as minister to them. *And delivereth them:* out of the hands of all their enemies. David had a guard, an army of these about him, in the court of Achish, who preserved him from being seized on, and receiving any hurt there; and who brought him from thence in safety: there is no doubt but he here speaks his own experience.

Ver. 8. *O taste, and see that the Lord is good,* &c.] He is essentially, infinitely, perfectly, immutably, and solely good in himself; and he is communicatively and diffusively good to others: he is the author of all good, but not of any evil, in a moral sense; this chiefly regards his special grace and goodness through Christ: all the divine Persons in the Godhead are good; the Father is good, he has good designs towards his people, has provided good things for them, made good promises to them, and bestows good gifts on them: the Son is good; the good Shepherd that has laid down his life for the sheep; he is the fountain of all grace and goodness to his churches, and to particular believers; he has wrought a good work for them, the work of redemption, and he speaks a good word on their behalf in the court of heaven: the Spirit is good; he works good things in the hearts of the sons of men, and shews good things unto them; and gracious souls, such as the psalmist here calls upon, are capable of tasting and discerning how good the Lord is in some measure; see Psal. cxix. 103. Cant. ii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 2, 3. Whilst unregenerate, their taste is vitiated, and remains unchanged, and sin is what they feed upon with pleasure, and so disrelish every thing that is good; but in conversion a new taste is given, so as to have a saving experimental knowledge of the grace and goodness of God in Christ, an application of it to them; and in such manner as to live upon it, and be nourished by it; and though this is not a superficial taste of things, like that of hypocrites, nor a single one only, being frequently repeated; yet it is but a taste in comparison of the enjoyment of it in the heavenly state; and every taste now influences and engages trust in the Lord, as follows. *Blessed is the man that trusteth in him:* see the note on Psal. ii. 12. the Targum renders it, *that trust in his word.*

Ver. 9. *O fear the Lord, ye his saints,* &c.] Who are sanctified by his spirit, and so are openly and manifestatively his; these are exhorted to fear the Lord with reverence and godly fear; and great reason there is why they should fear him, since he is King of saints, and fear is due to him from them; and seeing they have received many instances of grace and goodness from him, and therefore should fear him for his goodness-sake; and besides they, and they only, know him, and have the grace of fear in them, and so only can exercise it on him. *For there is no want to them that fear him;* not in spirituals, since so much goodness is laid up for them; the heart of God is towards them, his secret is with them, his eye is upon them, and the sun of righteousness arises on them; and both grace and glory are given to them; nor in temporals, since godliness, or the fear of God, has the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come.

Ver. 10. *The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger,* &c.] According to Apollinarius, "the needy rich, "whom famine presses;" see Job iv. 10, 11. *But they that seek the Lord;* by prayer, diligently, with their whole heart, and in the sincerity of their souls; the Targum is, *that seek the doctrine of the Lord;* that seek instruction from him, and to be taught by him; these *shall not want any good thing:* which God has purposed to bestow upon them, which he has promised unto them, and provided for them; nor any thing that shall be for their good.

Ver. 11. *Come, ye children,* &c.] Meaning either his own children, those of his own family, judging it his duty to instruct them, and bring them up in the fear of the Lord; or his subjects, to whom he stood in the relation of a father, as every king does; or all his hearers, as those who attended the prophets are called the children or sons of the prophets; or young people in common may be designed, who should be taught betimes their duty to God and men: unless the children of God in general are here meant; or particularly the least among them, called babes and little children, who are little in their own eyes, are modest and humble; and who, as they need instruction, are most forward to receive it; and the word *come* does not so much design local motion, a drawing near to hear, as readiness to hear, and a close attention of mind; as follows. *Hearken unto me:* as unto a father, giving good doctrine and wholesome advice; Prov. ii. 1, 2. and iv. 1, 2. *I will teach you the fear of the Lord;* which he had so often spoken of, and so many good things are promised to them that have it, and even in the context: this the psalmist could not give, nor can any man, only teach it, shew the nature of it, in what it lies, how it shews itself, and what are the effects it produces: this is the first lesson to be taught and learnt; for it is the beginning of wisdom; it includes all grace, and every duty, and regards the whole worship of God, and the manner of it.

Ver. 12. *What man is he that desireth life?* &c.] Every man desires life, even a natural life; it is more desirable than all things in it; especially an healthful life, without which the blessings and mercies of life cannot be comfortably enjoyed; and still more a life of prosperity; life, with an affluence of good things, and even a long one: though it may be rather that a spiritual life is here meant, and a comfortable one; a life free from the remorses of a guilty conscience, from the fear of hell, damnation, and wrath; from the bondage of the law, and the dread of death; a life of faith on Christ, and communion with him; and a life of sobriety, righteousness, and holiness; and perhaps it may be best of all to understand it of eternal life, which is life eminently

and emphatically; it follows, and *loveth* many *days*; that is, good ones; as they are interpreted in 1 Pet. iii. 10. not of this life, for the days of it are evil, and especially when they are lengthened out; the days of old age, Eccl. xii. 1. unless the days of the son of man, the days of enjoying the presence of God in his house and ordinances, should be intended; though rather the good and many days of eternity, even length of days, for ever and ever, in which will be fulness of joy, and never-ceasing and never-fading pleasures. *That he may see good*; there is good to be seen and enjoyed in this life, which if the saints did not believe they should see and enjoy, they would often faint; and this good lies in the participation of the blessings of grace, and in fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit: but the great and lasting good to be seen and enjoyed is in the world to come, when God shall be all in all, be seen as he is, and the saints shall inherit all things.

Ver. 13. *Keep thy tongue from evil*, &c.] This, and what follows in this and the next verse, point at the things wherein the fear of God shews itself; and suggest, that those who have it, and which is known by these fruits, shall enjoy the desirable and good days before mentioned. The tongue is an instrument of much evil, an unruly member, and needs restraint; and it is from evil, and not from good, it is to be kept; from evil-speaking of God, from cursing and swearing; from evil-speaking of men, reproaching and reviling them; from filthy speaking, from all obscene and unchaste words, and from all lying ones; for where such evil-speaking is indulged, the fear of God cannot be in that man. *And thy lips from speaking guile*: hypocritical and deceitful words, speaking with flattering lips and a double heart: some speak bad words in common conversation, through an evil habit and custom; and some speak good words with an ill design; and in neither of them is the fear of God before their eyes, nor in their hearts.

Ver. 14. *Depart from evil*, &c.] This denotes that evil is near to men; it keeps close to them, and should be declined and shunned: and it regards all sorts of evil; evil men, and their evil company; evil things, evil words and works, and all appearance of evil; and the fear of the Lord shews itself in an hatred of it, and a departure from it, Prov. viii. 13. and xvi. 6. *And do good*; not only acts of beneficence to all in necessitous circumstances, but every good work; whatever the word of God directs, or suggests should be done; and which should be done from right principles of faith and love, and to right ends, the glory of God, and the good of his interest; and Christ should be looked and applied unto for grace and strength to perform; all which are evidences of the true fear of God. *Seek peace, and pursue it*; in the world, and with all men, as much as possibly can be: in neighbourhoods, cities, and states, and in the churches of Christ, and with the saints, as well as with God through Christ; and which in every sense is to be pursued after with eagerness, and to be endeavoured for with diligence; see Rom. xii. 18. and xiv. 19. Heb. xii. 14.

Ver. 15. *The eyes of the Lord* are *upon the righteous*, &c.] These are the same with them that fear the Lord, and do good; not that they become righteous in the sight of God, or are justified before him, by their fear of him, and by their good works; but these are the fruits and effects of grace, shewing them to be righteous persons; for it is only by the righteousness of Christ that men are righteous before God: and upon these the eyes of the Lord are; not only his eye of Providence, to watch over them, protect them, and supply them with good things, but his eye of love; with complacency and delight he looks upon them, as clothed with the righteousness of his son; and it is with pleasure he looks upon them, that being well-pleasing in his sight; seeing by it the law is magnified and made honourable; nor does he ever withdraw his eyes from them, Job xxxvi. 7. *And his ears* are open *unto their cry*; for though they are righteous, they are sometimes in distress; their afflictions are many; the good days they are to see are hereafter; and at those times they cry unto the Lord; which is to be understood of prayer, and of the vehemency and fervency of it, when they have the ear of God, and he shews himself to be a God hearing and answering prayer.

Ver. 16. *The face of the Lord* is *against them that do evil*, &c.] Not against every one that sins; for the righteous are not without sin; they have sin in them, and they do no good without it; but against them that live in sin, whose course of life is a series of wickedness, and they are workers of iniquity; and have no sense of sin, nor sorrow for it, go on in it without shame or fear; against these the face of the Lord is, he shews his resentment, and stirs up his wrath. For the Lord to be against a man is dreadful; a fearful thing it is to fall into his hands as a God of vengeance; there is no standing before him when once he is angry; and to have the face of God against a man is intolerable, when it is to destroy, and *to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth*; so that they shall be no more thought of, nor spoken of, but with contempt and reproach; an everlasting mark of infamy being upon their names; see Prov. x. 7.

Ver. 17. The righteous *cry*, &c.] The word *righteous* is not in the original text, but is rightly supplied in our version, as it is in the Targum, and by Jarchi; and so Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, that these words are not to be connected with the preceding verse, but with the verse before that; and they are indeed an amplification of the last clause of it; and the cry of the righteous is meant, to which the ears of the Lord are open; though Aben Ezra thinks that these words are to be understood of them that do evil, and of their cry to the Lord, when they turn from their evil ways; but the former sense is best. *And the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles*; their inward troubles, through the workings of corruption in their hearts; through the violent assaults of Satan, the blasphemous thoughts he injects into them, and his solicitations of them to sin; and through divine desertions, and their outward troubles; through afflictions of body, losses of estate and friends, and the reproaches and persecutions of men; out of all these the Lord sooner or later delivers his people who cry unto him.

Ver. 18. *The Lord* is *nigh unto them that are of a broken heart*, &c.] Who are pressed and bore down

with afflictions, by the sorrow of heart under which their spirits are broken, Prov. xv. 13. or with a sense of sin, and sorrow for it, for which their hearts smite them, and they are wounded by it, and broken with it: to these the Lord is *nigh;* not in a general way only, as he is to all men, being God omnipresent, but in a special manner; he comes and manifests himself to them in a gracious way, pours in the oil and wine of his love, and binds up their broken hearts; yea, comes and dwells with them: he does not pass by them and neglect them, much less make the breach worse: he does not break the bruised reeds, but he heals their breaches. *And saveth such as be of a contrite spirit;* not in a legal, but in an evangelical way; who are humbled under a sense of sin, and melted down in true repentance, under a view of the love and grace of God; and are poor and mean in their own eyes: to these the Lord has respect; the sacrifices of a broken and contrite spirit are not despised by him, but accepted through faith in Christ; and such he saves with an everlasting salvation in him.

Ver. 19. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous,* &c.] This may be understood of some one particular righteous person, since the singular number is here made use of; whereas the plural is always used before, when the righteous are made mention of; and the Lord Jesus Christ may be designed, who is eminently and emphatically *the righteous;* he is righteous both as God and man, and as Mediator, in the discharge of every branch of his office; and his afflictions were many, which he endured from men, from devils, and from God himself: many were the afflictions of his body, which he bore when buffetted, scourged, and crucified; and many were the afflictions of his soul, when he bore the sins of his people, endured the wrath of God for them, and was forsaken by him; though none of these were for any sins of his own, but for the sins of others; and out of them all the Lord delivered him at last, and set him at his own right hand; or this may be understood of every one of the righteous; who, though they are justified from sin, and are saved from wrath, yet have many afflictions; which are *evils* in themselves, as the word [m] may be rendered, and are very troublesome and distressing; and these are great and grievous for quality, and many and abundant for quantity; though no more than it is the will of God should be, and not one too many. *But the Lord delivereth him out of them all;* as Christ was, and all his people will be; if not in this life, by giving respites and intervals, as he sometimes does; yet hereafter, when the righteous are completely delivered out of all their trials and exercises, so as that they shall never return more upon them. The word translated *afflictions,* as it signifies *evils,* may be safely interpreted of moral evils, as well as of evils of afflictions: it is the same word that is used for moral evil in ver. 21. and then the sense is, that many are the sins committed by righteous persons; for there are none without sin, in many things they all offend; yet they shall not perish by them, but they shall be delivered from them; as, from the dominion of them by the power of grace, and from the guilt of them by the blood of Christ, and from condemnation for them through his righteousness; so hereafter from the very being of them, and all molestation and disturbance by them.

Ver. 20. *He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.*] This is literally true of Christ, in whom the type of the passover-lamb had its accomplishment, and this passage also; see Exod. xii. 46. John xix. 31—36. and seems better to agree with him than with any of his members, since the bones of many of them have been broken by one accident or another; and especially many of the martyrs of Jesus have had all their bones broken upon the rack or wheel; wherefore, to understand these words of them might tend to create uneasiness and despondency in the minds of such who by any means have their bones broken; as if they were not righteous persons, this promise not being fulfilled in them: and to interpret this of the Lord's keeping the bones of his people in the grave, and in the resurrection putting them together again; this is no other than what will be done to the wicked; it seems therefore best to understand the whole of Christ; and it looks as if this passage was had in view as fulfilled in John xix. 36. since a Scripture is referred to; but if it is interpreted of the righteous in general, it must be with a limitation; as that their bones are all kept by the Lord, and not one is broken without his knowledge and will; and that they are not broken finally, but restored again perfect and whole in the resurrection, and so will continue to all eternity: the phrase, without entering into particulars, may in general design the care of Providence over the righteous; with this compare Matt. x. 29, 30.

Ver. 21. *Evil shall slay the wicked,* &c.] Meaning either the evil they designed against the righteous shall return and fall upon their heads, to their own ruin; or the evil of affliction, which to them is the evil of punishment, both here and hereafter, from which they will have no deliverance in the end; though the righteous have from their afflictions, being not properly punishments, but chastisements for sin, and are but for a time; or else the evil of sin, which is the cause of death corporeal and eternal. *And they that hate the righteous shall be desolate;* or *shall be guilty* [n]; be found so; or *shall be condemned,* or *damned,* as the Targum renders it. All wicked men hate the righteous, both Jesus Christ the righteous, and his people; and that because they are righteous, and do not run into the same excess of wickedness with them, these will be arraigned at the day of judgment, and will be convicted of all their hard speeches which they have spoken against Christ and his members; and will be pronounced guilty, and will be punished with everlasting destruction.

Ver. 22. *The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants,* &c.] Who are made so by his grace in the day of his power, and are willing to serve him, and to serve him with their minds, readily and cheerfully; and the *soul* of these, which is the more noble part of them, and is of more worth than a world, the redemption of which is precious, and requires a great price, the

[m] רעות mala, Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[n] יאשמו rei fiunt, Cocceius; reatum habebunt, Schmidt; damnabuntur, Gejerus; shall be condemned as guilty, Ainsworth.

Lord redeems; not that their bodies are neglected, and not redeemed: but this is mentioned as the principal part, and for the whole; and this redemption is by the Lord, who only is able to effect it, and which he has obtained through his precious blood; and here it seems to denote the application of it in its effects; that is, the forgiveness of sin, justification, and sanctification, since it respects something that is continually doing. *And none of them that trust in him shall be desolate;* or *be guilty**, or *condemned*, or *damned:* because they are justified from all the sins they have been guilty of, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; and having believed in him, they shall not be damned, according to Mark xvi. 16. and they shall be far from being desolate, and alone, and miserable; they shall stand at Christ's right hand, be received into his kingdom and glory, and be for ever with him.

PSALM XXXV.

A Psalm of David.

THIS psalm seems to have been written by David, when he was persecuted by Saul; and when many false charges were brought against him by his courtiers; and when he was the scorn and derision of the people; the subject of it is pretty much of the same kind with the seventh psalm, and might be written about the same time that was, and on the same occasion; and it may be applied to the church and people of God in like cases. There is a passage in it, ver. 19, which our Lord seems to refer to and apply to himself, John xv. 25. and some interpret the whole of it concerning him. The Arabic version calls it a prophecy of the incarnation; though there does not appear any thing in it applicable to that.

Ver. 1. *Plead* my cause, *O Lord, with them that strive with me*, &c.] Meaning Saul and his courtiers; concerning whom he elsewhere desires that the Lord would judge between them, plead his cause, and deliver him; as he accordingly did, and maintained it, and the righteousness of it, 1 Sam. xxiv. 12—15. Psal. ix. 4. So Christ pleaded not his own cause as man, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously; and his people leave their cause with him, who is their advocate, and is able to plead it thoroughly; and does plead it against wicked and ungodly men, who unrighteously charge them; against Satan the accuser of the brethren, who stands at their right hand to resist them; and against their own hearts, and the sins of them, which lust and war against them, and condemn them. *Fight against them that fight against me:* so the Lord is sometimes represented as a man of war, and Christ as a warrior fighting for the saints; and safe are they on whose side he is; but miserable all such who are found fighters against him and his; for none ever opposed him and prospered.

Ver. 2. *Take hold of shield and buckler*, &c.] Defensive weapons; not that the Lord stands in need of any of these to defend himself with: but the sense is, that he would be as these to David; as he was to him, and is to all his people; namely, their shield and buckler: he gives unto them the shield of salvation; he encompasses them about with his favour as with a shield, and keeps them by his power safe from all their enemies. *And stand up for mine help:* for which the Lord arises, and stands by his people, and against their enemies, delivering them out of their hands.

Ver. 3. *Draw out also the spear*, &c.] An offensive weapon; expressive of the vengeance which God sometimes takes of the enemies of his people, when he bends his bow, shoots his arrows, whets his glittering sword, and his hand takes hold of judgment. *And stop the way against them that persecute me:* that they might not overtake him; God can hinder, and he sometimes does hinder persecutors from overtaking his people in their straits; and as he hedges up their way with thorns, that they cannot proceed as they have begun, so he hedges up the way of their enemies; interposes himself and his power, and is a wall of fire about them; a wall for the defence and security of his saints, and a wall of fire for the consumption of those that rise up against them. The words may be rendered, *draw out the spear and sword, to meet those that persecute me*†; for סגור is a noun, and signifies a sword shut up in its scabbard; from whence *sagaris* comes, which is one kind of a sword. *Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation;* Christ is the salvation of his people; he is the only person appointed, provided, promised, and sent to be the Saviour; and he is the alone author of salvation; it is wrought out by him, and it is in him, and in him only; and therefore he is called their salvation, and the salvation of God: and they are interested in the salvation which is in him; it was designed, prepared, and wrought out for them, and for them only; and it is applied unto them by the spirit, and they shall perfectly enjoy it to all eternity: and yet sometimes they are at a loss about their interest in it, and desire it might be made known unto them, which was the case of the psalmist here; they, as he, see their necessity of it, and that there is no comfort nor safety without it; they are wonderfully delighted with the excellency of it, that it is so great in itself, so suitable to them, so complete and perfect, and of an everlasting duration; yet, what through the hidings of God's face, the temptations of Satan, the greatness of their sins, and the prevalence of unbelief, they cannot tell how to believe their interest in it; yet most earnestly desire the Lord would shew it to them, and assure them of it; which favour, when granted, is by the witnessings of the Spirit to their spirits, that they are the children of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb: and this is said particularly to them; it is not a discovery of salvation by Christ in general; that they have before; but it is a

* לא יאשמו non rei fient, Coccerius; non punientur, Gejerus; shall not be condemned as guilty, Ainsworth.

† So Grotius, Amama, Ainsworth, and some in Mollerus.

saying to their souls, that it is theirs; and when this is spoken home to the soul by the Spirit of God, it is effectual: and removes unbelief at once, and fills with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Ver. 4. *Let them be confounded, and put to shame, that seek after my soul*, &c.] This petition, and what follows, which seem to be by way of imprecation, are to be considered as prophecies of what would be, and as expressions of faith that so it should be: and are not to be drawn into examples, and to be imitated by private persons: nor are they contrary to those evangelical rules, which require men to love their enemies, and pray for them; to give place to wrath, and not meditate vengeance, nor take it: and so it was with David's enemies. Saul, who hunted after his soul or life, to take it away, was filled with shame and confusion, when David, having cut off the skirt of his garment, held it up to him; by which he was convinced that his life was in his hands, and he did not take it away, though he was seeking after his: and so it will fare with the enemies of Christ, the Jews; who sought to take away his life, and did take it away, when they shall see him come in the clouds of heaven, whom they have pierced; and in like manner will it be with the enemies of all his people, whom nothing will content but their lives, when they shall see the lambs they have worried and butchered on Christ's right hand, and they on the left; and to the sheep said, Come, ye blessed; and to them, Go, ye cursed. *Let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt*; as Saul did David's, even when he made the most specious shew of affection and respect unto him, as well as when he more openly persecuted him; and more than once was he turned back with shame, and departed home; see 1 Sam. xxiv. 22. and xxvi. 25. The Jews, that came to apprehend Christ, together with the Roman soldiers, and who had devised and intended his hurt, went backward, and fell to the ground with shame and confusion, when, having asked them who they sought, and they had replied, told them he was the person; and how often has it been, that when wicked men have devised deceitful matters against the members of Christ, that their counsel has been carried headlong, they have not been able to perform their enterprises; a hook has been put into their nose, and a bridle in their jaws, and they have been turned back the way they came, with shame and disgrace.

Ver. 5. *Let them be as chaff before the wind*, &c.] As they are; see Psal. i. 4. *and let the angel of the Lord chase them*; either a good angel, who is the Lord's, his creature that ministers unto him, and is ready to obey his orders; and who, as he encamps about the saints and protects them, so he is able to destroy their enemies; as one angel in a night destroyed all the first-born in Egypt, and another the whole army of the Assyrians, Exod. xii. 29. 2 Kings xix. 35. an angel of the Lord, who is swift to fly, and so to chase and overtake, and able to execute whatever is the will of the Lord; or else an evil angel, who is the Lord's, being made by him, though not made evil by him; and who is under his restraints, and can do nothing but by his permission; and who sometimes is employed by the Lord, as the executioner of his wrath upon wicked men; is suffered to distress and torture their consciences in this life, and hereafter drag them into everlasting burnings, prepared for the devil and his angels.

Ver. 6. *Let their way be dark and slippery*, &c.] In which they run before the angel, chasing and pursuing them; so that they know not where they are, at what they stumble, whither to flee, nor how to stand; the ways of wicked men are as darkness, they know not in what condition they are, and whither they are going; and utter darkness, even blackness of darkness, is reserved for them: but here it means a calamitous, uncomfortable, fickle, and unstable situation in this life; see Jer. xxiii. 11, 12. The allusion is to some of the valleys in the land of Palestine, which were dark, and the roads in them very smooth and slippery, as travellers in those parts have observed[s]. *And let the angel of God persecute them*; see the note on the preceding verse.

Ver. 7. *For without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit*, &c.] This is said in allusion to the custom of digging pits, and putting nets into them, for the catching of wild beasts; and covering them with straw or dust, or such like things, as Jarchi observes, that they might not be discerned; and which intends the secret and crafty methods taken by David's enemies to insnare him and destroy him; though he had given them no cause to use him in such a manner; which is an aggravation of their sins, and a reason of the above imprecations, as well as of what follows: and in the same manner, and without any just cause, Christ and his members have been treated by wicked men, and therefore their damnation is just, and will be inevitable: *which without cause they have digged for my soul*; which is added for further explanation-sake, and to aggravate their sin, and to shew the justness of their punishment.

Ver. 8. *Let destruction come upon him at unawares*, &c.] Or a *storm*[t], such as is caused in the eastern countries by a south wind, very sudden, violent, and destructive[u]: the singular number being here used, some Jewish commentators, as Kimchi, have thought Saul is particularly meant; and some Christian interpreters have been of opinion that Judas is intended: the imprecations here may be compared with those which respect him, Psal. cix. 6, 7, 8. Though this may regard every one of the enemies of David, or of Christ and his people, whose ruin and destruction will come upon them unawares; see 1 Thess. v. 3. Rev. xviii. 7, 8. *And let his net that he hath laid catch himself*: a figurative expression, agreeable to the allusion before made, and which is explained in the next clause. *Into that very destruction let him fall*, which he had designed and contrived for others; so Haman was hanged on the same gallows he had prepared for Mordecai; and so it often is in the course of Providence, that the wicked fall into the same calamity they have intended and endeavoured to bring others into; see Psal. vii. 15, 16. and ix. 15, 16.

Ver. 9. *And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord*, &c.]

[s] See Maundrell's Travels, p. 7.

[t] שואה tumultuosa calamitas, Cocceius; so Ainsworth; tumultus, Vatablus.

[u] See Thevenot, Tavernier, &c.

Not in the destruction of his enemies, but in the God of his salvation; the Targum is, *in the Word of the Lord;* the essential Word of God, the promised Messiah, Saviour, and Redeemer. Christ is the object of a believer's joy; he rejoices in his person, as he is the mighty God, able to save him, and to keep what he has committed to him, and to preserve him from falling; as he is God and man in one person, and so fit to be a Mediator between God and man; and as he is a prophet to instruct him, a priest to expiate his sin and make intercession for him, and as a King to rule over, protect, and defend him; and as he stands in the relations of a father, husband, brother, and friend: he rejoices in what he has done and is doing; in that this Word is made flesh, and has obtained eternal redemption, and now appears in the presence of God, as an advocate and intercessor: it follows, *it shall rejoice in his salvation;* that which Jehovah the Father has determined upon, provided for, and has formed the scheme of; that which Jehovah the Son undertook to accomplish, and now has finished; and that which Jehovah the Spirit had made a discovery and application of unto the psalmist, in answer to his request in ver. 3. This filled him with so much joy, as it does every believer that has a view of interest in it; seeing hereby the law is fulfilled, justice is satisfied, sin is atoned for, the pardon of it is procured, an everlasting righteousness is brought in, and a solid foundation laid for hope of eternal glory and happiness.

Ver. 10. *All my bones shall say,* &c.] So, in a figurative sense, vexation and disquietude are ascribed to the bones, Psal. vi. 2. and xxxviii. 3. and sometimes joy and gladness, Psal. li. 8. His soul is said to rejoice in the former verse; and here his bones are said to shew forth the praises of the Lord; and both together design the whole man, as heart and flesh in Psal. lxxxiv. 2. and the bones being the strength of the body may denote his saying what follows, with all his might, and with all his strength, and with the utmost fervency of spirit: *Lord, who is like unto thee;* on account of the perfections of his nature, which appear in the salvation and deliverance of his people: there is none like unto him for his wisdom, holiness, power, grace, and mercy; for his fore-knowledge, wisdom, and counsel, in forming the scheme of salvation; for his holiness and justice, which are glorified by it; for his might and power in effecting it; and for his grace, mercy, goodness, and faithfulness shewn in keeping covenant with his people, in pardoning and passing by their iniquity and transgression, and in condescending to take notice of his poor and needy, to deliver them, as follows; see Psal. cxiii. 5—8. *Which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him; yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?* in which words the psalmist doubtless respects himself and his own case, who was poor and afflicted, and stood in need of help when he was persecuted by Saul, who was his enemy, too strong for him, and who sought to spoil and ruin him, but the Lord delivered him out of his hands; see Psal. xviii. 17. They agree with the case of all the Lord's poor and needy, who are so not only in a temporal sense, as they commonly be; and in such sense as all mankind are, though every one is not sensible of his spiritual poverty through sin; having neither food nor raiment, nor any thing to procure them with, and yet think themselves rich and increased with goods; but in the best sense, being poor in spirit and rich in faith; these have enemies stronger than they. Sin is sometimes represented as a person, their antagonist that fights against them, wars with them, prevails over them sometimes, and carries them captive: sin is too strong for a man without the grace of God; nay, it was too strong for Adam in innocence, and spoiled him of the image of God, stripped him of his righteousness, and marred all the glory and honour in which he was; and it is too strong for a man that has the grace of God, when left to himself: but the Lord delivers his people from it; they are redeemed from it, and saved from punishment for it by the blood of Christ; and they are freed from the power and dominion of it, by the Spirit and grace of Christ at conversion, and at death they are delivered from the being of it. Satan is the strong man armed, and is an overmatch for the poor and needy; but Christ the mighty God is stronger than he, and has ransomed them out of the hands of him that was stronger than they; and the prey, or they that were made a spoil by him, are taken out of the hands of the mighty, and the lawful captive is delivered: they are, indeed, assaulted by his temptations, in which he would be too many for them, but that they are strengthened against him by the Lord, and are enabled to withstand him; who, in the issue, flees from them; nor can he do as he pleases with them, nor reassume his power over them he once had, nor lead them captive at his will as he once did: God is on their side, Christ is their patron and defender, that pleads their cause against him; the Spirit that is within them is greater than he that is in the world; angels are all around them, and in a little while these poor and needy will be in heaven, and out of his reach, and so of every oppressor and persecutor; now they are the weak things of this world, and their enemies are the mighty ones, and too strong for them, who spoil them of their good name and character, and sometimes of their goods and property; but the Lord does and will deliver them out of their hands, and enter them into rest, where the wicked cease from troubling.

Ver. 11. *False witnesses did rise up,* &c.] Against David, saying he sought the hurt of Saul, 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. as did against David's antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, Matt. xxvi. 59—61. and against his apostles, Acts xxiv. 5, 6. and very frequently do they rise up and bear false witness against his people, which is a very heinous crime. *They laid to my charge things that I knew not;* such as David was not conscious of, never thought of doing, much less attempted to do; as the taking away of Saul's life, the contrary of which appeared by his cutting off his skirt only when he was in his hands, and taking away his spear from his bolster when he could have taken off his head; and such were the things laid to the charge of the Messiah, David's son, who knew no sin, nor did any; and the like are exhibited against his members, who go through good report and bad report, and whose good conversation is falsely accused by malicious men.

Ver. 12. *They rewarded me evil for good,* &c.] For the good David did in killing Goliath, and slaying his ten thousands of the Philistines, and thereby saving his

king and country, Saul and his courtiers envied him, and sought to slay him: so our Lord Jesus Christ, for all the good he did to the Jews, by healing their bodies of diseases, and preaching the Gospel to them for the benefit of their souls, was rewarded with reproaches and persecutions, and at last with the shameful death of the cross; and in like manner are his people used; but this is an evil that shall not go unpunished; see Prov. xvii. 13. It is added, *to the spoiling of my soul;* or *to the bereaving of it*[t]; causing it to be fatherless; that is, to the bereaving it of its joy, peace, and comfort; so fatherless is put for comfortless, John xiv. 18. or to the taking away of his soul, which being separated from the body, its companion is left alone, as one that is fatherless.

Ver. 13. *But as for me, when they were sick,* &c.] Or under any disorder or distress of body or mind, when any misfortune or infirmity attended them; meaning Saul and his courtiers, before David was persecuted by them. *My clothing was sackcloth;* that is, he was grieved, and mourned for them, it being usual to put on sackcloth in time of mourning; see Gen. xxxvii. 34. *I humbled my soul with fasting;* on the account of them, giving up himself to prayer for them, as follows: *and my prayer returned into mine own bosom;* that is, he prayed privately and heartily for them, as for himself; he was constant in it, his heart was in it, and he took delight in it, and he was heard and answered; unless the sense should be, that his prayer was slighted by them, and so returned back to himself, as a present despised is returned; but however it was not without its effect, the good for which he prayed for them was returned by the Lord unto him.

Ver. 14. *I behaved myself as though* he had been *my friend* or *brother,* &c.] Meaning either Saul or Doeg the Edomite, or some such evil man; somewhat like this he says of Ahithophel, Psal. xli. 9. and lv. 13. and Arama thinks he is meant here; as Christ of Judas, whom he called friend, when he came to betray him; and who not only ate with him at table of his bread, but was steward of his family, and carried the bag, Matt. xxvi. 50. John xiii. 29. *I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth* for his *mother;* or as a mother that mourneth for her son, as Jarchi interprets it, whose affections are very strong; and thus Christ wept over Jerusalem, and had a tender concern for and sympathy with the Jews, his implacable enemies, and wept over them, and prayed for them, Luke xix. 41. Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xxiii. 34.

Ver. 15. *But in mine adversity they rejoiced,* &c.] Or *at my halting*[u], either by means of falling into sin; good men are subject to slips and falls, and that to the dislocating or breaking of their bones, which cause them to go halting all their days; wicked men watch for their halting, as Jeremiah's familiars did for his, Jer. xx. 10. and rejoice at it; see Psal. xxxviii. 16, 17. or by falling into some misfortune or calamity; hence we render it *adversity,* and may design some affliction or other, as in Mic. iv. 6. Zeph. iii. 19. at which wicked men rejoice; see Ezek. xxv. 23. so David's enemies rejoiced at his afflictions; and the enemies of his son and antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, were glad when Judas offered to betray him to them; more so when they had got him into their hands; and most of all when he was condemned and crucified: and so do the enemies of his people, as the Philistines sported with Samson when he was in his adversity, and as the antichristian party will rejoice and send gifts one to another when the two witnesses are slain; but the saints have a gracious God, who knows their souls in adversity; a sympathizing high-priest, who is touched with a feeling of their infirmities; and fellow-saints that are afflicted with them in all their afflictions, and bear a part of their burdens. *And gathered themselves together;* not to pity him, but to insult him; not to help him in his distress, but to add to it. Yea, *the abjects gathered themselves together against me;* mean persons, the refuse and scum of the earth; such as Job describes, Job xxx. 1—8. the word may be rendered *smitten*[w], either in spirit, as in Isa. lxvi. 2. they pretending sorrow of heart for his troubles; or rather smitten in body, in their feet, as Mephibosheth was; yet as lame as they were, and notwithstanding their lameness, they got together to rejoice at David's halting: or it may be best of all to understand it of their being smitten of God and afflicted; and the sense may be, that though the hand of God was upon them, this did not deter them from gathering together to insult David in his afflictions; some render the word *smiters*[x], that is, with their tongues, and so the Targum, *the wicked who smite with their words;* see Jer. xviii. 18. and such sort of persons were they that gathered together against Christ: it is true indeed that some of them were men of rank and figure, were the princes of this world, as Herod and Pontius Pilate, and the Jewish rulers, Acts iv. 27, 28. compared with Psal. ii. 1, 2. but the greater part of them were the meaner sort of people; particularly the Roman soldiers that gathered about him, and sported with him in Pilate's hall, and that surrounded him with scoffs when upon the cross: these also were literally *smiters* of him, both with words and with their hands, and are so called, Isa. l. 6. *And I knew it not;* David knew his enemies, or he could not have shewn so much concern for them, as he did in the preceding verses; but either he knew not of their gathering together against him; until he saw them in great numbers about him; or he was not conscious to himself of any evil he had done them, that should be the reason of it; and this was the case of his son the Messiah, he knew who they were that gathered about him, even those that blindfolded him, and bid him prophesy who smote him; but he knew no sin he had done why he should be treated in the manner he was. *They did tear me, and ceased not;* not their own garments, as some supply it, pretending great grief of heart for him; nor their mouth with laughing at him, as others; see ver. 21. but either his character and reputation, with hard sayings and reproachful words, or his flesh with blows; and this they did incessantly; and which was literally true of Christ, whose enemies tore his flesh, by plucking off the hair, by buffeting and scourging him, and by piercing his hands and his feet with nails, when

[t] שכול orbitatem, Montanus, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.
[u] בצלעי in claudicatione mea, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.
[w] נכים percussi, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Cocceius.
[x] So Ainsworth.

they crucified him; and they ceased not, even after death, to pierce his side with a spear.

Ver. 16. *With hypocritical mockers in feasts*, &c.] That is, the abjects gathered themselves together with such; these may design Saul's courtiers, his parasites and flatterers, and who were hypocrites in religion also, and made it their business at Saul's table, and in their banquetings and revellings, to mock at David; and who were *hypocritical mockers of* or *for a piece of bread*[t], as it may be rendered; the same word is used for a pasty, or cake, and for flatterers; and they used at their feasts to throw a pasty baked with honey to parasites[u], for the word מעוג signifies a cake, or a piece of bread, 1 Kings xvii. 12. and the sense may be, that they mocked at David as wanting a piece of bread, and that he had brought himself to one; or else those, and they that gathered with them especially, mocked at David for the sake of a meal; or for a piece of bread; see Prov. xxviii. 27. and such sort of men were the enemies of Christ, the Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites to God, flatterers of men, who loved feasts, and the uppermost places there, and whose god was their belly; and who were mockers of Christ, derided his doctrine, and scoffed at his person, especially when he hung upon the cross. *They gnashed upon me with their teeth*; in indignation and contempt; as Stephen's enemies did on him, Acts vii. 54.

Ver. 17. *Lord, how long wilt thou look on?* &c.] And behold these injuries and insults, and not arise to help and save? The psalmist firmly believed the omniscience of God, and was well assured he saw all that was done; but he was ready to consider him only as a spectator; or, however, seems impatient until he arose and shewed himself strong on his behalf; see ver. 22, 23. *Rescue my soul from their destructions, my darling from the lions*; his *soul* and his *darling* mean the same; either his life, than which nothing is dearer to a man; or his soul, his more noble part, and which was now *alone*, or solitary, as the word[w] used signifies; being forsaken of God and men, and was desolate and afflicted, as it is rendered Psal. xxv. 16. or his whole person, which was among men comparable to lions, for their strength and savageness, who breathed out nothing but cruelty and destruction; from which he desires he might be rescued, or returned to the quiet possession of his own house, and the house of God: the words are much the same with those of the Messiah, in Psal. xxii. 20, 21. see the notes there.

Ver. 18. *I will give thee thanks in the great congregation*, &c.] This is the resolution the psalmist came unto; the promise he made, that should he be delivered from his enemies, he would give God thanks in the most public manner; that is, he would acknowledge God to be the author of the mercy, and himself unworthy of it; and would ascribe glory, honour, blessing, and thanksgiving to him, in the midst of the church and people of God; they joining with him in it, when he should be restored to an attendance with them he before prays for. *I will praise thee among much people*; meaning the same as before, the people of God meeting together for solemn worship; the great congregation of all, and the much people, will be the saints in heaven, when they shall be gathered together, and sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. The words will bear to be applied to the Messiah, see Psal. xxii. 22.

Ver. 19. *Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me*, &c.] The word *wrongfully* is to be joined not to the word *rejoice*, but to the word *enemies*; and the sense is, that they were his enemies wrongfully, for false reasons, unjust causes, or without any cause that was just; as follows. Neither *let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause*; such were David's enemies, particularly Saul, Psal. vii. 4. and such were the enemies of Christ: this last clause is thought to be referred to by him, and applied to himself, John xv. 25. and the whole of this is said of him and by him, Psal. lxix. 4. see also Psal. cix. 3—5. These were the Jews, of whom he came, among whom he was, and who had no reason to be his enemies, and to hate him; since he was harmless and inoffensive in his life and conversation among them; went about doing a great deal of good to them, both for soul and body, and always expressed the most tender concern for them: they had reasons for their hatred and rejection of him, but not justifiable ones; such as the meanness of his person and state in their view, the doctrines he preached relating to his deity, divine sonship, and the distinguishing grace of God; and his inveighing against the sins and vices which prevailed among them; and such are the enemies of his people, who hate them, though they are the quiet in the land, as is said in the next verse; and are harmless and inoffensive in their behaviour towards men: these are hated for Christ's sake; and because he has chosen and called them out of the world; and because of their principles, which are distinguishing, and their practices, which are good: now the psalmist entreats that such might not be suffered to go on rejoicing over him, and at his calamities, but that he might be delivered out of all troubles, and out of their hands; and that they might not have any reason to wink with their eyes in a scornful and deriding way to him, and as expressing their pleasure to one another at his distresses; see Prov. vi. 12, 13. and x. 10.

Ver. 20. *For they speak not peace*, &c.] Meaning to himself, or any good man; as Joseph's brethren could not to him, Gen. xxxvii. 4. such were the men David had to do with, Psal. cxx. 6, 7. and such were the enemies of Christ, who could not give him a good word, nor speak one to him, John x. 20. and such are the enemies of his people, who breathe out nothing but threatenings and slaughter, and not any thing that tends to peace, to promote and maintain it. Some versions, as the Septuagint, and they that follow that, render it, *they do speak peace to me*; but then it was in an hypocritical way, as in Psal. xxviii. 3. and as the Jews did to Christ, Matt. xxii. 16, 17. for it follows: *but they devise deceitful matters against* them *that are quiet in the land*; meaning not the wicked, as Kimchi thinks; the rich, who live at ease and in quietness,

[t] לעגי מעוג subsannatoribus subcinericii panis, Vatablus; subsannantes propter placentam, Piscator; scoffers for a cake of bread, Ainsworth; hence a parasite, a table-companion, or trencher-friend, is used for a flatterer, vid. Suidam in voce Παράσιτος.

[u] Weemse's Christ. Synag. l. 1. c. 6. s. 5. p. 209. of the Moral Law, l. 2. c. 9. p. 310.

[w] יחידתי solitariam meam, Piscator, Gejerus, Schmidt, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

having as much as heart can wish, *with* whom, as he renders it, David's enemies devised mischief in a deceitful way; but the righteous of the earth, as the Targum; such as David and his men were, who desired to live peaceable and quiet lives under Saul's government; and had no intention to disturb his government, or wrest the crown from him; and as the Messiah, David's son, was, *the humble one in the earth*: as the Arabic version renders it in the singular number; a character that well agrees with Christ, who shewed great humility in coming into this world, and during his stay in it; it was a state of humiliation with him, and in which he behaved in the most lowly and humble manner; he was the quiet one in the land; he strove not, nor cried, nor was his voice heard in the street; he was not noisy and clamorous, quarrelsome and litigious; but all the reverse; he bore all insults, reproaches, and sufferings, patiently and quietly: and such are his people, so far as they are influenced by his grace and spirit; they are quiet and peaceable in kingdoms, cities, and neighbourhoods, and in the churches of God; and yet the wicked are continually plotting against them, and devising things to their hurt.

Ver. 21. *Yea, they opened their mouth wide against me*, &c.] In laughter, scorn, and derision; see Psal. xxii. 7, 8. And *said, Aha, aha*; a word expressive of joy; and the doubling it shews the greatness of it. *Our eye hath seen it*; what their heart wished for; namely, the distress of him, whose enemies they were.

Ver. 22. This *thou hast seen, O Lord*, &c.] The insults and derisions of these men, and the injuries they did to him, whom they hated. God is omniscient, and sees all things, all the evil wicked men do to him; and he will requite them in his own time; see Psal. x. 14. *Keep not silence*; meaning at his prayers; that he would not be as one deaf and dumb, turning his ears from his cries, and giving no answer to his requests; see Psal. xxviii. 1. and xxii. 2. *O Lord, be not far from me*; meaning not as to his general presence, in which sense he is not far from any, Acts xvii. 27. but with respect to his gracious presence and appearance to him for help and deliverance; see Psal. xxii. 1.

Ver. 23. *Stir up thyself and awake*, &c.] Who seemed to be asleep in the apprehensions of the psalmist, and to take no notice of his distresses, and the insults of his enemies; see Psal. xliv. 23. He adds, *to my judgment*, even *to my cause*; that is, to plead it and maintain it, and avenge him of his enemies, as in ver. 1. making use of his covenant-interest in him as a plea for it to engage him to do it, saying, *my God, and my Lord*; see Psal. xxii. 1.

Ver. 24. *Judge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness*, &c.] Either that righteousness of his, by which he justifies his people, which Christ has wrought out, God has accepted of, and imputes; and which, though revealed in the Gospel, was witnessed to by the law and prophets, and was known to the saints under the Old Testament, and particularly to David; see Rom. iv. 6. or the perfection of his justice, his essential righteousness displayed in all his works and actions, and in the government of the world; according to this the psalmist desired to be judged; not with respect to his person before God, but with respect to his cause before men, by delivering him from his enemies, and taking vengeance on them: thus Christ also was judged according to the strict justice or righteousness of God; for as sin was righteously condemned in his flesh, being imputed to him, and found upon him; so he was, according to the justice of God, acquitted, discharged, and justified in the Spirit, when he arose from the dead; and afterwards righteous judgment was executed on his enemies the Jews, when wrath came upon them to the uttermost: and his people are also dealt with according to the righteousness of God; who acts as a righteous God, as just and faithful in forgiving their sins, on account of the blood of Christ being shed for it; and in justifying their persons by his righteousness, and by giving them the crown of righteousness laid up for them; and at last by rendering tribulation to them that have troubled them. *And let them not rejoice over me*; meaning his enemies, as in ver. 15, 19. that is, let them not go on to rejoice; let them have no occasion for it, but deliver me out of their hands.

Ver. 25. *Let them not say in their hearts, ah, so would we have it*, &c.] Or we have what our souls wished for and desired: the sense of the petition is the same with Psal. xxvii. 12. *Let them not say, we have swallowed him up*; as roaring lions swallow down their prey, to which he had compared them, ver. 17. and as wicked men eat up the Lord's people as they eat bread, Psal. xiv. 4.

Ver. 26. *Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together*, &c.] In a body, as one man; as they gathered together against him, ver. 15. so he entreats they might together be brought to shame and confusion, they not being able to execute their designs; their schemes being broken, their counsels defeated, and they exposed to contempt. *That rejoice at mine hurt*; the same with his adversity, or halting, ver. 15. *Let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me*; let them be covered with it, as a man is with a garment; who magnified themselves, opened their mouths in great swelling words of vanity against him, vaunted and bragged over him, as in their power, and at their will.

Ver. 27. *Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause*, &c.] The cause of David was a righteous cause, he having done no iniquity, or any thing criminal against Saul his enemy, who persecuted him; and there were some that favoured his cause, as Jonathan, Saul's son, and a few others of rank and figure; but the greatest part were mean and despicable, 1 Sam. xxii. 2. and so the cause of Christ and of his people, which is one, is a righteous cause, which no one need to be ashamed of, and is worth suffering for; though those that favour it are for the most part the poor and base and weak things of the world: but when this cause prospers they rejoice and are glad, as they do at the happiness of every particular saint; for if one member is honoured, all the rest rejoice with it. Yea, *let them say continually*, the *Lord be magnified*; let them continually ascribe greatness, give honour and glory, to him, *which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant*; meaning either himself, who was a servant of the Lord, not only by creation, but by grace; and who had his times both of temporal and spiritual prosperity; which were owing to the good will and plea-

sure of God, and to the delight and complacency he had in him, being a man after his own heart, raised up to fulfil his will; and since this prosperity did not arise from any desert of his, he would have all the glory of it given to God: or else he intends the Messiah, his antitype, who, as Mediator, is the servant of the Lord; of his choosing, calling, and sending; whose commands he diligently and faithfully obeyed; from whom he had his work, and also his reward: his prosperity lies in the work of redemption succeeding in his hands; in his exaltation at the right hand of God; and in the spread of his Gospel in the world, and the efficacy of it to the conviction of sinners; and in the establishment and increase of his kingdom and interest; on which account the Lord's name is to be magnified and glorified, who delights in him as his servant, and in his prosperity; and the rather this is to be done, since the saints have an interest in him as a Prince and a Saviour: or any one of the servants of the Lord may be understood; or however it is applicable to any one of them, who, through the power of divine grace upon them, are made willing to serve the Lord with reverence and godly fear; who are his Hephzi-bah, in whom is all his delight and pleasure; who rejoices over them to do them good: and hence flows all the spiritual prosperity they enjoy, on account of which glory is to be given to God by them and all the saints that know it, Psal. xxxiv. 1, 2.

Ver. 28. *And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness, &c.*] In vindicating his cause, and bringing his enemies to shame and confusion, as well as of the glory and excellency of that righteousness of his, by which he was justified in his sight, and from whence his inward peace and prosperity flowed: *and of thy praise all the day long*: for the many mercies, temporal and spiritual, he was every day favoured with.

PSALM XXXVI.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David, the servant of the LORD.

THIS title, which the psalmist takes to himself, regards him not only as a creature, every man being the servant of the Lord as such, of right, though not in fact; but as a king, he being a minister of God for good to good men, and for evil to evil men; and also may respect him as a renewed man; and it is here used in opposition to and distinction from the wicked, who are the servants of sin and Satan, of whom he speaks in this psalm. The Syriac and Arabic versions in their titles suggest that this psalm was written when David was persecuted by Saul, and which is the sense of some interpreters; but R. Obadiah thinks Ahithophel is designed by the wicked man in it; and so it was penned on account of Absalom's rebellion.

Ver. 1. *The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, &c.*] Which is represented as a person speaking within him; not that the transgression of the wicked was really in him; sin was in him, and sin of the same kind and nature with the wicked man's; but he taking notice of and considering the wicked man's sinful course of life, and his daring impieties, conceived in his own mind, and concluded from hence, that there is *no fear of God before his eyes*; no reverential affection for him, but enmity to him; no godly filial fear, but at most only a slavish fear, a fear of punishment; no holy and humble fear of him, but pride and wickedness; no fiducial and obediential fear, but all the reverse; no true worship of him, either internally or externally: there can be no fear of God in any unregenerate man's heart, because it is not of nature, but of grace, and is what is implanted at first conversion; there is in some an appearance of it, where it is not really, whose fear is taught by the precept of men; and in others there may be some awe of the divine Being, and trembling at the thought of a future judgment, arising from the dictates of nature, the light of revelation, and the enjoyment of a religious education; but in some there is no fear of God at all, and they are bold and daring enough to assert it themselves, as the unjust judge did, Luke xviii. 4. Such as the atheist, the common swearer, the debauchee and epicure, who give up themselves to all manner of wickedness, contemn revelation, despise the word of God, and regard no day nor manner of worship; and this notwithstanding the majesty of God, at whose presence they tremble not, and notwithstanding the goodness of God, which should induce them to fear him, and notwithstanding the judgment of God on others, and even on themselves; see Jer. iii. 8. Luke xxiii. 40. and notwithstanding the future awful judgment, which they put far away or disbelieve. The Targum is, *transgression saith to the wicked within my heart*; and Jarchi's note upon the text is this, "this text is to be transposed thus, it is in my heart, "that transgression, which is the evil imagination, "says to the wicked man, that there should be no fear "of God before his eyes; and the phrase, *in the midst* "*of my heart*, is as if a man should say, so it seems "to me." The Septuagint version, and those that follow it, render the words thus, *the transgressor said, that he might sin in himself, there is no fear of God before his eyes*. Gussetius[b] interprets *before his eyes*, before the eyes of God himself, who is so good a Being, that the sinner fears no punishment from him, but will pardon all his sins.

Ver. 2. *He flattereth himself in his own eyes, &c.*] There are many self-flatterers; some on account of their worldly estate, that they are out of the reach of God and men, and regard neither; and that as they have much goods laid up, they shall enjoy them many years, and so never think of dying, nor of another world: others on account of their eternal state, pleasing themselves with their own purity, goodness, and righteousness: some flatter themselves either that their sins are not sins, or they are small ones; or they

[b] Ebr. Comment. p. 488.

are no other than what multitudes commit; or they are not seen and known, and that God himself sees them not, or takes no notice of them; and that they shall go on with impunity, sentence against them being not speedily executed; and others that there is no God, will be no judgment, nor future state. *Until his iniquity be found to be hateful*, or, *to find his iniquity and to hate*[r] that which is good, as the word may be rendered; that is, he flatters himself, or speaks smooth things to himself, and endeavours to work himself up into the belief of the above things; that he may find, embrace, and indulge his lusts with a quiet conscience, and hate God, good men, and every thing that is good; the Targum is, "that he may find sins and hate doc- "trine" or instruction. Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret the words another way, "that the holy and blessed "God may find out his iniquity to hate him;" see Gen. xliv. 16. which God may be said to do, when he charges the guilt of sin upon the conscience, and punishes for it; and exposes both the sinner and his sins to the world; thereby testifying his hatred of him and his sins; and which should have been hateful to him, as they are to all good men.

Ver. 3. *The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit*, &c.] Not only sinful, but sin itself; his mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, of filthy and unchaste words, of corrupt communication, lying, deceit, and flattery; out of the abundance of the wickedness of his heart his mouth speaketh; and which shews the badness of it, and proves all that is said before of him. *He hath left off to be wise, and to do good*: by which the psalmist seems to intend one that had been a professor of religion, who, besides the light of nature he had acted contrary to, had had the advantage of a divine revelation, and had been enlightened into the knowledge of divine things, and had done many things externally good, particularly acts of beneficence; but now had dropped his profession of religion, denied the truths he had been enlightened into, and ceased from doing good; otherwise a natural man understandeth not; and, though he is wise to do evil, to do good he has no knowledge.

Ver. 4. *He deviseth mischief upon his bed*, &c.] He casts about in his mind on his pillow, when at leisure from all employment; and consults and contrives schemes how to compass his lusts, and to do injury to others, without doing which he cannot sleep. *He setteth himself in a way that is not good*; in an evil way, which he chooses and delights in, and determines to continue in, he leaving the paths of righteousness to walk in the ways of darkness: *he abhorreth not evil*; which is to be abhorred both because of its nature and effects; see Rom. xii. 9. but on the contrary he loves it, takes pleasure in doing it, and in them that commit it: thus, by his thoughts, words, and actions, he appears to be devoid of the fear of God.

Ver. 5. *Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens*, &c.] Meaning either the general mercy of God the earth is full of, and extends to all creatures; to which it is owing that wicked men before described are not consumed; and which reaches *up to the heavens*[s], as the words are by some rendered, as their sins do; see Psal. lvii. 10. or the special mercy of God, and regards not the objects of it, creatures in heaven; for there are none there proper objects of mercy; but the seat of it, the heart of God, who is in heaven; or the repository of it, the covenant of grace, which is full of the sure mercies of David; and of mercy there was a most glaring instance, when the son of God was sent down from heaven, to obtain salvation for sinful men; or it may denote the original of it, the heaven, being, as Aben Ezra observes some Jewish interpreters say, the fountain of mercy, and the spring of truth; or the greatness and abundance of it, it being as high as heaven, yea, above it; see Psal. ciii. 11. and cviii. 4. *And thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds*: which lies in the execution of his purposes, whose counsels of old were faithfulness and truth; and in keeping his covenant and promises; he never changes his mind, nor forgets his word; he is a God of truth, and cannot lie; he knows the end from the beginning; no unforeseen event can turn up to hinder the performance of what he has purposed and promised, and he is able to perform; nor does ever any of the good things he has spoken of fail: though his faithfulness sometimes seems to be not only to the clouds, but in them, and out of sight; providences seem to clash with promises, which make unbelief to say, doth his promise fail for evermore? yet, though we believe not, he abides faithful, Psal. lxxvii. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 13.

Ver. 6. *Thy righteousness is like the great mountains*, &c.] Or, *the mountains of God*: so called for their excellency, as the cedars of God, Psal. lxxx. 10. or, as Gussetius[t] observes, the greatest and highest mountains, which are here meant, reaching above the clouds and the region of the air, are the pillars of the palace of God, and a part of it; and therefore called his mountains with great propriety, to which his righteousness is compared: that is, either the righteousness of God in the government of the world, which is sometimes like the high mountains, not to be reached and accounted for in the present state of things, though always is, and is immovable as they are; or the righteousness of God, by which he justifies sinners, which may be said to be as the mountains of God, because of the dignity of his person, who has wrought it out; and because of the clear manifestation of it, the Gospel, and so visible, as high mountains; and because of the immovableness and duration of it. *Thy judgments are a great deep*; both in a way of providence, many of them being at present not to be traced, though ere long they will be made manifest; and in a way of grace, such as the choice of some, and the leaving of others, the rejection of the Jews, and the call of the Gentiles; see Rom. xi. 33. *O Lord, thou preservest man and beast*; in a providential way, upholding each in their being, and supplying them with the necessaries of life: some understand this figuratively, of God's saving Jews and Gentiles, wise and unwise, and particularly those who, through humility and modesty, as Jarchi

[r] So Pagninus.
[s] בהשמים usque ad cœlos, Pagninus, Musculus, Muis, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Kimchi & Noldius, p. 164. No. 744. & Ainsworth.
[t] Ebr. Comment. p. 66.

says, compare themselves to beasts, because of their ignorance and stupidity, Prov. xxx. 2. Psal. lxxiii. 22.

Ver. 7. *How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God,* &c.] Which has appeared to men and not angels, to some and not others; to the chief of sinners, who are by nature children of wrath as others; in choosing, redeeming, and calling them, taking them into his family, and making them heirs of eternal glory; and all this of his sovereign good will and pleasure, there being nothing in them that could move him to it; which loving-kindness was in his heart from everlasting, and will never change in him, nor depart from them; and hence it must be most excellent and precious: *therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings;* not all men; for all have not faith, only some, to whom it is given to believe, and who know the Lord and his loving-kindness; by which they are induced and encouraged to trust in him, to betake themselves to him for mercy and protection, which they find in him: the allusion is either to the hen that gathers her chickens under her wings, and protects them in time of danger, and so it expresses both the paternal affection of God to his people, and the protection of them; or else to the wings of the cherubim over the mercy-seat, between which the Lord sat and communed with his people, and shewed mercy and favour to them, which encouraged them to trust in him.

Ver. 8. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house,* &c.] By his *house* is meant the church of God, of his building, and where he dwells; by the *fatness* of it the provisions there, the word and ordinances, and the blessings of grace which they hold forth; and especially Christ, the fatted calf, the bread of life, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed, and which make a feast of fat things; and these they that trust in the Lord are welcome to eat and drink of abundantly, and to abundant satisfaction; see Matt. v. 6. Psal. xxii. 26. *And thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasure;* the love of God, whose streams make glad the city of God; or the fulness of grace, which is in Christ, out of which believers draw with joy, and drink with pleasure; or eternal glory and happiness, enjoyed in the presence of God, in which is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore; a never-ceasing torrent of them.

Ver. 9. *For with thee is the fountain of life,* &c.] Or *lives*[r]: God himself is the fountain of living waters; this is a reason proving the happiness of those that trust in the Lord, and that they shall enjoy the above things; because with God the object of their trust is the fountain of life; not only of natural life, from whom they have it, and by whom it is supported, but of spiritual life, being quickened by him when dead in sin, by virtue of which they live by faith on Christ, and also of eternal life; and the phrase denotes, that life is originally in God as in its fountain, and that both the fulness of it is with him, and the freeness of it in the communication of it to others, as well as its continuance and duration. *In thy light shall we see light;* God is light itself, the Father of lights, and the former of it in every sense; in the light of his countenance, and the discoveries of his love, they that trust in him see light, or enjoy comfort; and in the light of his Son Jesus Christ, the sun of righteousness and light of the world, they see the face of God, and enjoy his favour, and behold the glory and excellency of Christ himself; and in the light of the divine Spirit, who is a spirit of wisdom and revelation, they see their sins exceeding sinful, their righteousness as nothing, and a preciousness in the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and in the light of the divine word they see the truths of the Gospel in their native simplicity and excellency, and the duties of religion to be performed by them; and in the light of faith, which is the gift of God, they have at least a glimpse of the unseen glories of the other world; and when the beatific vision shall take place, they shall see no more darkly through a glass, but face to face, even God himself, as he is in Christ.

Ver. 10. *O continue thy loving-kindness to them that know thee,* &c.] That is, spiritually and experimentally; and such are they that trust in him and love him: and these are the objects of the love of God; not that their knowledge, faith, or love, are the cause of his love to them; but these things describe and point at manifestly the objects of it; and this request regards the open discovery of it unto them: for the love of God itself always continues, though the manifestations of it are not always the same; and it is for the enlargement and continuance of them the psalmist here prays: for it may be rendered, *draw out thy loving-kindness*[s]; that is, to a greater length; make a larger and clearer discovery of it, that the height and depth, and length and breadth of it, may be more discerned. *And thy righteousness unto the upright in heart;* who are sincere and without guile; who have new hearts created and right spirits renewed in them, and have truth in the inward parts; and unto and upon such is the righteousness of Christ, and where it always continues, for it is an everlasting one; but here it means a clearer and constant revelation of it from faith to faith; unless it should rather intend the righteousness of God in protecting his people from the insults of their enemies, and the continual exertion of it for that purpose.

Ver. 11. *Let not the foot of pride come against me,* &c.] Meaning some proud enemy, such an one as Ahithophel, of whom R. Obadiah expounds it, who lifted up his heel against him; and is applicable to any haughty enemy of Christ and his people, and particularly to antichrist, the man of sin, that exalts himself above all that is called God. *And let not the hand of the wicked remove me;* either from the house of God; or from his throne, that high station and dignity in which he was placed.

Ver. 12. *There are the workers of iniquity fallen,* &c.] Either in the pit they dug for others; or into hell, where they shall be turned at last; see the notes on Psal. v. 5. and vi. 8. *They are cast down, and shall not be able to rise;* which will be the case of Babylon when fallen, Rev. xviii. 21. and this dis-

[r] מקור חיים vena vitarum, Montanus.

[s] משך trahe, Pagninus, Montanus; extende, Vatablus, Piscator; protrahe, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

tinguishes the falls of the wicked from those of the righteous; for though the righteous fall, whether into sin, or into any calamity, they rise again; not so the wicked; see Psal. xxxvii. 24. Mic. vii. 8. and thus, as the psalm begins with the transgression of the wicked, it ends with their ruin.

PSALM XXXVII.

A Psalm of David.

THIS psalm, it is very probable, was written at the same time, and upon the same occasion, with the former; and describes the different states of good and bad men; and is full of exhortations, instructions, and advice to the people of God; intermixed with various encouraging promises. A late learned writer[h] thinks it was written for Mephibosheth's consolation under Ziba's calumny.

Ver. 1. *Fret not thyself because of evil-doers,* &c.] The saints may be grieved at them and for them, because of their evil doings, and may be angry with them for them; yet are not to shew any undue warmth, at least in an indecent way, by calling them opprobrious names; for the words may be rendered, *do not shew thyself warm* or *angry*[i], in a sinful way; or fret not at their outward prosperity, as it is explained ver. 7. The Targum adds, *to be like them*, which agrees with ver. 8. *Neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity;* that is, at their present temporal happiness; see Psal. lxxiii. 3. The Targum adds, as before, *to be joined with them;* which sense some parallel places seem to incline to, Prov. iii. 31. and xxiii. 17.

Ver. 2. *For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.*] Which in the morning looks green, gay, and flourishing, and in the evening is cut down, and then fades away; see Psal. xc. 5, 6. and so the wicked prosper and flourish for a while, and then they perish with all their honour, riches, and wealth; so that their happiness is a very short-lived one, and therefore need not be envied and fretted at.

Ver. 3. *Trust in the Lord,* &c.] Not in men, who are fading and perishing like the green grass and tender herb; nor in riches, which are very uncertain things; but in the Lord, in whom is everlasting strength; and with whom are riches and honour, yea, durable riches and righteousness; trust in him both for things temporal and spiritual, for soul and body, for time and eternity; the way to have peace and quietness of mind under all dispensations is to exercise faith on a promising God. The Targum is, *trust in the Word of the Lord*, in the essential Word of God, the promised Messiah. *And do good:* in general, all good actions, in faith, and as the fruits and effects of it, without trusting to them, but in the Lord; doing them in his strength, and with a view to his glory; or in particular, acts of beneficence to the poor, to which the encouragement follows. *So shalt thou dwell in the land;* either in the land of Canaan, a continuance in which depended upon the obedience of the people of the Jews to the commands of God; see Isa. i. 19. Eph. vi. 1, 2. or rather in the good land which is afar off, the heavenly and better country, which those that trust in the Lord, and have that faith in Christ which works by love, shall dwell in to all eternity. *And verily thou shalt be fed:* either temporally, shall have food and raiment, even all the necessaries of life; or spiritually, with the word and ordinances, and with Christ the bread of life now; and hereafter shall be fed by him, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and by him led to fountains of living water: some read the words as an exhortation, and render them, *feed truth*[k], i. e. teach it, as Abraham taught his household, and as faithful pastors feed with knowledge and understanding; or *feed by faith*[l], as the just live by it; or, as the Targum renders it, *be strong in faith*, as Abraham was, Rom. iv. 20. or rather, *feed upon truth*[m], the word of truth, the Gospel of salvation, and the several truths and doctrines of it, which are food for faith, and nourish up to everlasting life.

Ver. 4. *Delight thyself also in the Lord,* &c.] In the persons in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; in the perfections of God, his power, goodness, faithfulness, wisdom, love, grace, and mercy; in his works of creation, providence, and redemption; in his word, his Gospel, the truths and ordinances of it; in his house, and the worship of it; and in his people, the excellent in the earth, in whom was all the delight of the psalmist; and each of these afford a field of delight and pleasure, to attend unto, contemplate, and meditate upon. *And he shall give thee the desires of thine heart:* such as are according to the will of God, and for the good of his people; such as relate to communion with him, and to the communication of more grace from him, and to the enjoyment of eternal glory.

Ver. 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord,* &c.] Or, *thy works*, as in Prov. xvi. 3. that is, all the affairs and business of life, which are a man's ways in which he walks; not that men should sit still, be inactive, and do nothing, and leave all to be done by the Lord; but should seek direction of God in every thing engaged in, and for strength and assistance to perform it, and go on in it, and depend upon him for success, and give him all the glory, without trusting to any thing done by them: or, as some render the words, *reveal thy way unto the Lord*[n]; not that God is ignorant of the ways of men, and of their affairs, and of their wants and necessities, but it is their duty to ask, and it is his delight to hear; they may come and use freedom with

[h] Delaney's Life of King David, vol. ii. p. 219.

[i] תתחר ne accendaris ira, Junius & Tremellius; ne exardescas, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[k] רעה אמונה pasce veritatem, Pagninus, Montanus.

[l] Pascere fide, Junius & Tremellius, Coccerius.

[m] Pasce te veritate, Gejerus; ut alimentum tuum, Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 942; feed on faith, Ainsworth.

[n] גול ἀποκάλυψον, Sept. revela, V. L. Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so the Targum, Coccerius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

him, and tell him their whole case, and leave it with him; believing he will supply all their need: or, as others render it, *roll thy way on the Lord*[a]; see Psal. lv. 22. meaning not the burden of sin, nor the weight of affliction, but any affair of moment and importance that lies heavy upon the mind; it is an ease to the mind to spread it before the Lord, who sympathizes with his people, supports them under and brings them through their difficulties. *And he shall bring it to pass*; as he does whatever he has appointed and determined shall be, and whatever he has promised, and whatever will be for his own glory and his people's good.

Ver. 6. *And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light*, &c.] That is, the good man having committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously, he will, in his own time, clearly make it appear that it is a righteous one, both to himself and others, in whatsoever obscurity it may have lain. *And thy judgment as the noon-day*: the same as before, unless rather the righteousness of Christ, which is the believer's by imputation, and is a justifying one in the judgment of God, should be meant; see Micah vii. 9. and the phrases may denote not barely the revelation of it in the Gospel, but the more clear manifestation of it to the believer himself, from faith to faith; or as it will be still more clearly revealed and declared at the day of judgment, when those who are clothed with it shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and be clear of all those charges and imputations which they have lain under in this life.

Ver. 7. *Rest in the Lord*, &c.] *Or be silent to the Lord*[b]; be still, and know that he is God; quietly submit to his will, and acquiesce in all the dispensations of his providence: it does not design a stupid indolence, or a stoical apathy, that we should be like stocks and stones, without any concern at the hand of God upon us; nor an entire silence under afflictions; we should own that they are of God, and that we are deserving of them; we should pray to him to sanctify them, to support under them, and deliver out of them; we should bless his name that they are no worse, and that they are any ways useful to us; and we should speak to others of the divine goodness experienced under them; but this stands opposed to an arraigning or murmuring at the providence of God, and intends a patient bearing the hand of God, and a resignation of will to his will; for it follows, *and wait patiently for him*: for the enjoyment of him, help from him, and deliverance by him. *Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass*; this explains the sense of ver. 1. it being often an additional uneasiness to the people of God under affliction, when they observe the prosperity of men that go on in a sinful way, and have all or more than heart can wish; and whatever they contrive and devise, though wicked and criminal.

Ver. 8. *Cease from anger*, &c.] Either at these wicked men who are so prosperous, or at God, who for the present suffers it; see Jonah iv. 9. Prov. xix. 3. *And forsake wrath*: which is anger wrought up to a greater degree; and the rather to be shunned and avoided, as being very disagreeable to the character of a good man. *Fret not thyself in any wise to do evil*: evil may be done by fretting at the prosperity of wicked men, or by imitating them, doing as they do, in hope of being prosperous as they are: from which the psalmist dissuades by reasons following.

Ver. 9. *For evil-doers shall be cut off*, &c.] Though they flourish for a while, they shall be cut down like the grass or flower of the field, or they shall be cut off as branches from a flourishing tree; they shall be cut off from the earth, and rooted out of it by death or some desolating judgment; see Prov. ii. 22. and therefore not to be envied and fretted at. *But those that wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth*: such who attend his word, worship, and ordinances; obey his commands, trust in his grace and mercy; or, as the Targum, *trust in the word of the Lord*; who wait upon him for the manifestations of himself, for the performance of his promises, for answer of prayer, for supplies of grace, and live in the expectation of the heavenly glory; these shall have for their inheritance, not the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, which the obedient Jews enjoyed; but either this world and the necessaries of it, which such persons have the promise of, a right unto through Christ, are heirs of, and do enjoy what they do with a blessing; or else the new earth after this, in which only righteous ones, those that wait upon the Lord, and trust in him, will dwell; unless the heavenly country, the good land afar off, is meant, often called an inheritance.

Ver. 10. *For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be*, &c.] Not that they shall be annihilated or reduced to nothing, because nonentities have no place nor being any where; when they die they shall lift up their eyes in hell; their bodies will rise again at the last day; they shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and go into everlasting punishment; but they shall be no more in the world, and in the same flourishing and prosperous circumstances they were: and this their destruction will be in a short time, very quickly. *Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be*; his dwelling-place, called after his own name, to perpetuate the memory of him; see Job vii. 10. and xx. 9. an instance of this the psalmist gives of his own knowledge, ver. 35, 36.

Ver. 11. *But the meek shall inherit the earth*, &c.] See the note on ver. 9. of this character see the note on Psal. xxii. 26. Our Lord seems to refer to this passage in Matt. v. 5. *And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace*: of spiritual peace enjoyed in a way of believing, arising from a comfortable view of interest in the blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and of all happiness and prosperity in the kingdom of Christ here on earth, at which time there will be abundance of peace, Psal. lxxii. 7. or of eternal peace in the world to come, which will be a state of uninterrupted and unspeakable peace; see ver. 37. all which afford inconceivable delight and pleasure; and therefore such have no need to fret and be envious at the fading happiness of wicked men.

[a] Devolve super Jehovam, Tigurine version.

[b] דום ליהוה tace Domino, Pagninus, Montanus; sile, Musculus, Piscator, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

Ver. 12. *The wicked plotteth against the just*, &c.] Forms schemes to make him uneasy, uncomfortable, and unhappy: *and gnasheth upon him with his teeth*: which expresses his malice and hatred, as David's enemies did upon him, Psal. xxxv. 16. and Stephen's, Acts vii. 54.

Ver. 13. *The Lord shall laugh at him*, &c.] Have him and his plots in derision, confound his schemes, and disappoint him of his designs, bring him into calamity, and laugh at it; see Psal. ii. 4. Prov. i. 26. *For he seeth that his day is coming*: either the day of the Lord, which he has appointed to judge the world in, and which comes suddenly, at unawares, as a thief in the night, and is known unto the Lord, though to none else; or the day of the wicked man's ruin and destruction, to which he is appointed, and which is the same; and so the Targum is, *the day of his calamity*; which the Lord observes is hastening on, when he will be for ever miserable.

Ver. 14. *The wicked have drawn out the sword*, &c.] That is, out of the scabbard; they drew upon the righteous, in order to sheath it in them; or they sharpened the sword, as Aben Ezra observes some interpret the word; it may be literally rendered, *opened the sword*[s], which before lay hid in the scabbard: *and have bent their bow*; having put the arrow in it, in order to shoot. The former expression may design the more open, and this the more secret way of acting against the righteous; and their view in both is *to cast down the poor and needy*, who are so, both in a temporal and spiritual sense; to cause such to fall either into sin, or into some calamity or another: *and to slay such as be of upright conversation*: who walk according to the rule of the word of God, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ: nothing less than the blood and life of these men will satisfy the wicked; and it is an aggravation of their wickedness that they should attempt to hurt men of such character who are poor and needy, holy, harmless, inoffensive, and upright; and this points at the reason why they hate them, and seek their ruin, because of the holiness and uprightness of their lives; see John xv. 19, 20. 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4.

Ver. 15. *Their sword shall enter into their own heart*, &c.] As Saul's did into his, 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. *And their bows shall be broken*; the meaning is, that their efforts shall be fruitless, and their attempts in vain; the mischief they have contrived and designed for others shall fall upon themselves; see Psal. vii. 15. and therefore the saints should not be fretful and envious.

Ver. 16. *A little that a righteous man hath*, &c.] It is the portion of the righteous, for the most part, to have but little of this world's goods; some indeed have been rich, as Abraham, Lot, David, Joseph of Arimathea, and others; but, generally speaking, the wicked have the largest share of worldly things, and the righteous but little, and are as having nothing comparatively; and yet their little is *better than the riches of many wicked*; not that a little is better than much, or that poverty is better than riches, or a poor man better than a rich man; but the comparison is between a righteous man and a wicked man; the emphasis lies there; and the sense is, that a *righteous* man's *little* is better than a *wicked* man's *much*; the righteous have a right to what they have, through Christ, who is heir of all things, but not the wicked; they have what they have in love and with a blessing, not so the wicked; they are contented in their state and condition, when the wicked are never satisfied; they possess and enjoy what they have, even all they have, when God oftentimes does not give the wicked an heart to eat and drink of what they are possessed, but a stranger eats it; they have the presence of God with them, and that makes a little sweet, and to go a great way; and they live without any anxious, distressing, carking care; not so the wicked; and ere long the tables will be turned, and they will have their good things, and the wicked their evil things; see Prov. xvi. 8. and xv. 16, 17. wherefore they have no need to fret under present circumstances, nor envy the happiness of wicked men. Arama interprets it, of a little help that a righteous man has, better than the riches of many wicked; and Gussetius[t] understands all this not of the smallness and largeness of the substance of different persons, but of their numbers, the one small, the other large; and Jarchi, that the sense is, that a few persons with the righteous, which was the case of Abraham and Gideon, are better and succeed more than the multitude of many wicked persons; and the church should be content with a small number of believers, and not draw in a multitude of wicked men into their communion.

Ver. 17. *For the arms of the wicked shall be broken*, &c.] That is, their sword-arm, with which they have drawn it; and so shall not be able to strike with it; and with which they have bent their bows, but shall not be able to shoot: and this proves, what is before suggested, that their efforts shall be fruitless; or their substance shall be taken away from them, in which they trusted, and wherein their strength lay; and this confirms what had been just spoken, that the righteous man's little is better than the wicked man's much; and which is further confirmed by what follows. *But the Lord upholdeth the righteous*; both in a providential way, by supporting them in their being, supplying their need, preserving them from dangers, and bearing them up under all their afflictions; and in a spiritual way, by maintaining the principle of grace and life in them, by furnishing them with all spiritual blessings, by sustaining them in times of temptation, and by securing them safe from their enemies; upholding them so as that they stand in the grace of God now, and shall stand before Christ with confidence hereafter; and shall not fall here finally and totally, nor in the day of judgment. The Targum is, *the Word of the Lord upholdeth the righteous*.

Ver. 18. *The Lord knoweth the days of the upright*, &c.] Not only how long they shall live, and so fill up their days, the number of them, as Aben Ezra interprets it; but the nature of their days, whether prosperous or adverse; and causes both to work together for their good; and he knows the work of their days, as Jarchi explains it, the actions done by them in faith and love, and to his honour and glory, and which he approves and accepts of in Christ; see Psal. i. 6. *And*

[s] חרב פתחו aperuerunt gladium, Gejerus.

[t] Ebr. Comment. p. 213, 475.

their inheritance shall be for ever; in heaven, which is an eternal and never-fading one, Heb. ix. 15. 1 Pet. i. 4. and therefore they ought not to fret and be envious.

Ver. 19. *They shall not be ashamed in the evil time,* &c.] Of affliction and persecution, or of old age, or in the day of judgment, when it will go ill with others; see 1 John ii. 28. *And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied;* whether it is understood figuratively of a famine of hearing the word, or literally of a proper famine of bread and water: these God will provide for them, as he did for Elijah, and they shall be sure unto them, and therefore let them not fret nor envy.

Ver. 20. *But the wicked shall perish,* &c.] In a time of famine, in an evil day, and particularly at the day of judgment: for this is to be understood, not merely of being in bodily distress and want; nor of perishing by death, common to the righteous and the wicked; nor of being in a lost perishing condition, as all men by nature are, but of eternal perdition in hell. *And the enemies of the Lord* shall *be as the fat of lambs, they shall consume;* that is, either they shall consume away as the fat of lambs burnt upon the altar, which evaporates, or as lambs fattened on purpose to be killed, and so prepared for the day of slaughter; in like manner the wicked, who have waxed fat and kicked, will be destroyed; they being the enemies of God, yea, enmity to him, to Father, Son, and Spirit, to the Gospel and ordinances of Christ, and to his people, and will be treated as such. Some render the word, *like the excellency of pastures*[t]; the grass of the field, which is cut down and withers presently; see ver. 2. *Into smoke shall they consume away,* or *with*[s] it; that is, as it; see Psal. lxviii. 1, 2. or *in smoke*[u]; in the smoke of eternal torments, or hell, as the Targum.

Ver. 21. *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again,* &c.] Whilst the wicked live, they are scandalous; they live by borrowing, which was always reckoned mean; see Deut. xxviii. 12, 44. Prov. xxii. 7. and what is worse, as they borrow, they do not design to repay; they take no care nor thought about that, but live upon what they borrow: for this either expresses their incapacity that they cannot pay; or the evil disposition of their mind, which rather seems to be the sense, that they will not pay. *But the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth;* which not only argues capacity and ability, but a kind, merciful, and tender spirit to persons in distress, and is expressive of a generous action.

Ver. 22. *For* such as be *blessed of him,* &c.] Not of the righteous man; for he blesses them that curse and persecute him, and despitefully use him; but of the Lord, as the Syriac version expresses it; or by the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; both in a providential way, for it is the blessing of the Lord that makes rich, and puts into a capacity to give to others; and in a way of grace, with an interest in God as a covenant-God in Christ; and with the blessings of grace in him, with a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, and a right to eternal glory. The Septuagint version, and those that follow that, render the words actively, *such as bless him;* either such as bless the righteous, who are blessed also, Gen. xii. 3. or rather such as bless the Lord, as the righteous do, for all their blessings temporal and spiritual they receive from him; these *shall inherit the earth;* see the note on ver. 9. *And* they that be *cursed of him;* not of the righteous man, but of the Lord, according to the tenour of his righteous law, which they have broken: *shall be cut off;* out of the land of the living; many of them in the midst of their days, and shall everlastingly perish.

Ver. 23. *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord,* &c.] Or *of a man*[w]; such a man as is blessed of the Lord; the steps which he takes in life are ordered by the Lord, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual: his good conduct is not of himself, it is a blessing of the Lord, who directs and keeps the feet of his saints, and inclines them to take such steps, and pursue such methods, which he succeeds and prospers. *And he delighteth in his way;* which he knows and approves of, guides and directs him in; see Psal. i. 6.

Ver. 24. *Though he fall,* &c.] Into temptation, and by it into sins, and these very great ones; from a lively and comfortable exercise of grace, and a degree of steadfastness in the doctrine of grace: *he shall not be utterly cast down;* because he is in the arms of everlasting love, and in the hands of Christ Jesus; is on him as the sure foundation, and is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and so shall not perish, but have everlasting life. *For the Lord upholdeth him with his hand;* with the right hand of his righteousness, and keeps him from falling finally and totally; see Isa. xli. 10. and the note on ver. 17.

Ver. 25. *I have been young, and now am old,* &c.] The psalmist makes mention of his age, which takes in the whole compass of his life, to command attention to what he was about to say; which was founded upon a long experience and observation of things, and was as follows. *Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken;* though afflicted of God, and persecuted by men, yet not forsaken; though poor and needy, and often in necessitous circumstances, yet God in his providence appeared for them in one way or another; and so as Apollinarius paraphrases it, "I never knew a just man "entirely needy;" for such might be forsaken by men, and even by their dearest friends and relations, yet not by the Lord: they might indeed, at times, think themselves forsaken of him, and their enemies might conclude and say they were, and yet this was not their case, Isa. xlix. 14. Psal. lxxi. 10, 11. and though they may be forsaken by him for a while, yet not utterly; he will not leave them and forsake them for ever, Isa. liv. 7. Heb. xiii. 5. *Nor his seed begging bread;* they being righteous also, which must be supposed; otherwise, as good men have wicked children, these, through their wickedness, may come to poverty, to beggary, as they sometimes do; though a distinction may be made between being poor and beggars; the seed of the righteous may be the one, and not the other: besides, there

[t] כיקר כרים sicut pretiosum pratorum, Muis; so some in Piscator; vel gloria, Michaelis.
[s] בעשן cum fumo, Gejerus, Tigurine version; so Ainsworth.
[u] In fumo, Montanus, Musculus, Michaelis.
[w] גבר hominis, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

is a difference between asking bread of others, in some few instances, and constantly begging bread from door to door, in which last sense the psalmist must be understood here; for otherwise he himself, in some cases, had asked bread, as of Ahimelech at Nob, and of Nabal, *&c.* as did also Elijah of the widow of Sarepta: and though there might have been instances of some of the posterity of the righteous who got their bread by begging at the door, as in the case of Lazarus; yet David had never observed any such instance during the time of his life, which shews that such instances are very rare; whereas among wicked men and their offspring the case is frequent and common. Again, it may be observed, that the psalmist is speaking in the context of righteous men that are liberal, and give to the poor freely and largely; and it is seldom if ever known that they or their children come to want and poverty. Once more, the word *forsaken* may be repeated in this clause, thus; *nor his seed begging bread forsaken*[x]; or seeking it in vain, and finally destitute of it; though they have been so reduced as to beg their bread, they have not been forsaken; they have had it, bread sufficient to support life, as Apollinarius paraphrases it; their bread has been given and their water sure; see Isa. xli. 17, 18. In an ancient Midrash[y], or exposition of the Jews, the sense is thus given: "although "his seed and his sons are begging bread, yet I have "not seen the righteous man, their father, forsaken, "because of his fear of the blessed God."

Ver. 26. He is *ever merciful, and lendeth*, &c.] He sympathizes with the poor in distress, and shews mercy to miserable objects; not only by words, but deeds: and this is his constant disposition and conduct; of which his lending, as well as giving to persons in necessity, is an instance; and which shews capacity, and is a proof of the observation of the psalmist, that such are never forsaken, nor left to beg their bread: so far from it, that they have to lend and give to others. *And his seed is blessed;* either his seed sown, his alms-deeds, which are blessed to him and his, and to them to whom he ministers, as Jarchi explains it; see 2 Cor. ix. 6, 10. or rather his offspring, who are blessed of God with things temporal for his sake; and are blessed by men, who say of them, these are the posterity of such and such liberal persons.

Ver. 27. *Depart from evil, and do good*, &c.] Depart from evil-doers, and their evil ways; join not with them, nor fret and be envious at them; but do acts of beneficence, and all good works; since righteous men, and their seed, are not forsaken, but blessed of God; see the note on Psal. xxxiv. 14. *And dwell for evermore;* or *thou shalt dwell for evermore*[z]; see ver. 3. that is, in everlasting habitations, in the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, Luke xvi. 9. 2 Cor. v. 1. The Targum is, *that thou mayest dwell in everlasting life.*

Ver. 28. *For the Lord loveth judgment*, &c.] Righteousness, or righteous actions, when done according to his will, from love, in faith, and to his glory; see Psal. xi. 7. or to minister judgment to the people, and to render to every man according to his works. *And forsaketh not his saints;* his holy ones, who are called with an holy calling, are created in righteousness and true holiness, and have principles of grace and holiness wrought in them; or whom he prosecutes with his favour and goodness, with his everlasting love and mercy, with spiritual blessings, with the blessings of justification, pardon, adoption, and a right to eternal life: these he never forsakes, not their persons, neither in life nor at death, nor at judgment; nor does he ever forsake the work of his own hands in them; but performs it until the day of Christ: nor will he ever so forsake them, as that they shall perish through the strength of sin, the temptations of Satan, or the snares of the world. *They are preserved for ever;* from the dominion and damning power of sin, from being devoured by Satan, from a total and final falling away, and from being hurt of the second death: they are preserved in Christ, in whose hands they are; and by the power of God, safe to his kingdom and glory, into which they shall have an abundant entrance. *But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off;* out of the earth, in the midst of their days, like withered branches; and be cast into everlasting burnings.

Ver. 29. *The righteous shall inherit the land*, &c.] See ver. 9, 11. *And dwell therein for ever;* as in ver. 27.

Ver. 30. *The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom*, &c.] Or *meditateth wisdom*[a]; that is, utters the wisdom he has been meditating upon; see Psal. lxix. 3. he meditates and speaks of the wisdom of God, which appears in the works of creation, providence, and grace; and of Christ, who is wisdom itself, and the wisdom of God essentially; and who, as Mediator, has the spirit of wisdom resting on him, the treasures of wisdom hid in him, and is made wisdom to his people: and righteous men meditate upon and speak of the glories of his person, the fulness of his grace, and the works of his hands; as also of the Gospel, which is the wisdom of God, mysterious, hidden, ancient wisdom, ordained before the world for their glory; and likewise of that internal wisdom, and experience of divine grace, the Lord has made them to know in the hidden part; which lies in the knowledge of themselves, and in a spiritual, experimental, and saving knowledge of Christ, and the way of salvation by him; and his mouth delivers out wise sayings, and useful instructions, fetched out of the word of God, and founded on experience and observation. *And his tongue talketh of judgment;* of the judgment which the righteous God ordinarily ministers in a providential way; and of his extraordinary and awful judgments, which have been or are in the earth; these he takes notice of for his own use, and observes them to others for their instruction; and also of the last judgment, the judgment to come, which he speaks of as sure and certain, as universal and inevitable, and at which he must appear before God: and he talks of judgment or righteousness; that is, of the righteousness of Christ; he makes mention of this only as his

[x] Justum non vidi derelictum, & semen justi quærens panem non vidi derelictum; so Hopfnerus, Tittelmannus, Lorinus, Franzius apud Gejerum; frustra quærens panem, & finaliter destitutum, Michaelis.
[y] Vajikra Rabba, s. 35. fol. 175. 2.

[z] ושכן לעולם & habitabis in seculum, Pagninus, Vatablus, Piscator; so Aben Ezra & Kimchi.
[a] יהגה μελετησει, Sept. meditabitur, V. L. so Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Michaelis.

justifying righteousness before God; he rejoices and glories in it, and desires to be found in it living and dying, and at judgment; and whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, and of good report, he thinks and speaks of them, and instructs his family, his children and servants, in them, that they may do them; see Gen. xviii. 19.

Ver. 31. *The law of his God is in his heart*, &c.] Which may be understood of the moral law, which was written in the heart of Adam at his creation, and continued there during his state of innocence, but was greatly obliterated by sin: there are some remains of it in fallen man, even in the very Gentiles; who, though without the law, do some things contained in it, which shews the work of it to be written in them; though in some it is scarcely legible, having lost all distinction between good and evil: but in regeneration the law of God is re-inscribed, according to the promise of the covenant of grace, Jer. xxxi. 33. and such have a real knowledge of the spirituality and perfection of it; of the impossibility of justification by it; and of Christ being the fulfilling end of it: and they have a strong affection for it; they love it; and delight in it after the inward man, and serve it with their minds; in which lies part of their conformity to Christ, and is a branch of their character as good men; see Psal. xl. 8. Isa. li. 7. moreover, the word תורת, here used, signifies any doctrine or instruction, and is sometimes used for the doctrine of the Gospel, Isa. ii. 3. and xlii. 4. and may have this sense here, and the meaning be, that that has a place in the hearts of righteous men, dwells richly there, and works effectually in them; and particularly the doctrine of grace which relates to covenant-interest in God; for it is the law or doctrine of *his God* that is in his heart. *None of his steps shall slide*: not that he shall never slip nor fall; for that is supposed ver. 24. but he shall never finally and totally go out of the paths of truth, holiness, and righteousness: the Lord keeps the feet of his saints, and orders their steps, and directs them in the way they should go, and preserves them in it; and enables them to walk uprightly, according to the rule of the divine word, and in all his commandments and ordinances; and to hold on and out unto the end: or the clause may be rendered, *it*, the law, *shall not cause his steps to slide* [b]; neither the law of God, nor the Gospel of Christ, but shall guide him in the right way, and be a lamp unto his feet, and a light unto his path.

Ver. 32. *The wicked watcheth the righteous*, &c.] All his motions and steps, his works and actions; he watches for his halting, and to take all opportunities and advantages against him; see Jer. xx. 10. *And seeketh to slay him*: murder his reputation, destroy his substance, and take away his life: some understand it of the devil, who watches the saints, observes their failings, accuses them before the throne, and seeks to devour them, 1 Pet. v. 8.

Ver. 33. *The Lord will not leave him in his hand*, &c.] Or power; but will in his own time deliver him from all the reproach, affliction, and persecution he endures by him; as he will also deliver him out of all the temptations of Satan. *Nor condemn him when he is judged*: by the wicked man: he will not join in the sentence, but reverse it, and condemn the tongue that rises up in judgment against him, and save him from him; see Psal. cix. 31. and Isa. liv. 17. nor will the Lord condemn him when he is judged by him at the last judgment; but will acquit him before men and angels, and introduce him into his kingdom and glory.

Ver. 34. *Wait on the Lord*, &c.] In the way of his appointments and ordinances; where may be learned the design of his providences, and of the prosperity of the wicked, and their end, Psal. lxxiii. 16—18. and in a providential way, for the performance of his promises, in which he never fails; and patiently bear whatever he is pleased to lay upon them; waiting for a deliverance out of every affliction, which will be in his own time. The Chaldee paraphrase is, "trust in the word of the Lord." *And keep his way*: which he has pointed out in his word, and has directed his people to walk in; though tempted by Satan to turn aside to the right hand or the left; though wicked men reproach, persecute, and seek to pervert it; and though a narrow and rough way, yet keep constantly in it, in which there are both pleasure and profit; good comes of it, and in it peace is had, and the presence of God enjoyed. *And he shall exalt thee to inherit the land*: that is, shall raise out of a low and uncomfortable situation of life to a more comfortable one; or however, hereafter, to dwell in the new heavens and new earth, to reign with Christ upon his throne, and to enjoy the eternal inheritance. *When the wicked are cut off*; as in ver. 9, 22, 28. *Thou shalt see it*; with joy and pleasure; not as exulting in the destruction of the wicked, simply considered; but as the glory of divine justice is displayed therein; see Psal. lii. 5, 6.

Ver. 35. *I have seen the wicked in great power*, &c.] Meaning some particular person invested with great power, in great authority among men, one of the spiritual wickednesses in high places; such a man as Haman in Ahasuerus's court; and though the psalmist does not choose to mention his name, he doubtless had him in his mind; as either Saul, or Doeg the Edomite, or Ahithophel, or some such man, who was in an exalted station of life; and it may be when he himself was in low and distressed circumstances: the word used [c] signifies one formidable and terrible, striking terror to all around; of whom others are afraid, as Aben Ezra interprets it, Isa. xxix. 20. and xlix. 25. *And spreading himself like a green bay-tree*: or like one that grows up out of the earth of itself, and is in its native soil, and very flourishing: and the metaphor denotes an increase of riches and honour, and a seemingly settled state in the enjoyment of such outward felicity; so Jarchi interprets it משריש, *taking root*; as well as such a man's glorying in and boasting of his affluence and fulness; see Psal. lxxiii. 12. Jer. xii. 1, 2. Psal. xlix. 6. Aben Ezra explains it of a wicked man's openly committing iniquity, declaring his sin as Sodom, and glorying in his shame; but rather it de-

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[b] לא תמעד אשריו non vacillat gressus ejus, Cocceius.

[c] עריץ terrificum, Montanus, Vatablus; terribilem aut formidabilem, Gejerus, Michaelis; daunting, terrible, Ainsworth.

notes a man in great authority and esteem, as a man crowned with laurels, and in a very exalted and triumphant state.

Ver. 36. *Yet he passed away*, &c.] At once, on a sudden; either his riches and honour, which, in one hour, came to nought, by one providence or another; or he himself by death; in the midst of all his prosperity, and whilst blessing himself in it, his soul was required of him; and so the Targum is, *he ceased from the world*: he went out of it unawares: the laurel, or bay-tree, very quickly grows old *. *And, lo, he was not*: he was not reduced to nothing; he did not become a nonentity, though he might wish himself to to be so; it being better for him if he had never been born; but he was not in the land of the living, in hell he lifted up his eyes. *Yea, I sought him, but he could not be found*; in the place where he formerly was, that knowing him no more; he could not be found on earth, from whence he was gone; nor in heaven, where no place is found for such wicked men; he was gone to his own place, as is said of Judas, and of whom Jerom interprets the whole of this passage.

Ver. 37. *Mark the perfect* man, &c.] None are so in themselves, not the most holy man upon earth; for though all grace is implanted at once in regeneration, the seed of grace of every kind is cast into the heart at once; yet it opens and spreads, and gradually increases; nor is any grace in its exercise perfect; not faith, nor hope, nor love: sin is in the best of men, and all stand in need of fresh supplies of grace. None of the saints ever affirmed that they had arrived to perfection, but have disclaimed it: one saint may indeed attain to a greater degree of grace and knowledge than another, and in a comparative sense be perfect; and there is a perfection of parts, though not of degrees, in all; the new man is formed in all its parts, though these are not grown to their full perfection: and whereas perfection often denotes truth and sincerity, such may be said to be perfect, that is, sincere, who have received the grace of God in truth, have the truth and root of the matter in them; so Noah, Job, and others, are said to be perfect men; but not simply and absolutely in themselves, but as in Christ Jesus; who has obtained complete redemption, perfectly fulfilled the law for them, fully expiated their sins, procured the entire pardon of them, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, by which they are justified from all sin, and are perfectly comely, and a perfection of beauty, through the comeliness of Christ put upon them. *And behold the upright*; the man that is upright in heart and conversation, who has a right spirit renewed in him, and the uprightness of Christ shewed unto him; or, in other words, who has the truth of grace within him, and the righteousness of Christ upon him: such men are to be marked, observed, viewed, and considered, as rare and uncommon men; and to be imitated and followed in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty; and especially the end of such persons is to be marked and beheld, as follows. *For the end of* that *man is peace*: such a man now enjoys a conscience-peace, which passes the understanding of worldly men; and which he possesses in Christ, and from him, amidst a variety of tribulations, arising from a view of interest in his blood and righteousness; and, generally speaking, goes off the stage of life, if not triumphing, yet resigned to the will of God, and in a serene and tranquil frame of spirit, and even desiring to be gone, and to be with Christ, and to have leave, with good old Simeon, to depart in peace; and as soon as they are departed they enter into peace, into the joy of their Lord, into his presence, where is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore; see Numb. xxiii. 10.

Ver. 38. *But the transgressors shall be destroyed together*, &c.] This is to be understood of obstinate and continued transgressors, who live and die in their transgressions; see Prov. xi. 3. otherwise all men are transgressors in Adam, and sinned and fell with him in his transgression; and are justly called transgressors from the womb; and are guilty of actual transgressions, nor are any clear from them; and are arraigned, convinced, and judged by the law as transgressors; and for many of these Christ died, and makes intercession; and who are converted, and turned from their transgressions; and these are pardoned, and saved, and not destroyed: but stubborn and perverse transgressors are destroyed; not only with a temporal destruction of their substance, and of their names, and they themselves are rooted out of the earth; but with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power; for this seems to refer to the day of judgment, when all the wicked will be *together*; and shall in a body stand at Christ's left hand, and be bid to 'go, ye cursed into everlasting fire,' and shall be turned into hell at once, and together. *The end of the wicked shall be cut off*; meaning either their posterity, as the word is rendered in Psal. cix. 13. or their hope and expectation of good things here and hereafter; when the righteous man receives the end of his faith, hope, and expectation, even the salvation of his soul; but these shall be disappointed and frustrated of their end; see Prov. xxiii. 18. or their last end is cutting off from the presence and sight of God, utter ruin and destruction; and so it stands opposed to the end of the perfect and upright man, which is eternal peace and happiness.

Ver. 39. *But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord*, &c.] Both their temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation; particularly the latter, which is originally of the Lord, and springs from the thoughts, purposes, and resolutions of his heart: it is of him freely, of his rich grace and abundant mercy; and it is of him fully and completely; it is an entire salvation of soul and body; includes all blessings of grace and glory in it; it is to the uttermost, and from all sin, and every enemy; and it is of him only; there is no salvation in any other; and the glory of it is to be ascribed to him, even to Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; for all the three divine Persons have a concern in it; the determination, contrivance, and settlement of it, is of Jehovah the Father; the impetration or effecting of it is of Jehovah the Son; and the application of it is of Jehovah the Spirit; see the note on Psal. iii. 8. He is *their strength in the time of trouble*; by reason of the hidings of God's face, the temptations

* Senescit velociter, Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 44.

of Satan, the prevalence of corruptions, the weakness of grace, and the many afflictions that befall them from God and men; the Lord he is their strong hold and munition of rocks, whither they betake themselves, and find succour, protection, and safety; he puts underneath everlasting arms, bears them up, and upholds them with the right hand of his righteousness; and is the strength of their hearts, of their lives, and of their salvation.

Ver. 40. *And the Lord shall help them*, &c.] In their distress, and out of their troubles, when none else can, and they themselves cannot; and that seasonably, and sometimes with means, and sometimes without. *And deliver them*: out of all their afflictions, which he does sooner or later; if not in life, yet at death. *He shall deliver them from the wicked*; this is repeated both for confirmation and explanation sake, shewing who they are the Lord will deliver his people from, even from wicked and unreasonable men; he will not leave them in their hands now to do with them as they shall think fit; and he will free them from them to all eternity in the other world, where they shall cease from giving them any trouble. *And save them, because they trust in him*: not that there is any saving virtue in faith, or in trusting in the Lord; the saving virtue is in the Lord, the object of faith and trust; but inasmuch as the Lord has appointed salvation to be through faith, or has made that the means of receiving and enjoying salvation, and the blessings of it, and has declared that he that believeth shall be saved, he does accordingly save all such persons; wherefore blessed are they that trust in him. The Chaldee paraphrase is, "he shall redeem them because they trust in his "Word."

PSALM XXXVIII.

A Psalm of David, to bring to remembrance.

THIS psalm was composed by David under some sore affliction, and when in great distress of mind by reason of sin, perhaps his sin with Bath-sheba; and was written as a memorial of his sense of sin, of his great afflictions, and deliverance from them; and therefore is said to be *to bring to remembrance*, or to refresh his memory with the said things. Kimchi and Ben Melech think the psalm was made for the sake of such as are in distress, to put them in mind and teach them how to pray. The Targum calls the psalm, "a good "remembrance concerning Israel;" and Jarchi says it was to remember the distress of Israel before the Lord, and that it is said with respect to all Israel; though others think the word *lehazcir* is the name of a psalm-tune; and Aben Ezra was of opinion that it was the first word of some pleasant poem. The Septuagint version adds, "concerning the sabbath," as if it was wrote to put persons in mind of that day; whereas there is nothing in the whole psalm that has any such tendency.

Ver. 1. *O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath*, &c.] This and the following clause are the same as in Psal. vi. 1. only instead of *wrath* there it is *anger*; see the note there.

Ver. 2. *For thine arrows stick fast in me*, &c.] Meaning either words with which as a father the Lord rebuked him; and which were sharp and cutting, entered into him and abode with him, and gave him much pain and uneasiness; and by which he concluded that his rebukes were in wrath and hot displeasure; such as those in 2 Sam. xii. 11. so the words of men are compared to arrows, Psalm lvii. 4. and lxiv. 3. or outward afflictions, attended with inward trouble of soul; for as judgments are the arrows of God, such as famine, pestilence, &c. Ezek. v. 16. Psal. xci. 5, 6. Deut. xxxii. 21, 42. so the chastening dispensations of Providence, under which the people of God themselves are, are so called, because they oftentimes come swiftly, suddenly, and at unawares, and are very pungent and distressing; and sometimes stick fast and continue long, by reason of which they are inwardly wounded, and conceive of God as sorely displeased with them; see Job vi. 4. *And thy hand presseth me sore*; the afflicting hand of God, which lay heavy upon him; and is a mighty hand when laid on such worms as mortal sinful men are, who cannot bear up under it, unless they have divine supports; see Job xix. 21. This is by some supposed to be some bodily disease inflicted on him; some have thought of the leprosy, which was a stroke from the hand of God; but this is not likely, since he must have been deposed and shut up; the Jews indeed say[e] that he was a leper six months, and that the divine Presence was taken from him; a late learned man[f] thinks it was the small-pox, from the unsoundness of his flesh, the soreness of the disease, the stench of it, temporary blindness, and his friends standing aloof from him; though perhaps no other than affliction of mind for sin, comparable to the disease described, is meant.

Ver. 3. *There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger*, &c.] Such was the nature of the affliction the psalmist laboured under, and which he took to be an effect of the anger of God towards him, that the whole frame of nature was affected with it, and from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet there was no health or soundness, as in Isa. i. 6. where the same word is used as here; some think the word[g] here used has the signification of man; and that the sense is, that through the violence of the distemper he had not so much as the form of a man, as his antitype in Isa. lii. 14. and as this led him to a view of his sins, as the cause of his affliction, he was so far from thinking

[e] In R. Obadiah in loc.
[f] Delaney's Life of King David, vol. 2. p. 146.

[g] אין מתם non superest amplius ulla forma seu figura hominis, Amama; so Joseph Kimchi.

himself sound and whole, or perfect in a spiritual sense, that he saw he was all over diseased with sin, and that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. *Neither* is there any *rest in my bones, because of my sin*; or *peace*[h] there; sin breaks the believer's rest, and disturbs his peace; nor can he, in a view of it, find any rest in himself, nor in any creature; nor in any service or duty, only in Jesus Christ, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice.

Ver. 4. *For mine iniquities are gone over mine head, &c.*] Like an inundation of waters, as the waves and billows of the sea; for the waters to come up to the neck or chin shews great danger; but when they go over the head the case is desperate, and a person is sinking and drowning; compare with this Psal. lxix. 1, 2. the simile may denote both the number and weight of sins, and also signifies the overwhelming distress the psalmist was in, under a view of them. *As an heavy burden they are too heavy for me*; the guilt of sin upon the conscience, without a view of pardon, lies heavy indeed, and makes a man a burden to himself, as it did Job, ch. vii. 20, 21. yea, sin is not only grieving and afflicting to pardoned ones, and who know they are pardoned, but it is a burden to them under which they groan; nor is it possible for any so to bear it as to satisfy and make atonement for it; none but Christ could ever do this, and he has done it; nor is there any relief for burdened souls, but by looking to a sin-bearing and sin-atoning Saviour, and by casting the burden upon him, who invites them to him for rest.

Ver. 5. *My wounds stink*, and *are corrupt*, &c.] Meaning his sins, which had wounded him, and for which there is no healing but in a wounded Saviour, and by his stripes we are healed, Isa. liii. 5. where the same word is used as here; Christ's black and blue stripes and wounds, as the word signifies, are the healing of ours, both of sins, and of the effects of them; which, to a sensible sinner, are as nauseous and loathsome as an old wound that is festered and corrupt. *Because of my foolishness*; as all sin arises from foolishness, which is bound in the hearts of men, and from whence it arises, Mark vii. 22. perhaps the psalmist may have respect to his folly with Bath-sheba, which had been the occasion of all the distress that is spoken of both before and afterwards.

Ver. 6. *I am troubled*, &c.] Discomposed and perplexed in mind; his thoughts were disturbed and irregular, and in the utmost confusion and distress: this trouble was not only on account of the affliction that was upon him, but chiefly because of his sin; and which was increased by the view he had of the displeasure of God, concluding he was come forth against him in wrath and fury. *I am bowed down greatly*; not in his body, at least not in that only, as if he was bowed together by his disorder, that he could not lift himself up; for he is said to walk in the next clause: or rather he bowed down his head as a bulrush voluntarily, and through sorrow and shame could not lift it up before the Lord; though it may chiefly design the pressure of his mind, that his soul was cast down within him, and with all his spiritual reasonings he could not erect himself; it is the Lord that raiseth up those that are bowed down in this sense; see Psal. xlii. 5, 6, 11. and cxlv. 14. *I go mourning all the day long*; or *I go black*, or *in black*[i]; meaning either that his skin was black, through the disease upon him, and the trouble that was in him, Job xxx. 30. or that he was clothed in black garments, as a token of mourning; as white garments were of joy and cheerfulness, Eccl. ix. 7, 8. and he was blacker still in his own apprehension, by reason of inward corruptions and outward transgressions, which appeared in a very black hue, attended with aggravating circumstances; see Cant. i. 5. Psal. li. 7.

Ver. 7. *For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease, &c.*] The word here used has the signification of burning[k]; and the Targum renders it, *my loins are filled with burning*; a burning fever was upon him, or there was an inflammation in those parts; a hot burning ulcer, which might be nauseous; and so was true in both senses. Aben Ezra interprets it abominable and vile; something not fit to be mentioned; and so Kimchi and Ben Melech. The word is rendered sometimes *lightly esteemed*; as in 1 Sam. xviii. 23. and Jarchi thinks it has this sense here; and the meaning is, that he was vile in his own eyes, and mean in his own esteem. Doubtless the psalmist has reference to something more than a bodily disease; at least not to that only, but to the disease of his soul also, sin, which has the nature of a disease; it is an hereditary one, which is derived from one to another by propagation; it is universal, and reaches to all men, and to all the parts of the body and powers of the soul; it is a complication of disorders: it is in its own nature mortal, and ever incurable but by Christ; and, as here, it is a loathsome one; it is loathsome to God, and to all sensible sinners: and when the psalmist says his loins were filled with it, it may signify that it was an internal disorder that was in him; sin that dwelt in him, a law in his members; and may denote the aboundings of sin in him, the swarms of corruptions that were in him; as also the pain it gave him, and the quick sense he had of it. *And there is no soundness in my flesh*; which is repeated, see ver. 3. partly for confirmation-sake, and partly to shew the continued sense of it, as persons under a disorder are continually making mention of it.

Ver. 8. *I am feeble*, &c.] Both in body, natural strength being weakened by the affliction, and dried up like a potsherd by the heat of the distemper; and in soul, being weak in the exercise of faith and other graces. The word is used of Jacob, fainting at and disbelieving the news of his son Joseph being alive, Gen. xlv. 26. *And sore broken*; in his constitution with the disease, and in his mind with trouble; especially for his sin, and under a sense of the divine displeasure; his bones were broken by his fall, and his

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[h] שלום אין non (est) pax, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Musculus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[i] קדר atratus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[k] R. Joseph Kimchi & Abendana נקלה ardore, Pagninus, Vatablus; ardens ulcus, Musculus, so some in Vatablus; tostione, Piscator; adustione, Gejerus; so the Targum; adusto, Cocceius, Ult. Comment. p. 742.

heart broken with a sense of sin, Psal. li. 8, 17. *I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart*: which was like the raging of the sea, as the word[l] rendered *disquietness* here signifies; and to which the uneasiness and restlessness of wicked men is sometimes compared, Isa. v. 30. and lvii. 20. and so great was the disquietude of this good man under affliction, and sense of sin and wrath, that he had no rest night nor day; and could not forbear crying out, in a very hideous manner, like the roaring of a lion.

Ver. 9. *Lord, all my desire is before thee*, &c.] To be delivered from his afflictions, to have a discovery and application of pardoning grace, and to have communion with his God: the desire of his soul was unto these things; and it was some satisfaction to him that it was before the Lord, and known unto him, before whom all things are naked and open. *And my groaning is not hid from thee*: under the weight of his affliction, the burden of his sin, and which he expressed in prayer to the Lord, and which is often done with groanings which cannot be uttered: but even these are known and understood by the Lord.

Ver. 10. *My heart panteth*, &c.] Or *goes about*[m]; runs here and there, and finds no rest; as Aben Ezra interprets the word from the Targum he cites; though the Targum we have renders it, *my heart shakes with fear*, or dread, as persons in a fever. Jarchi interprets the word, surrounded with grief; it denotes the panting or palpitation of the heart, through sorrow and dread, and the failing of it, even as at death. *My strength faileth me*, or *forsakes me*[n]; bodily strength and spiritual strength; the strength of faith, hope, and confidence. *As for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me*: which is often the case of persons under bodily disorders, their eyes grow dim, and sight fails them; and this might be true in a spiritual sense of the psalmist, who had lost sight of God as his covenant-God; of his interest in his love, in the blessings of his grace, and in eternal salvation, and was walking in darkness, and saw no light.

Ver. 11. *My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore*, &c.] As if it was a plague-sore, lest they should be infected with it; or because they could not bear the stench of his wounds, and the loathsomeness of his disease, or to see him in his agonies, and hear his roaring and his groans, ver. 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9. or as taking his case to be desperate, as if he was just dying, and no help could be given him, ver. 10. If it was the leprosy, as some Jewish writers have affirmed, the word נגע, translated *sore*, being used for the plague of the leprosy, they were obliged by the ceremonial law to keep at a distance from him: but this rather seems to be voluntary, and to proceed from neglect and contempt. These *lovers* and *friends* were such for whom David had had an affection, and had been friendly to, and therefore it was ungrateful in them to act the part they did; and such who had pretended love and friendship to him in his health and prosperity, but now had deserted him, which is a common case; see Job xix. 13, 14, 19. Psal. lxix. 8. and lxxxviii. 18. Afflictions try men's friends; and as that is a time when friendly visits are most wanting and most useful, so it is an aggravation of the affliction, and makes it the heavier when such are denied. *And my kinsmen stand afar off*: that were near to him by the ties of nature or friendship.

Ver. 12. *They also that seek after my life*, &c.] His avowed and implacable enemies, whom nothing would satisfy but the taking away of his life: these came too near him; for these, he says, *lay snares* for me, as Satan does for the souls of men, as the Jews did for Christ, and as wicked men do for the saints, Psal. cxxiv. 7. *And they that seek my hurt speak mischievous things*; to the injury of his character and reputation: *and imagine deceits all the day long*: contrive artful schemes to deceive; see Psal. xxxv. 20.

Ver. 13. *But I, as a deaf man, heard not*, &c.] He acted the part of a deaf man, and made as if he did not hear the mischievous things his enemies spoke; as Saul, when the sons of Belial spoke against him and despised him, 1 Sam. x. 27. and as our Lord when his enemies accused him, Matt. xxvii. 12, 13, 14. *And I was as a dumb man, that openeth not his mouth*; made no reply to what they said, and did not render railing for railing; in which Christ was the antitype of him, Isa. liii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 23. and iii. 9.

Ver. 14. *Thus I was as a man that heareth not*, &c.] Any thing that is said unto him; he took no more notice of it than if he had never heard it; but bore all the railings and calumnies of men with calmness and patience. *And in whose mouth are no reproofs*; as if he had nothing to say for himself, in vindication of his character, and to the refutation of his enemies; as if he had no arguments to make use of, for the conviction and reproof of his adversaries.

Ver. 15. *For in thee, O Lord, do I hope*, &c.] That he would plead his cause against his accusers and revilers, and who sought his hurt; that he should be delivered out of their hands, and out of all his afflictions; that he should be healed of his diseases, both of soul and body, under which he laboured; and should again enjoy the light of God's countenance, and have the discoveries of his pardoning grace and mercy; and this was the reason why he was so calm and quiet amidst the unkindnesses of his friends, and the cruel usage of his enemies. *Thou wilt hear*, or *answer*, *O Lord my God*; in the midst of all his distresses of body and mind, he had not given up his interest in God, as his God and Father; which is the great blessing of the covenant of grace, and which ever continues; and is the great support of believers, under whatsoever they meet with in soul and body, from friends or foes; this his God the psalmist believed would not only hear his cries in his sore distress, but hear the reproaches of his enemies, and answer them in a providential way in his own time, by terrible things in righteousness to their conviction and confusion; and therefore he himself was silent.

Ver. 16. For *I said*, hear me, &c.] This he had expressed in prayer to God; he had committed his cause to him, and entreated him that he would hear and

[l] מנהמת præ fremitu, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Gejerus, so Piscator, Coccelus, Michaelis.
[m] סחרחר circuivit, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.

[n] עזבני dereliquit me, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Musculus, Cocceius.

answer him; giving this as a reason, *lest otherwise they should rejoice over me*; at his misfortunes and calamities, at the continuance of his trouble and distress, both of body and mind. *When my foot slippeth*: as it sometimes did through the corruptions of nature, the temptations of Satan, and the snares of the world; which is more or less the case of all the people of God, who are all subject to slips and falls, though they shall not finally and totally fall away. *They magnify themselves against me*; that is, his enemies exulted and triumphed over him: this was what he found by experience; and therefore makes use of it as an argument with God, that he would hear and answer and deliver him out of his trouble, and preserve him from falling.

Ver. 17. *For I am ready to halt*, &c.] Meaning either that there was a proneness in him to sin; see Jer. xx. 10. or that he was subject to affliction and adversity, as the same word is rendered in Psal. xxxv. 15. and the words are either a reason and argument used with the Lord, to hear and keep his foot from slipping, that so his enemies might not rejoice over him, and magnify themselves against him; as they would do should he fall into sin or into any calamity, both which he was liable to: or they are a reason why he was so calm and quiet under the ill usage he met with from friends and enemies, because he was *ready for halting*, or *prepared*[o] for it; he considered that he was born for trouble and adversity; that God had appointed him to it, and it was appointed for him, and therefore he was quiet under it; see Job v. 6, 7. and xxiii. 14. he was prepared to meet it; he expected it, it being the common lot of God's people; and therefore when it came upon him it was no strange thing to him. The Septuagint version, and those that follow that, render the words, *I am ready for scourges*; and Jerom applies them to Christ, who was ready to undergo scourges, sufferings, and death itself, for his people. *And my sorrow is continually before me*; that is, for his sin, which was ever before him, stared him in the face, lay heavy on his conscience, and appeared very terrible and loathsome to him; his sorrow for it was without intermission, and was a godly sorrow, a sorrow for sin, as committed against a God of love, grace, and mercy: or he may mean, that his affliction, which was grievous to him, was continually upon him night and day: our Lord himself, David's antitype, was a man of sorrows all his days.

Ver. 18. *For I will declare mine iniquity*, &c.] Either to men, to ease his mind, justify God in his proceedings with him, and for their caution and admonition: or rather to God, against whom he had sinned, and who only could pardon him; with a view to which he was determined to make a free and open confession of it before him: *I will be sorry for my sin*, or *careful*[p] about it; that is, how he committed it for the future: true repentance for sin produces a carefulness to abstain from all appearance of it; see 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

Ver. 19. *But mine enemies are lively*, &c.] Or *living*[q], or *live*; not in a spiritual sense; for they had no lively hope, nor living faith, but were dead in trespasses and sins; nor merely in a natural sense, or corporeally, so David was living himself; but in great prosperity and worldly happiness, and so were brisk and cheerful, and lived a merry and jocund life. *And they are strong*: not only hale and robust in body, but abounded in riches and wealth, which are the strength of wicked men. *And they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied*; that is, such as hated him without a cause, and made lies and falsehoods the reasons of it: these increased in numbers, or in their outward state and circumstances; see Psal. lxxiii. 4, 5, 7, 12. and lxix. 4.

Ver. 20. *They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries*, &c.] See the note on Psal. xxxv. 12. *Because I follow* the thing that *good* is; or follow *good*; a good God, whom his soul followed hard after, Psal. lxiii. 8. the good Shepherd of the sheep, who led him into green pastures, whither he followed him, Psal. xxiii. 1, 2, 3. the good Spirit of God his guide, whom he walked after, Rom. viii. 1. good and holy men of God, whom he took for examples and copied after; and every good work, which he pursued with eagerness and pleasure; and all this drew upon him the hatred of his adversaries.

Ver. 21. *Forsake me not, O Lord*, &c.] Or continue not to forsake; for he seems to have been under divine desertion, and might be under apprehensions that God had utterly forsaken him; which he entreats he would not, though his friends had forsook him, and his own strength had failed and left him, ver. 10, 11. *O my God, be not far from me*; as to his gracious presence, and with respect to help and deliverance, otherwise God is not far from any of his creatures, being omnipresent.

Ver. 22. *Make haste and help me*, &c.] Or, *for my help*; his case required haste, and God does help his people when none else can, and that right early. *O Lord, my salvation*; by which it appears that his prayer was a prayer of faith; he saw that his salvation was in the Lord, and in no other; and though he had been and was in such a low condition, both in soul and body, yet his faith was not lost; that is an abiding grace, and will continue under the influence of the author and finisher of it, until the end of it is received, the salvation of the soul. R. Moses[r] thinks the phrase *make haste* is to be repeated here, and read thus, *make haste, O Lord, to my salvation*.

[o] נכון paratus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[p] אדאג solicitus ero, Montanus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis, Ainsworth.

[q] חיים viventes, Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[r] In Aben Ezra & R. Joseph Kimchi in R. David Kimchi in loc.

PSALM XXXIX.

To the chief Musician, even to Jeduthun, a Psalm of David.

SOME take Jeduthun to be the name of a musical instrument, as Jarchi, on which, and others the first word of a song, to the tune of which, this psalm was sung, as Aben Ezra; though it seems best, with Kimchi and others, to understand it as the name of the chief musician, to whom this psalm was sent to be made use of in public service; since Jeduthun was, with his sons, appointed by David to prophesy with harps and psalteries, and to give praise and thanks unto the Lord, 1 Chron. xvi. 41, 42. and xxv. 1, 3. he is the same with Ethan[s]. The occasion of it is thought, by some, to be the rebellion of his son Absalom; so Theodoret thinks it was written when he fled from Absalom, and was cursed by Shimei; or rather it may be some sore affliction, which lay upon David for the chastisement of him; see ver. 9, 13. and the argument of the psalm seems to be much the same with that of the preceding one, as Kimchi observes.

Ver. 1. *I said*, &c.] That is, in his heart; he purposed and determined within himself to do as follows; and he might express it with his mouth, and so his purpose became a promise. *I will take heed to my ways*; as every good man should; that is, to all his actions, conduct, and conversation: it becomes him to take heed what ways he walks in; that they are the ways of God, which he directs to; that they are the ways of Christ, which he has left an example to follow in; and that they are according to the word of God; that he walks in Christ, the way of salvation, and by faith on him; that he chooses and walks in the way of truth, and not error; and in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; and in the path of holiness, in which, though fools, they shall not err: and it is also necessary that he should take heed that he does nothing, either by embracing error, or going into immorality, by which the ways of God, and Christ, and truth, are evil-spoken of, blasphemed and reproached; and that he does not depart out of these ways, nor stumble, slip, and fall in them. *That I sin not with my tongue*; which is a world of iniquity, and has a multitude of vices belonging to it; not only in profane men, but in professors of religion; whom it becomes to take heed that they sin not with it, by lying one to another, by angry and passionate expressions, by corrupt communication, filthiness, foolish talking, and jesting, which are not convenient; by whispering, tale-bearing, backbiting, and by evil-speaking one of another: particularly there are vices of the tongue, which the saints are liable to under afflictive providences, and seem chiefly designed here; such as envious expressions at the prosperity of others; words of impatience under their own afflictions, and murmurings at the hand of God upon them; such as these the psalmist determined, within himself, to guard against; in order to which he proposed to take the following method. *I will keep my mouth with a bridle*; that is, bridle his tongue, that being an unruly member, and to be kept in with bit and bridle, like an unruly horse; see James i. 26. and iii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 8. *While the wicked is before me*; or *against me*[t]; meaning either whilst Ahithophel and Absalom were conspiring and rebelling against him, and Shimei was cursing him, under which he behaved with great silence, calmness, and patience; see 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. and xvi. 5—12. or whilst he had the flourishing condition of wicked men in his view, and was meditating on it; or rather, when any one of them came to visit him in his affliction, he was determined to be wholly silent, that they might have no opportunity of rejoicing over him, nor of reproaching him, and the good ways of God: and indeed it is proper for the people of God to be always upon their guard, when they are in the presence of wicked men; and be careful what they utter with their lips, who watch their words to improve them against them, and the religion they profess.

Ver. 2. *I was dumb with silence*, &c.] Quite silent, as if he had been a dumb man, and could not speak; so he was before men, especially wicked men, and under the afflicting hand of God; see ver. 9. thus he put his resolution into practice. *I held my peace, even from good*: that is, he said neither good nor bad: this expresses the greatness of his silence: he did not choose to open his lips, and say any thing that was good, lest evil should come out along with it; though this may be considered as carrying the matter too far, even to a criminal silence; saying nothing of the affliction he laboured under as coming from the hand of God, and of his own desert of it; nor praying to God for the removal of it, nor giving him thanks for his divine goodness in supporting him under it, and making it useful to him; though it seems rather to have respect to his silence concerning the goodness of his cause before men; he said not one word in the vindication of himself; but committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously. The Targum and Jarchi interpret it of his silence and cessation *from the words of the law*: he said nothing concerning the good word of God; which sense, could it be admitted, the words in Jer. xx. 9. might be compared with these and the following. *And my sorrow was stirred*: this was the issue and effect of his silence; his sorrow being pent up, and not let out and eased by words, swelled and increased the more; or the sorrow of his heart was stirred up at the insults and reproaches of his enemies, as Paul's spirit was stirred up by the superstition and idolatry of the city of Athens, Acts xvii. 16.

Ver. 3. *My heart was hot within me*, &c.] Either with zeal for God; or rather with envy at the prosperity of wicked men, and with impatience at his own afflictions. *While I was musing the fire burned*; not

[s] Vid. Hiller. Onomastic. Sacr. p. 513, 895.

[t] לנגדי adversum me, V. L. contra me, Cocceius; so the Targum.

the fire of the divine word, whilst he was meditating upon it, which caused his heart to burn within him; nor the fire of divine love, the coals whereof give a most vehement flame, when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, and the thoughts of it are directed by the spirit of God to dwell in meditation on it; but the fire of passion, anger, and resentment, whilst meditating on his own adversity, and the prosperity of others. Then *spake I with my tongue;* and so broke the resolution he had made, ver. 1. he spoke not for God, though to him: not by way of thankfulness for his grace and goodness to him, in supporting him under his exercises; but in a way of complaint, because of his afflictions; it was in prayer he spoke to God with his tongue, and it was unadvisedly with his lips, as follows.

Ver. 4. *Lord, make me to know mine end,* &c.] Not Christ, the end of the law for righteousness, as Jerom interprets it; nor how long he should live, how many days, months, and years more; for though they are known of God, they are not to be known by men; but either the end of his afflictions, or his latter end, his mortal state, that he might be more thoughtful of that, and so less concerned about wordly things, his own external happiness, or that of others; or rather his death; see Job vi. 11. and his sense is, that he might know death experimentally; or that he might die: this he said in a sinful passionate way, as impatient of his afflictions and exercises; and in the same way the following expressions are to be understood. *And the measure of my days, what it is;* being desirous to come to the end of it; otherwise he knew it was but as an hand's breadth, as he says in the following verse. That *I may know how frail I* am; or *what time I have here;* or *when I shall cease to be*[a]; or, as the Targum is, *when I shall cease from the world;* so common it is for the saints themselves, in an angry or impatient fit, to desire death; see Job vii. 15, 16. Jonah iv. 8. and a very rare and difficult thing it is to wish for it from right principles, and with right views, as the Apostle Paul did, Phil. i. 23.

Ver. 5. *Behold, thou hast made my days as an hand-breadth,* &c.] These words, with the following clause, are the psalmist's answer to his own inquiries; or rather a correction of his inquiry and impatience, shewing how needless it was to ask such questions, and be impatient to die, when it was so clear and certain a case that life was so short; not a yard or ell, but an hand-breadth, the breadth of four fingers; or at most a span of time was allowed to man, whose days are few, like the shadow that declineth, and the grass that withers; by which figurative expressions the brevity of human life is described, Psal. cii. 11. and ciii. 15. and this is the measure made, cut out, and appointed by the Lord himself, who has determined the years, months, and days of man's life, Job xiv. 5. *And mine age is as nothing before thee;* in the sight of God, or in comparison of his eternity; not so much as an hand-breadth, or to be accounted as an inch, but nothing at all; yea, less than nothing, and vanity; see Isa. xl. 17. that is, the age or life of man in this world, as the word[w] used signifies; for otherwise the age or life of man, in the world to come, is of an everlasting duration; but the years of this present life are threescore and ten, ordinarily speaking; an hundred and thirty are by Jacob reckoned but few; and even a thousand years with the Lord are but as one day, Psal. xc. 4, 10. *Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.* As vanity may signify sin, emptiness, folly, falsehood, fickleness, and inconstancy; for man is a very sinful creature, empty of all that is good; foolish as to the knowledge of divine things; he is deceiving and deceived, his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; and he is unstable in all his ways: he is *all vanity*[x], as the words may be rendered; all that he has, or is, or is in him, is vanity; his body, in the health, beauty, and strength of it, is subject to change; and so are his mind, his memory, his judgment and affections, his purposes and promises; and so are his goods and estate, his riches and honours; yea, all the vanity that is in the creatures, that is, in the vegetable and sensitive creatures, yea, that is in the whole world, is in him; who is a microcosm, a little world himself: and this is true of every man, even in his *best settled*[y] estate; when he stood the most firm, as the word used signifies; it is true of men of high and low degree, of the wise, knowing, and learned, as well as of the illiterate and ignorant, Psal. lxii. 9. Rom. i. 21, 22. even of those that are in the most prosperous circumstances, in the greatest ease and affluence, Luke xii. 16—19. David himself had an experience of it, 2 Sam vii. 1. and xi. 11. yea, this is true of Adam in his best estate, in his estate of innocence; for he was even then subject to change, as the event has shewn; and being in honour, he abode not long; and, though upright, became sinful, and came short of the glory of God: indeed, the spiritual estate of believers in Christ is so well settled as that it cannot be altered; nor is it subject to any vanity. Of the word *Selah,* see the note on Psal. iii. 2.

Ver. 6. *Surely every man walketh in a vain shew,* &c.] Or *in an image*[z]; not *in the image of the Lord,* as the Targum; in the image in which God created man, for that is lost; nor in that which is instamped on men in regeneration; for every man does not walk in that; rather in the image of fallen man, in which every man is born and walks: or *in a shadow*[a]; or like one; to which the days of man's life are often compared, 1 Chron. xxix. 15. Psal. cii. 11. and cxliv. 4. and who, for the most part, busies himself in shadowy and imaginary things; agreeably to all which the poet says[b], "I see that we who live are nothing else but images, "and a vain shadow." Some[c] interpret it of the *shadow of death;* and others[d] of *darkness* itself: and it fitly expresses the state of unregeneracy and darkness in which every man walks without the grace of God,

[a] מה חדל אני quasi nvi ego, Montanus; quamdin mundanus ero, Vatablus; quam brevis temporis sim, Musculus.
[w] חלדי vitale ævum meum, Cocceius; my worldly time, Ainsworth.
[x] כל הבל universa, vel omnis vanitas, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis, Musculus, Cocceius; so Ainsworth.
[y] נצב stans, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; quamlibet firmus consistere videatur, Tigurine version, Vatablus; though settled, Ainsworth; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[z] בצלם in imagine, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[a] In umbra, Gejerus; instar umbræ, Musculus; vid. Hackman. Præcidan. Sacr. tom. 1. p. 82.
[b] Ορω γαρ ημας, Sophoclis Ajax, v. 125, 126.
[c] Donesh in Jarchi in loc.
[d] Jarchi & Kimchi in loc. & R. Jonah in Miclol Yophi in loc.

and which will end in utter darkness, if that does not prevent it; and which is called *a walking in the vanity of the mind*, Eph. iv. 17. Here it seems rather to intend the outward shew, pomp, and grandeur of every great man; of emperors, kings, princes, nobles, and the great men of the world; which is all a vain shew, a glittering appearance for a while, a glory that passeth away, and will not descend after them when laid in the grave, and oftentimes lasts not so long. *Surely they are disquieted in vain;* about vain things, as riches and honours, which are fickle and unstable; and sometimes in vain are all the carking cares and disquietude of the mind, and toil and labour of the body, which are here referred to, to obtain these things; some rise early, and sit up late, and yet eat the bread of sorrow; and if they gain their point, yet do not find the pleasure and satisfaction in them they promised themselves and expected. *He heapeth up* riches, *and knoweth not who shall gather them;* according to Jarchi, the metaphor seems to be taken from a man that has been ploughing and sowing, and reaping and laying up the increase of the field in heaps, and yet knows not who shall gather it into the barn, seeing he may die before it is gathered in; compare with this Luke xii. 16—19. or the meaning is, when a man has amassed a prodigious deal of wealth together, he knows not who shall enjoy it, whether a son or a servant, a friend or a foe, a good man or a bad man, a wise man or a fool, Eccl. ii. 18, 19.

Ver. 7. *And now, Lord, what wait I for?* &c.] Look for, or expect, in this view of things? not long life, since the days of man are so short, and his age as nothing; not help from man, since he is altogether vanity; not riches and honour, since they are such poor, fading, perishing things; but the glories of another world, and the enjoyment of the Lord himself, both in this and that. *My hope is in thee;* the psalmist now returns to himself, and comes to his right mind, and to a right way of judging and acting; making the Lord the object of his hope and trust, expecting all good things, grace and glory, alone from him; and this is the hope which makes not ashamed.

Ver. 8. *Deliver me from all my transgressions,* &c.] Which were the cause and occasion of all his distresses, inward and outward; and the deliverance prayed for includes a freedom from the dominion of sin, which is by the power of efficacious grace; and from the guilt of sin, which is by the application of the blood of Christ; and from obligation to punishment for it, or deliverance from wrath to come, which is through Christ's being made a curse, and enduring wrath in the room and stead of his people; and from the very being of sin, which, though it cannot be expected in this life, is desirable: and the psalmist prays that he might be delivered from *all* his transgressions; knowing that if one of them was left to have dominion over him, or the guilt of it to lie upon him, and he be obliged to undergo due punishment for it, he must be for ever miserable. *Make me not the reproach of the foolish;* of a Nabal; meaning not any particular person; as Esau, according to Jarchi; or Absalom, as others; but every foolish man, that is, a wicked man; such who deny the being and providence of God, make a mock at sin, and scoff at the saints: and the sense of the psalmist is, that the Lord would keep him from sinning, and deliver him out of all his afflictions, on account of which he was reproached by wicked men.

Ver. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth,* &c.] This refers either to his former silence, before he broke it, ver. 1, 2. or to what he after that came into again, when he had seen the folly of his impatience, the frailty of his life, the vanity of man, and all human affairs, and had been directed to place his hope and confidence in the Lord, ver. 5—7. or to the present frame of his mind, and his future conduct, he had resolved upon; and may be rendered, *I am dumb; or will be dumb, and will not open my mouth**; that is, not in a complaining and murmuring way against the Lord, but be still, and know or own that he is God. *Because thou didst* it; not *because thou hast made me*, as Austin reads the words, and as the Arabic version renders them, *because thou hast created me;* though the consideration of God being a Creator lays his creatures under obligation as to serve him, so to be silent under his afflicting hand upon them; but the sense is, that the psalmist was determined to be patient and quiet under his affliction, because God was the author of it; for though he is not the author of the evil of sin, yet of the evil of affliction; see Amos iii. 6. and it is a quieting consideration to a child of God under it, that it comes from God, who is a sovereign Being, and does what he pleases; and does all things well and wisely, in truth and faithfulness, and in mercy and lovingkindness: this some refer to the rebellion of Absalom, and the cursing of Shimei, 2 Sam. xii. 11. and xvi. 10, 11. or it may refer to the death of his child, 2 Sam. xii. 22, 23. or rather to some sore affliction upon himself; since it follows,

Ver. 10. *Remove thy stroke away from me,* &c.] The psalmist still considers his affliction as coming from the hand of God, as his stroke upon him, and which lay as a heavy burden on him, and which God only could remove; and to him he applies for the removal of it, who is to be sought unto by his people to do such things for them; nor is such an application any ways contrary to that silence and patience before expressed. *I am consumed by the blow of thine hand:* meaning either that his flesh was consumed by his affliction, which came from the hand of God, or he should be consumed if he did not remove it: he could not bear up under it, but must sink and die; if he continued to strive and contend with him, his spirit would fail before him, and the soul that he had made; and therefore he entreats he would remember he was but dust, and remove his hand from him; for this is a reason enforcing the preceding petition.

Ver. 11. *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity,* &c.] The psalmist illustrates his own case, before suggested, by the common case and condition of men, when God corrects them: which he has a right to do, as the Father of spirits, and which he does with rebukes; sometimes with rebukes of wrath, with furious rebukes, rebukes in flames of fire, as the men of the world; and sometimes with rebukes of love, the

* לא אפתח non aperiam, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

chastenings of a father, as his own dear children; and always for iniquity, whether one or another; and not the iniquity of Adam is here meant, but personal iniquity: and correction for it is to be understood of some bodily affliction, as the effect of it shews. *Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth;* that is, secretly, suddenly, and at once; as a moth eats a garment, and takes off the beauty of it; or as easily as a moth is crushed between a man's fingers; so the Targum; " he melts away as a moth, whose body is " broken:" the Vulgate Latin, Septuagint, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions, and so the metaphrase of Apollinarius, read, as a spider which destroys itself. The word rendered *beauty* takes in all that is desirable in man; as his flesh, his strength, his comeliness, his pleasantness of countenance, *&c.* all which are quickly destroyed by a distemper of the body seizing on it; wherefore the psalmist makes and confirms the conclusion he had made before: *surely every man is vanity. Selah.* See the note on ver. 5.

Ver. 12. *Hear my prayer, O Lord,* &c.] Which was, that he would remove the affliction from him that lay so hard and heavy upon him. *And give ear unto my cry:* which shews the distress he was in, and the vehemency with which he put up his petition to the Lord. *Hold not thy peace at my tears:* which were shed in great plenty, through the violence of the affliction, and in his fervent prayers to God; see Heb. v. 7. *For I am a stranger with thee;* not to God, to Christ, to the Spirit, to the saints, to himself, and the plague of his own heart, or to the devices of Satan; but in the world, and to the men of it; being unknown to them, and behaving as a stranger among them; all which was known to God, and may be the meaning of the phrase *with thee;* or reference may be had to the land of Canaan, in which David dwelt, and which was the Lord's, and in which the Israelites dwelt as strangers and sojourners with him, Lev. xxv. 23. as it follows here. And *a sojourner, as all my fathers were;* meaning Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their posterity; see Gen. xxiii. 4. and xxxv. 27. Psal. cv. 23. as are all the people of God in this world: this is not their native place; they belong to another and better country; their citizenship is in heaven; their father's house is there, and there is their inheritance, which they have a right unto, and a meetness for: they have no settlement here; nor is their rest and satisfaction in the things of this world: they reckon themselves, whilst here, as not at home, but in a foreign land; and this the psalmist mentions, to engage the Lord to regard his prayers, since he has so often expressed a concern for the strangers and sojourners in the land of Israel.

Ver. 13. *O spare me,* &c.] Or *look from me*[f]; turn away thy fierce countenance from me; or *cease from me*[g], *and let me alone;* as in Job x. 20. from whence the words seem to be taken, by what follows: *that I may recover strength;* both corporeal and spiritual: *before I go hence;* out of this world by death: *and be no more;* that is, among men in the land of the living; not but that he believed he should exist after death, and should be somewhere, even in heaven, though he should return no more to the place where he was; see Job x. 20, 21. when a man is born, he comes into the world; when he dies, he goes out of it; a phrase frequently used for death in Scripture; so the ancient Heathens called death *abitio*, a going away[h].

PSALM XL.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

JARCHI interprets this psalm of the Israelites, and of their deliverance and song at the Red sea. The title of it, in the Syriac version, is, " A psalm of David according to the letter, when Shemaiah brought " the names of those who minister in the house of the " Lord;" see 1 Chron. xxiv. 6. according to Kimchi, the subject of this psalm is the same with that of the two preceding; and R. Obadiah thinks it was composed by David, when he was recovered of a leprosy; but though it might be wrote by David, it was not written concerning himself, or on his own account, but of another. The title of this psalm is somewhat different from others in the order of the words; whereas it is usually put *a psalm of*, or *for David;* here it is, *for David, a psalm;* and may be rendered, as Ainsworth observes, *a psalm concerning David;* not literally, but typically understood; not concerning David himself, but concerning his antitype and son, who is called by his name, Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25. Hos. iii. 5. and that it is to be interpreted of him is evident from the application of ver. 6, 7, 8, unto him by the apostle in Heb. x. 5—9. and the whole of it is applicable to him; some apply it to Jeremiah in the dungeon, and others to Daniel in the den, as Theodoret observes.

Ver. 1. *I waited patiently for the Lord,* &c.] Or *waiting I waited*[i]; which denotes continuance, constancy, and patience; and which Christ exercised in the garden, when he submitted himself entirely to the will of God; and on the cross, when he continued in sure hope and firm expectation of his help and assistance, though he was for a while forsaken by him; see Isa. l. 7, 8, 9. *And he inclined unto me, and heard my cry;* both in the garden, by delivering him from fear of death; and on the cross, by upholding, helping, and assisting him, by carrying him through his sufferings and death, and raising him from the dead; see Isa. xlix. 8. Heb. v. 7.

Ver. 2. *He brought me up also out of an horrible pit,* &c.] Which, with the following phrase, *out of the*

[f] השע ממני respice aliorsum a me, Gejerus; averte visum a me, Michaelis.

[g] Desine a me, Pagninus; desiste a me, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; cessa a me, Vatablus.

[h] Fest. Pomp. apud Schindler. Lexic. col. 440.

[i] קוה קויתי expectando expectavi, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Musculus, Rivetus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

miry clay, expresses the state and condition Christ was in at the time of his bloody sweat, his crucifixion, and his lying in *sheol*, the pit or grave, sometimes rendered hell, which these figurative phrases fitly signify; when it is observed, that he was made sin, and had the sins of all his people on him; and, as the type of Joshua, was clothed with their filthy garments; he might be truly said to be in the miry clay; and also that he was made a curse for them, and bore the wrath of God in their room and stead; and was forsaken by his God and Father, and so endured both the punishment of loss and sense, and what was tantamount to the sufferings of the damned in hell; see Psal. lxix. 1, 2. to which may be added the noisy insults of malignant men, and the infernal fiends, who surrounded him on the cross; when he was in an horrible, or *noisy pit*, as the words may be rendered [h], the allusion being to subterraneous caverns or pits, in which the falls of water make so horrible a noise as is intolerable; or to deep pits, into which any thing cast makes a great sound: and the issue of all this was, that he was laid in the pit of the grave, and held under the power and with the cords of death; from all which he was delivered when he was raised from the dead, justified in the Spirit, and glorified in the human nature by his God and Father. *And set my feet upon a rock;* on Mount Zion in heaven, whither he was carried up after his resurrection; where he will remain until his second coming, being set down at the right hand of God, in a most stable, firm, and unalterable state, as well as an honourable one: for he will die no more, and death shall no more have dominion over him. And *established my goings;* in treading the path of life, which was shewn him at his resurrection; in passing through the air, the territory of Satan, at his ascension; and in his entrance into his glory, and making his way to his father's right hand and throne.

Ver. 3. *And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God, &c.*] Sung by him in the midst of the great congregation of angels and saints, upon his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God; see Psal. xxii. 22, 25. when he went to his God and ours, to his Father and ours; and in which song he is joined by all his people above and below, Rev. v. 9—13. *Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord;* even all the elect of God, as many as are ordained to eternal life; the many whose sins Christ bore, for whom he became a ransom, whom he justifies and brings to glory: these all *see* him in the horrible pit and miry clay, in his state of humiliation, as bearing their sins, and the punishment due unto them; as wounded, bruised, and crucified; as rising again for their justification; and as on Mount Zion crowned with glory and honour; and a multitude of harpers with him, singing the new song: these see the salvation he has wrought out, the glory, fulness, and suitableness of it, and their interest in it; and they *fear* not with a fear of hell and damnation, which is inconsistent with the trust after mentioned; but with a godly and filial fear, which arises from and is encouraged by the grace and goodness of God, their faith in the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus, and which render him a proper object of trust and confidence; for he is so both as suffering, crucified, and slain, and as risen again, and exalted at the Father's right hand, Gal. ii. 20. 1 Pet. i. 22.

Ver. 4. *Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, &c.*] For such are safe and secure in him, are possessed of all blessings of grace through him, have peace in their own souls now, and shall enjoy eternal happiness with him hereafter. *And respecteth not the proud;* such as the Pharisees, and all self-righteous persons, who trust in themselves and their own righteousness, submit not to the righteousness of Christ, and despise others; to these such who trust in Christ have no respect; they neither esteem them, nor imitate them. *Nor such as turn aside to lies;* to idols, the lying vanities of the Gentiles; or to any doctrines injurious to the person, office, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and grace of Christ; which are no other than lies, and which those who believe in Christ have no respect to, but abhor both them and the abettors of them.

Ver. 5. *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, &c.*] This is the *new song*, as Aben Ezra rightly observes, which is said in ver. 3 to be put in the mouth of the Messiah; who sometimes speaks in the plural number, being the representative of his people, and sometimes in the singular; for it is the same person that speaks here who is continued speaking in the next verse, and following; and which are applied to Christ, Hab. x. 5. the *works* here said to be done, and to be *many* and *wonderful*, are not the creation of the world, the dividing of the sea, and feeding the people of Israel forty years in the wilderness, as Jarchi interprets them; but the incarnation of Christ, redemption by him, the resurrection of him from the dead; regeneration and conversion, and the preservation of the saints from the evil of the world, safe to the kingdom and glory of God; all which, as they are many and various, and display the manifold wisdom and grace of God, so they are marvellous, and will be the subject of the wonder of saints to all eternity. *And thy thoughts* which are *to us-ward;* that is, the decrees of God, as Aben Ezra truly explains them; the purposes, counsels, and intentions of God; which, though mentioned last, are before his works, and are the spring of them: these were in the mind of God from everlasting, were unknown till revealed, were thoughts of peace, and not of evil, and are unfrustrable, and ever fulfilled, and are manifold, precious, and amazing, Psal. cxxxix. 17. and these were concerning all the elect of God as considered in Christ, and members of his; and therefore he says *to us-ward;* and all the works before mentioned were done to them, or for them, and on their account; and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret the phrase, *because of us*, or *for our sakes;* even the incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the thoughts of them, were for them. *They cannot be reckoned up in order to thee;* or *there is none can order them unto thee* [i]; there is no power in man to do it, as

[h] מבור שאון *e cisterna sonitus*, Pagninus, Montanus; *strepitus*, Vatablus, the Targum & Kimchi; and to the same purpose Musculus, Cocceius, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; out of the pit of sounding calamity, Ainsworth.

[i] אין ערוך אליך *non est qui ordinet apud te*, Pagninus; none can count them in order to thee, Ainsworth.

Aben Ezra observes; or *there is none like unto thee*, as Jarchi and the Oriental versions; see Exod. xv. 11. Psal. lxxxix. 7. Isa. xl. 18, 25. though this sense seems to break in upon the account of the wonderful works and thoughts of God, which are still designed in the following clause. If *I could declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered*: that is, by men: from this general account of the many and wonderful works and thoughts of God, the Messiah passes on to take notice of one particular design and work of the Lord, the redemption of his people by the sacrifice of himself.

Ver. 6. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, &c.*] These were desired, willed, and appointed by God, and that very early, even from the times of our first parents; and, when performed aright, were acceptable to God, quite down to the times of the Messiah: indeed, when offered without faith in Christ, and with a wicked mind, to merit any thing at the hand of God, they were always abominable to him; and he likewise ever preferred love to himself, and of the neighbour, obedience to the commands of the moral law, and works of mercy to men, before all the sacrifices of the ceremonial law, 1 Sam. xv. 22. Hos. vi. 6. Mark xii. 33. nor were these ever in such esteem with him as the sacrifices of a broken and contrite heart, or of praise and thanksgiving, Psal. li. 16, 17. and lxix. 30, 31. nor were they ever regarded by him but as they respected Christ; nor were they ever designed to cleanse from sin, and take it away, but to lead to the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ: but none of these senses have place here: the meaning of the words is, that it was not the will of God, at the time this passage refers to, that legal sacrifices should continue any longer; and that they should not be offered up, even by good men, in the best manner, and to the best ends and purposes; the time being come that a better sacrifice should be offered, which was the sum and substance of them, and was prefigured by them. *Mine ears hast thou opened*; or *dug*, or *bored*[m]; in allusion, as is thought by many, to Exod. xxi. 6. though the phrase rather signifies the formation and excavation of the ear; or the preparing and fitting it for its use; that is, to hearken to the will of his heavenly Father, to become man, offer himself a sacrifice, and suffer and die in the room of his people; to which he became obedient, taking upon him the form of a servant, when found in fashion as a man; and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; see Isa. l. 4—6. in Heb. x. 5, the words are rendered as by the Septuagint, *but a body hast thou prepared me*; and with it the Arabic and Ethiopic versions agree; and so Apollinarius, "flesh of mortal generation;" a part of the body being put for the whole; and which, indeed, is supposed: for unless a body had been prepared for him, his ears could not have been opened; and it was in the body, in human nature, that he was the obedient servant; and this is to be understood, not only of a preparation of this body, in the purposes, counsel, and covenant of God; but chiefly of the formation of it in the womb of the virgin, where it was curiously wrought and prepared by the Holy Ghost, that he might have something to offer, and in it become, as he did, an offering and a sacrifice to God, of a sweet-smelling savour. *Burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required*; any longer; this body being prepared for the Messiah to be offered up in.

Ver. 7. *Then said I, &c.*] As in the council and covenant of peace, when and where he declared his willingness to come into the world, and make satisfaction for the sins of his people; so when the fulness of time was come for his appearance in human nature he repeated the same; for of the time of his coming into the world are these words interpreted, Heb. x. 5. when sacrifice and offering God would not have any longer continued, and when a body was prepared him, then he said, *Lo, I come*; O Father; as Apollinarius, in his metaphrase, adds; that is, freely, and without compulsion; immediately, at once, without any delay; and be himself, and not another; and this not by change of place, but by assumption of nature; taking the body, or human nature, prepared for him, and uniting it to himself; to which the word *lo* is prefixed as a note of attention and admiration; the incarnation of Christ being a wonderful affair, and of the utmost moment and importance. *In the volume of the book it is written of me*; either in the book of divine predestination, in the purposes and decrees of God, Psal. cxxxix. 16. or in the book of the Scriptures; either in general, John v. 39. Luke xxiv. 27, 44. or particularly in the book of the Psalms, Psal. i. 1, 2. and ii. 2, 6, 7. or rather in the book of the law, the five books of Moses, since these were the only books or volumes that were composed at the writing of this psalm; and it has respect not to Deut. xviii. 15. nor ch. xvii. 18. nor Exod. xxi. 6. but rather Gen. iii. 15. and seeing the coming of Christ into the world was not only appointed of God, agreed unto by Christ, but was prophesied of, and penned down in the sacred writings; therefore at the appointed time he came, freely and willingly. This book is called a volume, or roll, alluding to the manner of writing formerly; when what was wrote was finished, it was rolled about a stick in the manner of a cylinder; and in this form is the book of the law with the Jews to this day; see the note on Luke iv. 17.

Ver. 8. *I delight to do thy will, O my God, &c.*] This he came down from heaven to do, and this he did do, by preaching the Gospel, and working miracles; and above all by obtaining eternal redemption for his people, which he effected by fulfilling the law, becoming a sacrifice, and suffering and dying in their room; all which were the will of God, and grateful to him, and in doing which Christ took the utmost delight and pleasure, John iv. 34. Luke xii. 50. *Yea, thy law is within my heart*; either the whole moral law, under which he was, as man, and the surety of his people; and which was written upon his heart, and which he perfectly obeyed; or that particular law, injunction, and command laid upon him by his father, to offer himself a sacrifice, and lay down his life for men; which he agreed to, had it in his mind, his heart

[m] כרית fodisti, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus, Michaelis; perfodisti, Tigurine version, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; perforasti, Cocceius.

was set upon it, and he cheerfully complied with it, John x. 18. and xiv. 31.

Ver. 9. *I have preached righteousness in the great congregation*, &c.] Not the righteousness which the law requires men to do; but the righteousness which Christ himself wrought out, for the justification of them that believe; this he was a preacher, as well as the author of, and is part of the glad tidings he was anointed to preach, Isa. lxi. 1. and the word[s] here used signifies, for the most part, the publishing of good tidings; and this our Lord did publicly, before all the people, in the synagogues of the Jews, and in the temple, whither the people in great numbers resorted; especially at the three great festivals in the year; the feasts of passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, when all the males were obliged to appear, and made up a great congregation indeed; see John ii. 23. and v. 1, 14. and viii. 2. and xviii. 20. *Lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest;* Christ appeals to his divine Father, the searcher of hearts, and trier of reins, for the truth of this; that he had not laid any restraint upon his lips, nor kept back any thing in his ministry that was profitable; but had taught the way of God in great integrity and sincerity; had opened his mouth, and spoke freely and fully, and used great plainness of speech.

Ver. 10. *I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart*, &c.] Meaning not the essential righteousness of God, though that was abundantly declared in the wounds, sufferings, and death of Christ; and which was the end indeed of his being a propitiation for sin, Rom. iii. 25, 26. but his own righteousness, as before, which he wrought out, and brought in; and which is called the righteousness of God his father, because it is approved of by him, and accepted with him, and which he imputes to all his people. *I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation;* that is, the *faithfulness* of God in executing all his purposes, counsels, and decrees, which are said to be faithfulness and truth; and in fulfilling his covenant and promises, relating to the redemption and salvation of men by Christ; and in the mission of Christ into this world on that account; and in the accomplishment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning him; and in making good all the particular promises of support, help, and strength, made to the Messiah himself: and by his *salvation* is meant, that which is of God the Father's appointing, continuing, and settling, in the council and convenant of grace; which he sent his Son to be the author of, and which he has obtained; and is the great doctrine of the Gospel preached by himself, and his faithful ministers, Luke xix. 9, 10. Mark xvi. 16. *I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation;* or *in the great congregation*, as the Targum. By the *loving-kindness* of God is designed both his love to Christ, which was before the foundation of the world, and continued in his lowest state of humiliation, and which our Lord was far from concealing, but gave openly instances of it, John xvii. 24. and x. 17. and v. 20—23. and his love to his people; and which he declared to be the same with that which he is loved with, and instances in the gift of himself to them by his father, as the great evidence of it, John xvii. 23. and iii. 16. and by *truth* is intended the Gospel in general, which came by Christ, was preached by him, which he bore witness to, to do which was one end of his coming into the world; and this was not concealed by him, who is truth itself; but was fully and plainly declared by him, as it had not been before, John i. 17. and xviii. 37.

Ver. 11. *Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord*, &c.] This is a petition of Christ to his Father, when in the midst of his sorrows and sufferings, before related; and particularly when he hid his face from him, and withheld the discoveries of his tender and affectionate love. *Let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me;* as he had promised; of which promise some notice is given, Isa. xlix. 8. in the fulfilment of which the loving-kindness, truth, and faithfulness of God, would appear. Some read these words as expressive of faith in these things, *thou wilt not withhold*, &c. *thy loving-kindness and thy truth shall continually preserve me*[t].

Ver. 12. *For innumerable evils have compassed me about*, &c.] Like floods of water all around him; see Psal. xviii. 4. 5. Jonah ii. 5. these are the evils of punishment inflicted on him, as the surety and Saviour of his people; such as the sorrows and griefs he bore all his days; the cruel mockings and scourges he endured; his being buffeted and spit upon; his head crowned with thorns, and his hands and feet pierced with nails; insulted by men and devils; crucified between two thieves, and so died the shameful and painful death of the cross. *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me;* not any committed by him; he was conceived, born, and lived without sin, knew none, nor did he any; but the sins of his people, which were imputed to him, laid upon him, and which he voluntarily took and bore; and which he reckoned as his own, and was responsible for them; these, when he hung upon the cross, came upon him from all quarters, and he bore them in his own body upon the tree. *So that I am not able to look up;* or *cannot see*[v]; either the end of these iniquities, they being so numerous, as is after related; or he could not bear to look upon them, they were so filthy and nauseous, and he so pure and holy; or he could not behold his father's countenance, which these sins that were upon him separated him from, and caused to be hid from him; or, like one pressed down with the guilt of sin, as the poor publican was, could not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, Luke xviii. 13. *They are more than the hairs of mine head;* as they must needs be, since they were the iniquities of all the elect of God, of the whole general assembly and church of the first-born, written in heaven, Isa. liii. 6. *Therefore my heart faileth me;* as man; see Psal. xxii. 14. though being supported by his divine nature, and by his divine Father and eternal Spirit, he failed not, nor was he discouraged, Isa. xlii. 4. this is said to shew the truth of the human nature, the greatness of men's sins, the strictness of divine justice, and what strength was necessary to accomplish man's salvation.

[s] בשרתי εὐηγγελισάμην, Sept. evangelizavi, Schmidt, Michaelis; I have preached the glad tidings of justice, Ainsworth.

[t] לא תכלא non cohibebis, Gejerus, Michaelis; יצרוני custodient me, Vatablus, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[v] לא יכלתי לראות non potui videre, Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus; cernere, Cocceius; intueri, Gejerus.

Ver. 13. *Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me*, &c.] From the innumerable evils which compassed him about; from sinful men, and from devils, signified by the sword, dog, and lion, Psal. xxii. 20, 21. and from the power and dominion of death and the grave; all which was done when he was raised from the dead, and as the fruit and effect of God's well-pleasedness in him, and with what he did and suffered; see Psal. xxii. 8. and xviii. 19. *O Lord, make haste to help me*; see the note on Psal. xxii. 19.

Ver. 14. *Let them be ashamed and confounded together*, &c.] As they will be at the last day, when they shall see him whom they have pierced come in the clouds of heaven, in his own and his father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels. *That seek after my soul to destroy it*; that is, his life, as did Herod in his infancy, and the Scribes and Pharisees, chief priests and elders of the people of the Jews, frequently, and at last accomplished what they sought after. *Let them be driven backward*; as those were who came with Judas into the garden to apprehend him, John xviii. 6. *And put to shame that wish me evil*; as did the Jews, who sought all opportunities to insnare him, and that they might have to accuse him to the Roman governor; and who earnestly desired his crucifixion, and vehemently wished his death; see Psal. xli. 5.

Ver. 15. *Let them be desolate for a reward of their shame*, &c.] Of their shameful wishes, words, and actions, as they were: their habitations in Jerusalem were desolate, and so was their house or temple there, and their whole land, and they themselves were stripped of every thing, when Jerusalem was taken and destroyed; see Matt. xxiii. 38. Acts i. 20. *That say unto me, Aha, aha*; words expressive of joy, Psal. xxxv. 21, 25. exulting at his miseries and sufferings on the cross, Matt. xxvii. 39—44. so the Targum, "we "have rejoiced at his destruction, with joy at his "affliction."

Ver. 16. *Let all those that seek thee*, &c.] In the first place, with their whole hearts, earnestly and diligently, in Christ, and under the influences of his spirit, for pardon, righteousness, communion, larger measures of grace, and for honour, glory, immortality, and eternal life. *Rejoice and be glad in thee*; as their covenant-God, the Father of their mercies, the God of all comfort and salvation, who pardons their sins, clothes them with the robes of righteousness and garments of salvation, and accepts their persons in Christ; all which is matter of joy and gladness: Christ is concerned for the joy of his people, John xv. 11. the Targum is, *they shall*, or *let them rejoice, and be glad in thy word*; in himself, the essential Word, in whom there is always ground and reason of joy and gladness; because of his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. *Let such as love thy salvation*; either Christ, who is God's salvation, Gen. xlix. 18. Isa. xlix. 6. Luke ii. 29, 30. and who is loved by his people, universally, superlatively, and sincerely; or the salvation of him, his deliverance from the grave, resurrection from the dead, and exaltation; the benefits of which believers share in, and so have reason to love it: or the salvation he is the author of, which is loved by those that know it; partly because agreeable to the divine perfections, the glory of God is great in it; and partly because it is so full and complete in itself, and so suitable to them. *Say continually, the Lord be magnified*; let this be their constant employment in this world, as it will be for ever in the next, to ascribe greatness to God; or greatly to praise him, because of the great salvation wrought out for them.

Ver. 17. *But I am poor and needy*, &c.] As Christ was literally, 2 Cor. viii. 9. and in a spiritual sense, when deserted by his father, forsaken by his disciples, and surrounded by his enemies; and had the sins of his people, the curse of the law, and the wrath of God upon him. Yet *the Lord thinketh upon me*; thinketh *good* for me, as the Targum; or thinks highly of me; has me in great esteem though despised of men, and in such a suffering state. *Thou art my help and my deliverer*; he believed he should have what he prayed for, ver. 13. see Isa. l. 7, 8, 9. *Make no tarrying, O my God*; which is a repetition of the request in ver. 13.

PSALM XLI.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm of David.

In this psalm is a prophecy concerning Christ, and concerning Judas Iscariot, as runs part of the title in the Syriac version; and in the Arabic version it is called a prophecy concerning the incarnation, and the salutation of Judas; and certain it is that the ninth verse is to be understood of him, and of his betraying Christ into the hands of his enemies, since it is cited and applied to him by our Lord himself, John xiii. 18. so that having such a sure rule of interpretation, we may safely venture to explain the whole psalm of Christ, which treats both of his humiliation and exaltation: for it neither agrees with David wholly, nor with Hezekiah, to whom some ascribe it, as Theodoret remarks.

Ver. 1. *Blessed is he that considereth the poor*, &c.] Not the poor of the world in common, nor poor saints in particular, but some single poor man; for the word is in the singular number, and designs our Lord Jesus Christ, who, in the last verse of the preceding psalm, is said to be *poor and needy*; and so read the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions here; who became poor for our sakes, that we might be enriched by his poverty; being born of poor parents, educated in a mean manner, and in public life was ministered to by others: the word [q] here used signifies one that is attenuated, weak, and exhausted either of his substance or strength, or both; as Christ was in his state of humiliation, when he was emptied of his riches, and,

[q] דל tenuem, Montanus, Cocceius; attenuatum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; the poor weakling, Ainsworth.

though Lord of all, had not where to lay his head; and whose strength was dried up like a potsherd, when he suffered on the cross; and indeed at best he was encompassed with weaknesses and infirmities: and in this his low estate he is to be wisely considered, or attended to with wisdom and understanding; and he may be said wisely to consider him, who considers how great a person he is, that came into such a low estate for us; not a mere man, but above angels and men, that has all the perfections of deity in him, is the eternal Son of God, truly and properly God, and the Creator of all things, and Governor of the universe; which consideration will engage to and encourage faith and hope in him, lead to adore his wonderful grace, and to admire his condescension and humility in becoming poor and weak; as also who considers that the poverty of Christ was for our sakes, and that we might be made rich with the riches of grace and glory; and considers it so as not to be offended with it; see Matt. xi. 6. and xiii. 57. and which may serve to support us under all meanness and infirmity, and in whatsoever estate saints may come into; and likewise who considers him in his offices which he exercised in that his estate as the apostle and high-priest of our profession; and him in his exalted state in heaven; see Heb. xii. 3. and iii. 1. and vii. 4. and viii. 1. in a word, he wisely considers him, who believes in him as his Saviour, prizes him as the pearl of great price, cleaves close unto him, and follows him wherever he goes; who desires to know more of him, is concerned for his honour, interest, kingdom and glory, and pities his poor members, and freely and bountifully communicates to them; and so the Targum, "blessed is the man that wisely considers "the afflictions of the poor, that he may have mercy "on him;" and such an one is an happy man, and the following things said of him prove him to be so. *The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble*: or *in the evil day*[r]; out of all his trouble, temporal and spiritual, of body and soul; in every time of affliction, private and personal; or in a time of public calamity; perhaps reference may be had to the time of Jerusalem's destruction, which was a time of great tribulation, Matt. xxiv. 21. when those who did not consider Christ in his poor and low estate, but despised and rejected him, were destroyed; and such as did were saved from that calamity: and it may also include the day of judgment, which is the evil day, unto which the wicked are reserved, and when they will be punished with everlasting destruction; but then those that consider Christ, and believe in him, will be saved from wrath. Some[s] take these words, with what follows in the two next verses, as a prayer, and as delivered by him that visits the sick, for his comfort; and so Joseph Kimchi interprets it of an honourable man visiting a sick man, and instructing and comforting him with such words as these, that *the Lord will deliver him*, &c.

Ver. 2. *The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive*, &c.] Amidst a thousand deaths, to which he is exposed for making a profession of his faith in Christ; see 2 Cor. i. 10. and iv. 10, 11. and vi. 9. or this may refer to his spiritual life, which is hid and preserved in Christ, in whom he believes; and is safe and secure; because Christ lives he shall live also, and shall never die the second death, nor be hurt by it, but shall have everlasting life. And *he shall be blessed upon the earth*; with temporal blessings; for whatever he has, be it more or less, he has it with the blessing of God, and as a blessing of the covenant, and in love, and so is a blessing indeed: and with spiritual blessings; with peace, pardon, righteousness, and a right and title to eternal glory and happiness; and he will be blessed in the new earth, in which righteousness will dwell, and where he will dwell, live, and reign with Christ a thousand years. *And thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies*; not into the will of Satan, that roaring lion who would devour him if he might; nor of wicked men, and furious persecutors, whose wrath the Lord makes to praise him; and the remainder of it is restrained by him; some read these words as a prayer, *do not thou deliver him*, &c. see Psal. xxvii. 12. so Pagninus, Montanus, Junius and Tremellius, Ainsworth, and others.

Ver. 3. *The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing*, &c.] When on a sick bed, or a death-bed, where he lies languishing, and ready to expire; when his natural strength, spirits, and heart fail him, then the Lord strengthens him with strength in his soul; and is the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever. The Targum is, "the Word of the Lord "shall help him in his life, and shall appear to him "on the bed of his illness, to quicken him." *Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness*; or *all his bed thou hast turned* or *wilt turn in his sickness*[t]; meaning not the recovery of him from a bed of sickness to a state of health, which is the sense given by many; much less a turning him from a state of ease and rest into trouble and distress; but making him easy and comfortable on a bed of sickness; which, in a literal sense, is done when a sick person's bed is turned or made, or he is turned upon it from side to side; so the Lord, by the comforts of his spirit, makes a sick and death-bed easy to them that believe in Christ, and often puts that triumphant song into their mouths in their dying moments, *O death! where is thy sting?* &c. 1 Cor. xv. 55. and this is the peaceful end and blissful state of such who wisely consider Christ and believe in him; whose poor and low estate, through the sins of his people on him, the insults of his enemies, and the treachery of one of his disciples, is described in the following verses.

Ver. 4. *I said, Lord, be merciful unto me*, &c.] See the note on Psal. xl. 11. *Heal my soul*; not that it was diseased with sin in such sense as the souls of other men are; but it is to be understood as a petition for comfort whilst bearing the sins of others, and which Christ as man stood in need of when in the garden and on the cross; so healing signifies comfort in trouble, as in Isa. lvii. 18. Mal. iv. 2. *for I have sinned against thee*; or *unto thee*, or *before thee*, as the Targum; not that any sin was committed by him in his own person, but he having all the sins of his people on him, which he calls his own, Psal. xl. 12. he was treated as a sin-

[r] ביום רעה in die mala, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Muscalus.
[s] Vid. R. David Kimchium in loc.

[t] הפכת versasti, Pagninus, Montanus; vertisti, Vatablus; ita vertes, Michaelis; so Ainsworth; στρεψαι [illegible], Apollinarius.

ner, and as guilty before God, Isa. liii. 12. and so the words may be read, *for I am a sinner unto thee*[u]; I am counted as one by thee, having the sins of my people imputed to me; and am bound unto thee, or under obligation to bear the punishment of sin; or thus, *for I have made an offering for sin unto thee*[w], so the word is used, Lev. vi. 26. and ix. 15. and so it might be rendered in Lev. v. 7, and 11. and perhaps may be better rendered so in Lev. iv. 3. and be understood, not of the sin of the anointed priest, but of his offering a sacrifice for the soul that sinned through ignorance, ver. 2, which offering is directed to: and then the sense here is, heal me, acquit me, discharge me, and deliver me out of this poor and low estate in which I am; for I have made my soul an offering for sin, and thereby have made atonement for all the sins of my people laid upon me; and accordingly he was acquitted and justified, 1 Tim. iii. 16.

Ver. 5. *Mine enemies speak evil of me*, &c.] That is, the Jews, who were enemies to his person, people, doctrines and ordinances, and would not have him to reign over them; these spake evil of him, charged him with being a glutton and a wine-bibber; said he had a devil, and was a Samaritan; imputed his miracles to diabolical influence; branded his doctrine with blasphemy, and spoke against his religion and worship, and wished him ill, saying, *when shall he die;* they had a good will to assassinate him privately, but upon mature deliberation they consulted and determined to take what advantage they could against him, and deliver him up to the Roman governor; they feared, should he go on and succeed, through his doctrines and miracles, as he did, it would go ill with them; and they concluded, could he be brought to death, it would clearly appear to the common people that he was not the Messiah; though this was the very thing he came into the world for, and which he himself was very desirous of; because hereby, and hereby only, the salvation of his people could be brought about; and though this was a thing foretold in prophecy, yet it seems as if Christ's enemies the Jews, and Satan himself, were ignorant of it, and of its virtue and use to save men; however, though it was an ill wish in them, it was well for us that he did die, though the consequence is not as they wished. *And his name perish?* that is, the fame of his doctrine and miracles, the memory of him and his worthy deeds, particularly his Gospel, which so fully expresses the glory of his person and grace; yea, he himself, for they hoped that upon his death he would come into general disgrace, that his name would never be mentioned but with reproach, that his Gospel would be no more preached, and that he would be accursed of God and men: in all which they were sadly disappointed; for, upon his resurrection from the dead, he had a name given him above every name; his memory became precious to thousands; an ordinance was appointed to remember him to the end of the world in all his churches; his Gospel was ordered to be preached to all the world, as it was; and he himself is blessed for evermore.

Ver. 6. *And if he come to see* me, *&c.*] Meaning any one of his enemies, when they came, as pretended, to pay him a friendly visit. A late learned writer[x] interprets this of Absalom, who visited his father when he had the small-pox, which he thinks, after mentioned, of which his enemies expected he would die, when Absalom pretended great concern for his life; though he, with others, were plotting against him, should he live, to destroy him. *He speaketh vanity*, lies and falsehoods, in an hypocritical manner, with a double heart; his mouth and his heart not agreeing together; see Matt. xxii. 16. *His heart gathereth iniquity to itself;* amasses to itself greater treasures of wickedness still, though that itself is desperately wicked, and very wickedness: this is to be understood of the enemies of Christ observing his words and actions, and laying them up, with a wicked intention, against a proper time. When *he goeth abroad, he telleth* it; as in the instances concerning giving tribute to Cæsar, destroying the temple, and saying he was the son of God, Matt. xxii. 17, 18. compared with Luke xxiii. 2. John ii. 19, 21. compared with Matt. xxvi. 60, 61. John v. 17, 18. compared with John xix. 5.

Ver. 7. *All that hate me whisper together against me*, &c.] That is, they privately conspired against him; see Matt. xxii. 15. John xi. 53. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. *Against me do they devise my hurt;* not only to take away his name and credit, but his life.

Ver. 8. *An evil disease*, say they, *cleaveth fast unto him*, &c.] Not any bodily one, of which they might hope he would die; much less any foul disease, the disease of sin; but, as the phrase may be rendered, *a word of Belial*[y]; that is, a wicked charge or accusation; a charge of sin brought against him by the sons of Belial, as of blasphemy and sedition, which they concluded would be fastened upon him, and stick by him, and in which they should succeed to their wishes; or else the shameful punishment, the death of the cross, inflicted on him, which they fancied would fix an indelible mark of infamy and scandal on him, since cursed is he that hangeth on a tree. *And now that he lieth, let him rise up no more;* inasmuch as he was dead, of which they had full proof, and was laid in the grave, his tomb watched, and the stone rolled to it sealed; they thought all was safe, and it was all over with him, that he would never rise again, as he had given out, and his disciples uncapable of committing a fraud they afterwards accused them with: this, according to the above learned writer, see ver. 6, was said by Absalom, as he thinks Ahithophel is the person designed in the following verse.

Ver. 9. *Yea, mine own familiar friend*, &c.] Or, *the man of my peace*[z]; who did live peaceably with him, and ought always to have done so; whom he treated as his friend, as the rest of the apostles; calling him to that high office, and ordaining him to it, and qualifying him for it; and whom he called by the name of friend, when he came to betray him; Judas is meant. *In whom I trusted;* with the bag and the money in it, both for the sustenance of his own family, the apostles, and for the relief of the poor, John xii.

[u] לך tibi, Paguinus, Montanus, Coccelus.
[w] Obtuli sacrificium pro peccato, Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 249, 923.
[x] Delany's Life of King David, vol. 2. p. 157, 158.

[y] דבר בליעל verbum Belijahal, Montanus, Musculus, Cocceius, Gejerus.
[z] איש שלומי vir pacis meæ, Paguinus, Montanus, Vatablus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

6. and xiii. 29. *Which did eat of my bread;* of his bread in common with the rest of the apostles; and who was eating with him when he gave the sign who should betray him; and who seems to have eaten of the bread in the Lord's supper: even this same person *hath lifted up his heel against me;* by supplanting him, dealing hypocritically with him, and betraying him into the hands of his enemies: the metaphor is either taken from an unruly horse throwing his rider, and then ungenerously spurning at him, and trampling on him; or from wrestlers, who seek to supplant and trip up each other's heels; which shews the ingratitude, baseness, and treachery of Judas; see John xiii. 18.

Ver. 10. *But thou, O Lord, be merciful unto me, and raise me up,* &c.] Not from a bed of illness, nor from a state of poverty and want; but from the dead: it was by the will of his divine Father that he suffered death, and it was to him he made satisfaction and reconciliation for the sins of his people, by his sufferings and death; and therefore it was but a reasonable request, that, having done this, he should be raised from the dead: besides, his father had promised it, and he had believed it; so that this prayer was a prayer of faith, founded upon a divine promise; and the resurrection of Christ is for the most part ascribed to God the Father as his act; though not to the exclusion of the Son, who had power, as to lay down his life, so to take it up again; and though the resurrection of Christ from the dead is not only an act of power, but also of justice, he having paid his people's debts, atoned for their sins, and satisfied law and justice, it was but right and equitable that he should be discharged from the prison of the grave, and set free; yet here it is requested as an act of mercy, grace, and kindness; for, by doing it, it would appear that his father's wrath was taken away from him, and that he had turned himself from the fierceness of his anger to him, and that he was well-pleased with his righteousness and sacrifice; besides, it was giving him glory, as well as rolling away the reproach he lay under; and, however, it was in mercy to his body the church, whom he represented, since it was for their justification; nay, their regeneration is influenced by it; and so is the resurrection of their bodies, of which Christ's resurrection is the pledge and pattern. The end Christ had in view in making the request follows. *That I may requite them;* not *him*, Judas, last mentioned; for justice pursued and overtook him; he destroyed himself, and was gone to his own place, before Christ's resurrection from the dead; but *them*, the Jews, as a body; his enemies that spoke ill of him, wished ill to him, conspired against him, to take away his life, and did bring him to the dust of death: and this his requital of them, after his resurrection, was either of good for evil, by ordering his disciples to preach his Gospel, first at Jerusalem, to those very persons who were concerned in his death, many of whom were converted, baptized, and added to the church; or of evil, for their evil to him, which had its accomplishment in part, at the destruction of Jerusalem, and will more fully at the day of judgment, when they that have pierced him shall see him come in the clouds of heaven.

Ver. 11. *By this I know that thou favourest me,* &c.] Or *delightest in me**; as he did, both as his son and his servant; in his obedience, sufferings, and death, whereby his counsels were accomplished, his covenant ratified, and the salvation of his people procured; and which delight and well-pleasedness in him was the ground of his deliverance from the power of death and the grave; see Psal. xviii. 19. and xxii. 8. the token by which Christ knew this was, *because mine enemy doth not triumph over me;* Judas could not; he was too short-lived, he was quickly taken off, and all the woes fell upon him imprecated on him, Psal. cix. 6—10. nor the Jews; for though they were highly delighted when they had fastened him to the cross, and when he was dead, and laid in the grave; yet they could not sing their jubilee-song over him until the third day was past; for they knew he had given out that he should rise again the third day; on which day he did rise, and his apostles preached that he was alive, and through him the resurrection of the dead, to their great grief, vexation, and mortification: nor did Satan, the enemy of Christ, personal and mystical, triumph over him; not in the wilderness, where, after he had tempted him, he was obliged to leave him; nor in the garden, and his agony there, where he was strengthened by an angel; nor even on the cross; for on that Christ himself triumphed over Satan and his principalities, whom he spoiled, and destroyed the devil and all his works; and, at his ascension to heaven, led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men, in token of triumph, and went forth, in the ministration of the Gospel, conquering, and to conquer; turning men from the power of Satan, and causing his servants to triumph in him, whilst they were in every place diffusing the savour of his knowledge.

Ver. 12. *And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity,* &c.] In the innocence of his nature, being free from sin, original and actual; in the uprightness of his life and conversation before God and men; and in the perfection of his obedience and sacrifice, whereby he brought in a perfect righteousness, made complete atonement, and obtained full salvation and redemption for his people; and, because of all this, Jehovah the Father upheld him in his sufferings, as man and Mediator, that he failed not, and was not discouraged: or rather the sense is, that by several things which turned up in Providence, as the disagreement of the witnesses, declaration of his judge, and the confession of Judas his betrayer, he was cleared of the charges brought against him, and his innocence was maintained, and he upheld in it; but especially this was done by raising him from the dead, when he was openly acquitted, discharged, and justified, and declared to be the holy One of God, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Psal. xvi. 10. *And settest me before thy face for ever;* after his resurrection, he was introduced into the presence of his Father, and was made glad with his countenance; where he sits before him as the Angel of his presence, and appears in the presence of God in the behalf of his people; is the Lamb in the midst of the throne, as though he had been slain; where his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, are ever in view for their acceptance, and

* חפצת בי complacuisti in me, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; delectaris me, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

where he ever lives to make intercession for them; for here he will continue until the time of the restitution of all things.

Ver. 13. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel*, &c.] Which is said, either by the Messiah, on account of the delight his Father had in him; the favour he had shewn him in raising him from the dead, maintaining his innocence, and exalting him at his own right hand; and for all the blessings of grace the whole Israel of God enjoyed through him: or else by the church, who is meant by Israel, the Lord is the God of in a covenant-way; who, hearing such things done to her Lord and head, breaks out into an exclamation of praise, and ascribes blessing and glory to God for them, which is due to him. *From everlasting, and to everlasting*; that is, throughout all ages, world without end, Eph. iii. 21. *Amen and Amen*: which word, as Kimchi observes, signifies confirmation; and the doubling of it is for the greater confirmation of what is expressed. Here ends the first part of the book of Psalms, which is divided into five parts by the Jews[a].

PSALM XLII.

To the chief Musician, Maschil, for the sons of Korah.

OF the word *Maschil*, see the note on the title of the 32d Psalm. Korah was he who was at the head of a conspiracy against Moses and Aaron, for which sin the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed alive him and his company, and fire devoured two hundred and fifty more; the history of which is recorded in Numb. xvi. yet all his posterity were not cut off, Numb. xxvi. 11. some were in David's time porters, or keepers of the gates of the tabernacle, and some were singers; see 1 Chron. vi. 33. and ix. 19. 2 Chron. xx. 19. and to the chief musician was this psalm directed for them to sing, for they were not the authors of it, as some[b] have thought; but most probably David himself composed it; and it seems to have been written by him, not as personating the captives in Babylon, as Theodoret, but on his own account, when he was persecuted by Saul, and driven out by men from abiding in the Lord's inheritance, and was in a strange land among the Heathen, where he was reproached by them; and every thing in this psalm agrees with his state and condition; or rather when he fled from his son Absalom, and was in those parts beyond Jordan, mentioned in this psalm; see 2 Sam. xvii. 24—27. so the Syriac inscription, the song which David sung in the time of his persecution, desiring to return to Jerusalem.

Ver. 1. *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks*, &c.] Either through a natural thirst that creature is said to have; or through the heat of the summer-season; and especially when hunted by dogs, it betakes itself to rivers of water, partly to make its escape, and partly to extinguish its thirst, and refresh itself. The word here used denotes the cry of the hart, when in distress for water, and pants after it, and is peculiar to it; and the verb being of the feminine gender, hence the Septuagint render it the *hind*; and Kimchi conjectures that the reason of it may be, because the voice of the female may be stronger than that of the male; but the contrary is asserted by the philosopher[c], who says, that the male harts cry much stronger than the females; and that the voice of the female is short, but that of the male is long, or protracted. Schindler[d] gives three reasons why these creatures are so desirous of water; because they were in desert places, where water was wanting; and another, that being heated by destroying and eating serpents, they coveted water to refresh themselves; and the third, when followed by dogs, they betake themselves into the water, and go into that for safety. *So panteth my soul after thee, O God*: being persecuted by men, and deprived of the word and worship of God, which occasioned a vehement desire after communion with him in his house and ordinances; some render the words, *as the field*, or *meadow*, *desires the shower*, &c.[e]; or thirsts after it when parched with drought; see Isa. xxxv. 7. Psal. lxiii. 1. and by these metaphors, one or the other, is expressed the psalmist's violent and eager thirst after the enjoyment of God in public worship.

Ver. 2. *My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God*, &c.] Who is so called, in opposition to the idols of the Gentiles, which were lifeless statues; and who is the author, giver, and maintainer of natural life; and who has promised and provided eternal life in his son; and is himself the fountain of life, and the fountain of living waters, and a place of broad rivers and streams: particularly his loving-kindness, which is better than life, is a pure river of water of life, the streams whereof make glad the saints; and hence it is that the psalmist thirsted after God, and the discoveries of his love: saying, *when shall I come and appear before God?* meaning, not in heaven, as desiring the beatific vision; but in the tabernacle, where were the worship of God, and the ark, the symbol of the divine Presence, and where the Israelites appeared before him, even in Zion: see Psal. lxxxiv. 7.

Ver. 3. *My tears have been my meat day and night*, &c.] That is, he could not eat for sorrow, like Hannah, 1 Sam. i. 7, 8. or whilst he was eating tears fell in plenty, and they were as common, day and night, as his food, and mixed with it[f]; see Psal. lxxx. 5. *While they continually say unto me*, his enemies the Philistines, *where is thy God?* theirs were to be seen and pointed at, as the host of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, and idols of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone;

[a] Midrash Tillim, fol. 2. 1. Kimchi Prefat. in Psal.
[b] So R. Moses in Muis, Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 918, & others.
[c] Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 4. c. 11.
[d] Lexic. Pentaglott. col. 60. so Kimchi.
[e] Sept. & Symmachus apud Drusium.
[f] — lachrymæque alimenta fuere, Ovid. Metamorph. l. 10. Fab. 1. v. 75.

wherefore they ask, where was his? but David's God was invisible; he is in the heavens, and does what he pleases, Psal. cxv. 2, 3. or the sense is, that if there was such a God he believed in and professed, and he was his servant, surely he would never have suffered him to fall into so much distress and calamity, but would have appeared for his relief and deliverance; and therefore tauntingly, and by way of reproach, ask where he was.

Ver. 4. *When I remember these things, &c.*] Either the reproaches of his enemies; or rather his past enjoyments of God in his house, he after makes mention of. *I pour out my soul in me:* that is, he had no life nor spirit in him, but was quite overwhelmed with distress and anguish; or he poured out his soul in prayer to God, that it might be with him as in times past. *For I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God:* the place of public worship, whither he had often gone, with great pleasure and delight; and, which added thereto, there were many that went along with him; or whom he had *caused to go*[g], had brought along with him; which is the sense of the word, only used here and in Isa. xxxviii. 15. as Dr. Hammond from R. Tanchum and Aben Walid, has shewn: a good man will not only attend divine worship himself, but will bring others with him: but now, he could neither go alone, nor in company, the remembrance of which greatly affected his mind; see Psal. cxxxvii. 1. *With the voice of joy and praise:* the people singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. *With a multitude that kept holy-day;* as especially on the three great festivals in the year, the feasts of passover, pentecost, and tabernacles, when all the males of Israel appeared before God together, and which was a large multitude; and a delightful sight it was to behold them, when they were all engaged in religious worship at once.

Ver. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* &c.] The psalmist corrects himself, as being too much depressed in spirit with his present circumstances, and expostulates with himself; adding, *and* why *art thou disquieted in me?* which suggests, that the dejections of God's people are unreasonable ones; sin itself is no just cause and reason of them; for though it is very disagreeable, loathsome, and abhorring, troublesome and burdensome, to a spiritual man, and is ingenuously confessed, and heartily mourned over, and is matter of humiliation; yet no true reason of dejection: because there is forgiveness of it with God; the blood of Christ has been shed for the remission of it; it has been bore and done away by him; nor is there any condemnation for it to them that are in him; and though it rages, and threatens to get the ascendant; yet it is promised it shall not have the dominion over the saints; neither the nature of it, being great, as committed against God himself, nor the multitude of sins, nor the aggravated circumstances of them, are just causes of dejection, since the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin; nor are Satan and his temptations; he is indeed an enemy, very powerful, subtle, and terrible; he is the strong man armed, the old serpent, and a roaring lion; and his temptations are very troublesome and grieving; and it becomes the saints to be upon their guard against him and them; but they have no reason to be cast down on account hereof; for God, who is on the side of his people, is mightier than he; Christ is stronger than the strong man armed, and the divine Spirit who is in them is greater than he that is in the world: Satan is under divine restraints, and can go no further in tempting than he is suffered, and his temptations are overruled for good; besides, good armour is provided for the Christian to fight against him with, and in a short time he will be bruised under his feet: nor are the hidings of God's face a sufficient reason of dejection; for though such a case is very distressing, and gives great trouble to those that love the Lord; nor can they, nor does it become them to sit easy and unconcerned in such circumstances, as they are great trials of faith and patience; yet it is the experience of the people of God in all ages: some good ends are answered hereby, as to bring saints to a sense of sins, which has deprived them of the divine Presence, to make them prize it the more when they have it, and to be careful of losing it for the future. Besides, the love of God continues the same when he hides and chides; and he will return again, and will not finally and totally forsake his people; and in a little while they shall be for ever with him, and see him as he is; and though by one providence or another they may be deprived for a while of the word, worship, and ordinances of God, he that provides a place for his church, and feeds and nourishes her in the wilderness, can make up the lack of such enjoyments by his presence and spirit. The means and methods the psalmist took to remove his dejections and disquietudes of mind are as follow. *Hope thou in God:* for the pardon of sin; for which there is good ground of hope, and so no reason to be cast down on account of it; for strength against Satan's temptations, which is to be had in Christ, as well as righteousness; and for the appearance of God, and the discoveries of his love, who has his set time to favour his people, and therefore to be hoped, and quietly waited for. Hope is of great use against castings down; it is an helmet, an erector of the head, which keeps it upright, and from bowing down: it is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and is of great service in the troubles of life, and against the fears of death. *For I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance;* or *the salvations of his countenance*[h]; which implies that the psalmist believed, notwithstanding his present circumstances, that he should have salvation upon salvation; salvation of every kind; or a full and complete one, which should spring, not from any merits of his, but from the free grace and favour of God, expressed in his gracious countenance towards him; and also intimates, that the light of his countenance would be salvation to him[i] now; and that his consummate happiness hereafter would lie in beholding his face for evermore: all which would give him occasion and opportunity of praising the Lord. Now such a faith and persuasion

[g] אדדם deducebam, Tigurine version; assumebam mihi illos, Michaelis; efficiebam eos in societatem collectos socios esse mihi, Gussetius, p. 190.

[h] ישועות פניו salutes faciei ipsius, Cocceius; so Michaelis.

[i] Salutes sunt facies ejus, De Dieu.

as this is a good antidote against dejections of soul, and disquietude of mind; see Psal. xxvii. 13.

Ver. 6. *O my God, my soul is cast down within me*, &c.] Which the psalmist repeats, partly to shew the greatness of his dejection, though he had not lost his view of interest in God as his covenant-God; and partly to observe another method he made use of to remove his dejection and refresh his spirits; and that was by calling to mind past experiences of divine goodness. *Therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan*; the country round about it, or rather beyond it; which was at the furthest parts of the land of Canaan, where David was obliged to flee, and where he had often met with God. *And of the Hermonites*; who inhabited the mountain of Hermon; or the Hermonian mountains, as the Targum; see Psal. cxxxiii. 3. a mountain upon the border of the land of Israel eastward, and which was very high; Cocceius thinks the Geshurites are meant; see 1 Sam. xxvii. 8. here also the Lord had appeared to him, and for him. *And from the hill Mizar*; or *the little hill*[k]; which might be so in comparison of Hermon. The above interpreter thinks Zoar is meant, which Lot so called, Gen. xix. 20, 22. which was near Sodom and Gomorrah: Kimchi thinks it might be Zior, mentioned in Josh. xv. 54. but, be it what or where it will, in this little hill David enjoyed the divine Presence; or was indulged with some remarkable favour; from all which he concludes he had no just reason to be dejected and disquieted in his mind: and right it is for the people of God to call to mind past experiences, and make mention of them; partly for the glory of divine grace, and to express their gratitude to God, and their sense of his goodness; and partly to cheer and refresh their own spirits, and prevent dejection and despondency: and delightful it is to call to mind, how, at such a time, and in such a place, the Lord was pleased to manifest his love, apply some gracious promise, or deliver from some sore temptation or distress: all which must tend to encourage faith and hope. The Jewish writers differently interpret these words; Jarchi, of David's remembrance of the wonderful works God did for the people of Israel of old, in drying up the river Jordan, and giving them the law on Mount Sinai, a little hill, in comparison of some others: Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, understand them as a reason of his dejection, when he remembered how the Israelites came from those several parts to the solemn feasts at Jerusalem, which he was now deprived of; and the Targum paraphrases them of the inhabitants of those places, and of the people that received the law on Mount Sinai, remembering God; and so Arama thinks *beyond Jordan* is mentioned because the law was given there; and by the hill Mizar he understands Sinai: and some Christian interpreters consider them as a reason why David's soul was cast down in him, he being in such places as here mentioned, at a distance from his own house, from Jerusalem, and the place of divine worship, and so render the words, *because that I remember thee*, &c.[l].

Ver. 7. *Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of the water-spouts*, &c.] By which are meant afflictions, comparable to the deep waters of the sea, for their multitude and overwhelming nature; see Psal. lxix. 1, 2. Isa. xliii. 2. these came pouring down, one after another, upon the psalmist: as soon as one affliction was over, another came, as in the case of Job; which is signified by one calling to another, and were clamorous, troublesome, and very grievous and distressing. *All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me*; with which he seemed to be covered and overwhelmed, as a ship is at sea. It may be observed, that the psalmist calls afflictions God's water-spouts, and *his* waves and *his* billows; because they are appointed, sent, ordered, and overruled by him, and made to work for the good of his people: and now, though these might seem to be a just cause of dejection, yet they were not, as appears from the following verse.

Ver. 8. Yet *the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day-time*, &c.] Which is a tender affection in God towards his people, springs from his sovereign will and pleasure, is from everlasting, is ever the same, never removes from them, and is better than life; the effects of which are all spiritual blessings, grace, and glory: and this the Lord *commands* when he sends it forth with power, makes a clear manifestation and home application of it to them; when he commands his covenant, or bestows covenant-blessings on them; when he commands his strength, or gives them strength to bear up under afflictions; when he commands deliverances for Jacob, or works salvation for them; and when he commands blessings temporal and spiritual on them, especially life for evermore; see Psal. cxi. 9. and lxviii. 29. and xliv. 4. and cxxxiii. 3. and this is done in *the day-time*; either, as some interpret it, in a fit and seasonable time, in God's appointed time, who has his set time to favour his people, and shew his loving-kindness to them; or openly and publicly, so as themselves and others may see the salvation of the Lord; or continually; for mercy, goodness, and loving-kindness, follow them all the days of their lives; yea, are from everlasting to everlasting: and these words may be read either in the past tense, as some do, *yet the Lord hath commanded*[m], &c. and so respect what had been, and relate to the former experiences and manifestations of the love of God, with which the psalmist encourages himself under his present afflictions; or in the future, as in our version; and so they are an expression of faith as to what would be hereafter, that the Lord would appear again, and shew him his face and favour. *And in the night his song shall be with me*; signifying hereby, that he strongly believed he should have occasion of singing praise to God in the night-season, though he was now in such mournful circumstances: he calls it *his song*; that is, the Lord's song; because the matter of it are his loving-kindness, and the blessings springing from it; because the Lord himself is the subject of it; his perfections, his works, his salvation and glory; and because he gives songs in the night, and puts them into the mouths of his peo-

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[k] מהר מצער de monte modico, V. L. Musculus; parvo, Pagninus, Vatablus; so Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[l] על־כן propterea quod, Tigurine version, Piscator, Muis; quia, Noldius, p. 727, No. 1790.

[m] יצוה præcepit, Tigurine version; mandavit, Hammond; so Aben Ezra and others.

ple; see Isa. xii. 2. Job xxxv. 10. and the psalmist says it would be *with* him, in his heart, and in his mouth, and be his constant companion wherever he was, lying down, or rising up; and that *in the night:* either figuratively understood of affliction and distress, out of which he would be delivered, and so be compassed about with songs of deliverance; or literally, it being a time of leisure to call to mind the salvation and mercies of the day, and be thankful for them; see Psal. lxxvii. 6. and cxix. 62. Acts xvi. 25. And *my prayer unto the God of my life:* natural, spiritual, and eternal; being the author, giver, and preserver of each; and this is no inconsiderable mercy, to have such a God to pray unto in a time of distress; as well as in a time of salvation, to go to, and make known requests with thanksgiving; which seems to be intended here, since it is joined with a song. Prayer and praise go together, the object of which are not lifeless idols, that cannot save; but the living God, who is a God hearing and answering prayer, and does not despise the prayer of the destitute. The prayer of the psalmist follows.

Ver. 9. *I will say unto God my rock,* &c.] A name frequently given to the eternal God, Father, Son, and Spirit, Deut. xxxii. 4, 31. 1 Cor. x. 4. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3. see the note on Psal. xviii. 2. *Why hast thou forgotten me?* see the note on Psal. xiii. 1. *Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?* meaning perhaps Saul; though it may be applied to any spiritual enemy, sin, Satan, and the world; who are very oppressive and afflicting, and occasion continual mourning to the children of God.

Ver. 10. As *with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me,* &c.] The reproaches of his enemies were grievous and cutting to him, as if a sword pierced through the marrow in his bones, which, being very sensible, gives exquisite pain. There is a various reading here: some copies, as Vatablus observes, read ב, *in,* or with, and others כ, *as,* which seems to be the truest; and our translators supply *as,* to make the sense, though they read *with;* but some[a] only read *as;* and the sense is, the reproaches cast upon the psalmist were as a sword cutting and killing; and these reproaches were as follow. *While they say daily unto me, where is thy God?* see the note on ver. 3.

Ver. 11. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* &c.] The same expostulation as in ver. 5. and so is what follows, *why art thou disquieted within me?* and the same argument and means are made use of to remove dejection and disquietude. *Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him;* see the note there; to which is added a new argument, taken from the grace and goodness of God, and covenant-interest in him. Who is *the health of my countenance, and my God;* as the bodily health of man is seen in the countenance, and for the most part to be judged of by it; so is the spiritual health of the saints, and which they have from the Lord; when he, as the sun of righteousness, arises upon them with healing in his wings, he, by his gracious presence, makes their countenances cheerful, fills them with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and causes them to lift up their heads with an holy boldness and confidence, and without shame and fear: or as it may be rendered, who *is the salvations of my countenance*[b]; that is, who is or will be the author of full and complete salvation to me; which will be so public and open, so clear and manifest, as to be beheld by myself and others; and this the psalmist mentions, in order to remove his present dejections; and besides, this God of salvation he believed was his covenant-God, and would be so even unto death; and therefore he had no just reason to be dejected and disquieted.

PSALM XLIII.

THIS psalm is without a title; but may well enough be thought to be one of David's: and the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, and Syriac versions, call it a psalm of David, and the latter adds, when Jonathan told him that Saul intended to kill him; and certain it is, that it was wrote by the same person, at the same time, and upon the same occasion as the preceding; seeing some of the same expressions are used in it; and some take this and the preceding to be but one psalm, and this might be written with that on account of the rebellion of his son Absalom.

Ver. 1. *Judge me, O God,* &c.] The Targum adds, *with the judgment of truth:* see Rom. ii. 2. *And plead my cause:* which was a righteous one; and therefore he could commit it to God to be tried and judged by him, and could put it into his hands to plead it for him; see the note on Psal. xxxv. 1. *Against an ungodly nation:* meaning either the Philistines, among whom he was; or his own nation, when they joined his son Absalom in rebellion against him: some understand it of the great numbers that were with Saul, when he was persecuted by him. *O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man:* either Absalom, who, under pretence of a vow he had vowed in Hebron, got leave of David to go thither, and then engaged in a conspiracy against him; or Ahithophel, who had been his friend and acquaintance, but now joined with Absalom. It is true of Saul, who, under pretence of friendship, sought his ruin, and to whom he expressed himself almost in the same words here used; see 1 Sam xviii. 17, 25. and xxiv. 12, 15.

Ver. 2. *For thou art the God of my strength,* &c.] Who being the streng and mighty God was able to deliver and save him, as well as to plead his cause; and was the author and giver of strength, natural and spiritual, to him; and was the strength of his heart, life and salvation; and is a good reason why he committed his cause unto him. *Why dost thou cast me off?*

[a] כרצח ως φονευων, Symmachus in Drusius; ut occisio, Pagninus, Amama; so Aben Ezra interprets it.

[b] ישועות salutes, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Michaelis.

this is the language of unbelief: it being what was not in reality, only in appearance: the psalmist was ready to conclude he was cast off and rejected of God, because he was afflicted and left in a desolate condition by him, and he did not immediately arise to his help and deliverance, and had withdrawn the light of his countenance from him; but God does not cast off or reject any of his people; they always continue in his love, and in his covenant, and in the hands of his son; they are always in his sight and family, and shall never perish eternally: and whoever casts them off, or casts them out, he will not. *Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?* see the note on Psal. xlii. 9.

Ver. 3. *O send out thy light and thy truth,* &c.] By *light* is meant, not the law, as Arama; but rather, as some Jewish [r] interpreters understand it, the Messiah, the sun of righteousness, and light of the world; who is the author of all light, natural, spiritual, and eternal; and whose coming into the world is often signified by being *sent* into it. The spirit of God also is the enlightener of men, both at first conversion and afterwards, and is sent down into their hearts as a comforter of them, by being the spirit of adoption. The Gospel of Christ is a great and glorious light, which, with the Holy Ghost, is sent down from heaven; though perhaps here rather may be meant the light of God's countenance, the discoveries of his favour and loving-kindness, which produce light, life, joy, peace, and comfort: and by *truth* may be meant, either Christ himself, who is the truth; or the Gospel, the word of truth; or rather the faithfulness of God in the fulfilment of his promises; and so the words are a petition that God would shew forth his loving-kindness, and make good his word, which would be of the following use: *let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles:* that is, to the place of public worship, where the tabernacle was, the *hill* where it was, which seems to be Mount Zion; and is called *holy;* not that there was any real holiness in it; only relative, because of the worship of God in it; and the *tabernacle* is called *tabernacles,* because of the holy place and the most holy place in it; the one being the first, the other the second tabernacle, as in Heb. ix. 2, 3. and this hill and tabernacles represented the church and ordinances of God, to which such who are possessed of light and truth are led.

Ver. 4. *Then will I go unto the altar of God,* &c.] Which was in the tabernacle, either of burnt-offerings, or of incense, there to offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for mercies received. The altar under the Gospel dispensation is Christ, on which such sacrifices being offered, are acceptable to God, Heb. xiii. 10, 15. *Unto God my exceeding joy;* as over the mercy-seat, upon a throne of grace, and as his covenant-God; or this is exegetical of the altar, which is Christ, God over all, blessed for ever; and who is the object of the unspeakable joy of his people, in his person, righteousness, and salvation. *Yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God;* the harp is a musical instrument, used in that part of public worship which concerned the praise of God under the former dispensation, and was typical of that spiritual melody made in the hearts of God's people when they sing his praise, see Rev. v. 8. and xiv. 2.

Ver. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* &c.] See the notes on Psal. xlii. 5, 11.

PSALM XLIV.

To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

IT is not certain who was the writer of this psalm, nor when it was written, and to what time it belongs: some have thought it was composed by one of the Babylonish captivity, and that it gives an account of the church and people of God in those times; but what is said ver. 17, 18, 20, does not seem to agree with Dan. ix. 5, 6, 10, 11, 13. It is most likely it was written by David, and to him the Targum ascribes it; though it does not respect his times; since what is said in ver. 9—14 cannot agree with them; yet he being a prophet might, under a prophetic influence, speak of future times, and personate the church in them. Some are of opinion that he prophetically speaks of the times of the Maccabees and of Antiochus, when the church and people of God suffered much for the true religion, and abode steadfast in it; so Theodoret: but rather the whole may be applied to the times of the New Testament, since ver. 22 is cited by the Apostle Paul, Rom. viii. 36, and is applied to his times, and as descriptive of the suffering state and condition of the church then; and which seems to be the guide and key for the opening of the whole psalm.

Ver. 1. *We have heard with our ears, O God,* &c.] The church being in distress calls to mind the past favours of God to his people, in order to encourage her faith and hope; and this expression, delivered in such a form, shews the clearness, evidence, and certainty of what was heard; and which was heard not only as a tradition from father to son; but being recorded in the writings of Moses and the prophets, and these things read both in private and in public, were heard with the ear. *Our fathers have told us* what *works thou didst in their days, in the times of old;* such as the signs and wonders in Egypt, the slaying of the first-born there, and the bringing of the people of Israel from thence with a mighty hand and stretched-out arm; which fathers were used to tell in the ears of their sons, and sons' sons; and of which there were memorials continued in future ages, which led children to ask their parents the meaning of them; when they informed

[r] Midrash Tillim, & Jarchi, in loc.

them of the wondrous works of Providence done in former times, and by which means they were handed down from age to age; see Exod. x. 2. and xii. 26. and xiii. 8.

Ver. 2. *How thou didst drive out the Heathen with thy hand,* &c.] Of power; that is, the Canaanites, as the Targum; the seven nations which inhabited the land of Canaan before the children of Israel came into it, Deut. vii. 1. *And plantedst them;* not the Canaanites elsewhere; but, as the same Targum explains it, the house of Israel in their land; which, like a vine, was removed from one place, and planted in another; and the settlement of the children of Israel in the land of Canaan is frequently expressed by this metaphor, Exod. xv. 17. Psal. lxxx. 8. Isa. v. 1, 7. Jer. ii. 21. *How thou didst afflict the people;* the Egyptians, according to Arama; rather the Canaanitish nations, by wars and desolating judgments. *And cast them out;* that is, the same nations out of their land; though some render this clause, *and didst send them out;* the captive Israelites, as Arama; or *didst propagate them*[s]; meaning the people of Israel; who being like a vine planted in the land, sent out its boughs and branches, and became very flourishing and fruitful; see Psal. lxxx. 9—11. and so the Syriac version renders it, *and thou confirmedst them;* but the former sense seems best, agreeably to which is the Targum, *thou hast broken the nations, and hast consumed them;* and that all this was the Lord's work appears by what follows.

Ver. 3. *For they got not the land in possession by their own sword,* &c.] There were many things which shew that the possession of the land of Canaan was not of the Israelites themselves, but of the Lord; as their passing over into it through Jordan as on dry land; the manner in which Jericho, the first city of it, was taken, and the smiting of the Israelites by the men of Ai. *Neither did their own arm save them;* from their enemies, and deliver them into their hands: they were too apt to ascribe things to their own righteousness, merit, and power; but such methods were taken by the Lord as to prevent such attributions to themselves; see Deut. viii. 16, 17. and ix. 3—6. *But thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance;* the mighty power of God, his stretched-out arm in their favour, and which arose from his pure good will to them. *Because thou hadst a favour unto them;* was well-pleased, and took delight in them; chose them to be a special people to himself, above all people on the face of the earth.

Ver. 4. *Thou art my King, O God,* &c.] Besides the favours God had done for his people in time past, the church takes notice of her interest in God as her King, who was able to protect and defend her, and to deliver her out of all her distresses, in order the more to strengthen her faith and hope in him; and, claiming her interest in him, she draws nigh to him with an holy boldness, and desires him as a King, that by a word of his (for where the word of a king is, there is power) he would *command deliverances for Jacob;* not literally, but mystically understood; the spiritual Jacob, and people of God; all Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile; meaning herself and members: the blessing desired is *deliverances,* or *salvations;* so called, because the deliverance or salvation the Lord commands, grants, and works out for his people, is of different kinds, both spiritual and temporal, and is a deliverance from various things; from sin, Satan, the present evil world, wrath to come, and all enemies; and out of various temptations and afflictions, and which follow successively one upon another; and at last it is complete and perfect.

Ver. 5. *Through thee will we push down our enemies,* &c.] The Chaldee paraphrase renders it, *through the Word;* the essential Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the church's King and God, and has wrought out complete deliverance and salvation for his people; and he is the horn of salvation, by which, though weak in themselves, they push down their enemies, which are many and mighty, and they are more than conquerors over them: the metaphor is taken from creatures pushing with their horns those that oppose them, and in defence of themselves; and there seems to be an allusion to Deut. xxxiii. 17. *Through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us;* in the name of the Lord the saints set up their banners, and in his name they come forth and fight with their spiritual enemies, that rise up against them, as sin, Satan, and wicked men; and in the name, and through the power of the Lord, they tread them down as mire in the streets; and ere long Satan will be wholly bruised under them; and the antichristian party shall be trodden down by them, and be as ashes under the soles of their feet; see Rom. xvi. 20. Mal. iv. 3.

Ver. 6. *For I will not trust in my bow,* &c.] In any carnal weapon, in any creature-help and assistance, or in an arm of flesh, but in the word of the Lord, and in his name; see Psal. xx. 7. *Neither shall my sword save me;* that is, I will not ascribe salvation to it; the church's weapons are not carnal, but spiritual; not the sword of the civil magistrate, but the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God; Christ's kingdom, being not of this world, is not supported and defended by worldly means, or carnal weapons.

Ver. 7. *But thou hast saved us from our enemies,* &c.] Spiritual ones, and not we ourselves; and therefore will not trust in ourselves, nor in any thing of ours, but in the Lord, and give him the glory of salvation. *And hast put them to shame that hated us;* the men of the world, the seed of the serpent, and the serpent himself, when his works were destroyed, and his principalities and powers spoiled by Christ upon the cross; hence the following boasting of the Lord, and glorying in him.

Ver. 8. *In God we boast all the day long,* &c.] Or, as the Targum, *in the word of the Lord,* in Christ, who is God over all, and who of God is made to his church and people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; so that there is always matter of glorying and boasting in him. *And praise thy name for ever and ever;* in this world, as long as life continues; and in the other world to all eternity; both for the works of providence and of grace; for deliverances commanded, and for salvation from all enemies wrought out. *Selah;* of this word see the note on Psal. iii. 2.

[s] ותשלחם has autem germinare fecisti, Tigurine version; propagasti ipsos, Piscator; so Ainsworth; but rejected by Gussetius, Ebr. Comment. p. 859.

Ver. 9. *But thou hast cast off, &c.*] This, with what follows to ver. 17, describe the desolate and afflicted state of the church, under the Gospel dispensation, in some parts and ages of it; and in the light in which it was viewed by the church, previous to the encouragement she took from the consideration of favours and benefits formerly bestowed, and of her covenant-interest in God, related in the preceding verses. She looked upon herself as cast off, because afflicted and persecuted, and the Lord did not arise to her immediate help and deliverance; this may regard the ten persecutions under Rome Pagan; see the note on Psal. xliii. 2. *And put us to shame;* before men, at the taking of the ark, as Arama; rather for their faith in God, and boasting of him, when he did not appear for them, but suffered them to continue in their afflictions and distresses; which occasioned their enemies to triumph over them, and say unto them, where is your God? and also before God, who being forsaken by him, could not come before him with that holy boldness and confidence they were wont to do: see Cant. ii. 14. *And goest not forth with our armies;* as the Generalissimo of them; see 1 Sam. viii. 20. Judg. iv. 14. not leading them forth, and going before them; not teaching their hands to war and their fingers to fight; nor inspiring them with courage and valour; nor giving success and victory to them as formerly; but seeing that Christians, at least in the first ages of Christianity, had no armies in a literal sense, this may rather be understood of the non-success of the Gospel in some period of it, and of the power and prevalence of antichrist, the man of sin. The Gospel ministry is a warfare: the preachers of it are good soldiers of Christ under him; their weapons are not carnal, but spiritual; great success attended the word in the first times of the Gospel; Christ went forth with his armies conquering and to conquer; and multitudes were subdued by him, and became subjects of him; but in some ages there has been but little success, few have believed the report of the Gospel, and been converted by it; Christ's ministers have laboured in vain, Satan's kingdom, though attacked, yet not weakened, nor Christ's kingdom enlarged, but rather all the reverse; antichrist has been suffered, as to make war with the saints, so to prevail and overcome, and will do so, Rev. xiii. 4, 7. and xi. 7. but it will not be always the case, Christ will go forth with his armies, and make great conquests again, Rev. xi. 15. and xvii. 14. and xix. 11—16. this may refer to the wars of the Papists with the Waldenses and Albigenses, who were vanquished by the former.

Ver. 10. *Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy, &c.*] In the times of Eli, according to Arama; but may be understood of some of the visible members of the church, and professors of religion, not being valiant for the truth, and deserting the cause of God and Christ, by reason of tribulation and persecution arising because of the word. *And they which hate us spoil for themselves;* by seizing on the goods and substance of those they persecuted; enriching themselves by confiscating their estates and possessions to their own use; or by spoiling others of them, they deceived with their corrupt doctrines and soul-destroying principles, whereby they became slaves to the antichristian party; this may respect the same wars as before.

Ver. 11. *Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat, &c.*] To be butchered, and then eaten as sheep are; and therefore are called *the flock of slaughter,* Zech. xi. 4, 7. as the church was, not only under the ten persecutions of Rome Pagan, but through the butcheries and massacres of Rome Papal; who have worried many of Christ's sheep, have eaten their flesh and drank their blood, and have become drunken with it; it has been their meat and drink to persecute the saints of the most High. *And hast scattered us among the Heathen;* the Pagan world, as the first Christians were, who were scattered up and down in the Gentile world everywhere; see 1 Pet. i. 1. or the Papacy, who are sometimes called Gentiles, Rev. xi. 2. because much of the Gentile idolatry is introduced into the Popish religion; and among these many of the true members of Christ and of his church have been carried captive and scattered; and such will be found there a little before the destruction of Babylon, and will be called out from thence; see Rev. xiii. 10. and xviii. 4.

Ver. 12. *Thou sellest thy people for nought, &c.*] So God, when he is said to deliver up his people into the hands of their enemies, is said to sell them to them; see Judg. ii. 14. and iii. 8. and iv. 2. and selling them for nought suggests, that in their apprehensions he had no esteem of them and value for them; just as men, when they have any person or thing to dispose of they have no regard unto, but choose to be rid of, will part with it for nothing: and as it follows, *and dost not increase* thy wealth *by their price;* get nothing by the bargain. This must be understood after the manner of men, and in the opinion of the church, and not as in reality; no otherwise than as it has been true, that God has suffered some of his people to be in the bondage and slavery of mystical Babylon, called Egypt, one part of whose wares and merchandises are slaves and souls of men, Rev. xi. 8. and xviii. 13.

Ver. 13. *Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, &c.*] Which is the common lot of Christians: Christ and his apostles have given reason for the saints in all ages to expect it, and have fortified their minds to bear it patiently, yea, to esteem it an honour, and greater riches than the treasures of the antichristian Egypt. *A scorn and a derision to them that are round about us;* being always represented as mean and despicable, and reckoned ignorant and accursed, and as the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things.

Ver. 14. *Thou makest us a by-word among the Heathen, &c.*] Among the Papists, as the Jews were among the Gentiles, Deut. xxviii. 37. Jer. xxiv. 9. calling them schismatics, heretics, fanatics, and what not? *A shaking of the head among the people;* by way of indignation, scorn, and contempt; see Psal. xxii. 7. and cix. 25.

Ver. 15. *My confusion is continually before me, &c.*] Meaning that which is the occasion of it. *And the shame of my face hath covered me;* not by reason of sin, which is often the cause of confusion and shame in God's people; see Jer. iii. 25. Dan. ix. 8. but on account of what follows.

Ver. 16. *For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth, &c.*] That is, antichrist, to whom a mouth speaking blasphemies has been given, and which he has opened in blasphemy against God, at-

tributing that to himself which belongs to God; blaspheming his name, his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven; see Rev. xiii. 5, 6. 2 Thess. ii. 4. *By reason of the enemy and avenger:* which are very proper characters of antichrist, who is the enemy of Christ and of his people, and breathes out vengeance against them; as the same titles are also given to the Scribes and Pharisees, the implacable enemies of Christ, Psal. viii. 2.

Ver. 17. *All this is come upon us,* &c.] Not by chance, but according to the purpose and counsel of God; not for sin, and as a punishment of it, but for Christ's sake and his Gospel; for a profession of faith in him, and for the trial of it. *Yet have we not forgotten thee;* not the being and perfections of God, on which they often meditated, especially as displayed in the affair of salvation by Jesus Christ; nor the works of God, which were remembered to encourage faith and hope in their present circumstances, ver. 1. nor the benefits and favours bestowed upon them by him; nor his word, worship, and ordinances; their reproach, afflictions, and persecutions, did not move them from the hope of the Gospel, and the service of God. *Neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant;* by disbelieving their interest in God as their covenant God; by disregarding or not coming to and making use of Christ the Mediator of it; and by calling in question their interest in the blessings and promises of the covenant; for nothing can be more called dealing falsely in or with respect to the covenant of grace than unbelief about it; which remains firm and sure notwithstanding all the afflictions that may come on such who are interested in it: moreover, as this may respect the formal exhibition of the covenant under the Gospel dispensation, by the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances, the sense may be, that though the church and her members met with so much reproach and persecution from men, yet did not drop nor deny any of the truths of the Gospel, nor corrupt the ordinances of Christ, nor neglect an attendance on them; but were virgins, pure and incorrupt in doctrine and practice, and followed the Lamb whithersoever he went.

Ver. 18. *Our heart is not turned back,* &c.] To its original hardness, blindness, and bondage, to its former sin and folly, to cherish, gratify, and fulfil its lusts and desires; not from God, from love to him, faith in him, and desires after him; nor from his worship and service; their trials had no such influence upon them as to cause them to apostatize from God, neither in heart, nor in action. *Neither have our steps declined from thy way;* from the way of his commandments, from the paths of holiness, truth, and faith, being directed and guided therein by the counsel of the Lord, and kept and preserved by his power.

Ver. 19. *Though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons,* &c.] Where men, comparable to dragons for their poison and cruelty, dwell; particularly in Rome, and the Roman jurisdiction, both Pagan and Papal, the seat of Satan the great red dragon, and of his wretched brood and offspring, the beast, to whom he has given his power; here the saints and followers of Christ have been sorely afflicted and persecuted, and yet have held fast the name of Christ, and not denied his faith; see Rev. ii. 13. and xii. 3. the wilderness is the habitation of dragons; and this is the name of the place where the church is said to be in the times of the Papacy, and where she is fed and preserved for a time, and times, and half a time, Rev. xii. 6, 14. *And covered us with the shadow of death;* as the former phrase denotes the cruelty of the enemies of Christ's church and people, this their dismal afflictions and forlorn state and condition; see Psal. xxiii. 4. Isa. ix. 2. and may have some respect to the darkness of Popery, when it was at the height, and the church of Christ was covered with it, there being very little appearances and breakings forth of Gospel light any where. According to Arama, the *place of dragons* denotes the captivity of Egypt, which is the great dragon; and the *shadow of death*, he says, was a name of Egypt in ancient times, as say the Rabbins; and observes that ver. 25 explains this; see Gen. iii. 14.

Ver. 20. *If we have forgotten the name of our God,* &c.] As antichrist, and the antichristian party did in those times, Dan. xi. 36, 37. *Or stretched out our hands to a strange god;* as not to any of the Heathen deities under the Pagan persecutions, so not to any images of gold, silver, brass, and wood, under the Papal tyranny; not to the Virgin Mary, nor to angels and saints departed; nor to the breaden God in the mass, never heard of before; see Dan. xi. 38, 39. Rev. ix. 21.

Ver. 21. *Shall not God search this out?* &c.] Undoubtedly he would, was it so, and expose it, and punish for it; as he will the Balaamites and children of Jezebel, Rev. ii. 18—23. this seems to be an appeal to God for the truth of all that the church had said concerning her steadfastness and integrity under the most trying exercises. *For he knoweth the secrets of the heart;* whether the heart is turned back, or there is any inclination to apostatize from God, or his name is forgotten in it; as well as whether in fact the hand has been stretched out, or prayer made to a strange god, Jer. xvii. 9, 10.

Ver. 22. *Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long,* &c.] These words are cited by the Apostle Paul in Rom. viii. 36. and are applied to his times, shewing the then close attachment of the saints to Christ, and their strong love and affection for him; and they have the same sense here, being an instance and proof of the church's integrity and faithfulness in the cause of God, amidst the sorest afflictions and persecutions; for the truth of which she appeals to the searcher of hearts; and had their accomplishment in the ten persecutions under the Heathen emperors, and under the Papal tyranny; and may be understood of their being threatened with death, being in danger of it, and exposed unto it continually, 1 Cor. xv. 31. 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11, 12. or of their being in such troubles and afflictions, which may be called death, 2 Cor. i. 8, 9, 10. and xi. 23. or of the actual slaying them: and what was done to many of the members of the church she attributes to herself, because of the union between them; and for the sake of the worship of the true God, because they would not worship the gods of the Heathens, nor the image of the beast, multitudes of them were put to death; and that all the day long, and every day, and that for a long series and course of time, or continually; and indeed, ever since the Gospel day or

dispensation began, this killing work has been more or less; and it will continue during the reign of antichrist, until the measure of his iniquity is filled up, and the afflictions of the saints are accomplished. *We are counted as sheep for the slaughter*, or *as sheep of slaughter*[q]; see Zech. xi. 4, 7. that is, either as sheep to be slaughtered for food, their enemies delighting to eat their flesh and drink their blood; see the note on ver. 11, or for sacrifice, they reckoning it doing God good service to take away their lives, as though they sacrificed a lamb or a sheep unto him; and which, like sheep, they have patiently endured: this is the account made of them, not by the Lord, in whose sight their death is precious; nor by the saints, with whom their memory is dear; but by their furious persecutors, among whom they are as sheep among wolves; see 1 Cor. iv. 13.

Ver. 23. *Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord?* &c.] Not that sleep properly falls upon God: the Keeper of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps; his eyes are always upon his people; he never withdraws them from them, and he watches over them night and day: but sometimes he seems and is thought to be asleep; as when wicked men flourish and triumph over the righteous, and go on in sin with impunity; when their judgment seems to linger, and their damnation to slumber, though it does not; and when the saints are under sore afflictions, and the Lord seems to disregard them, and does not appear for their deliverance; and when things are as when the disciples were in a storm, and Christ was asleep, to whom they said, *carest thou not that we perish?* and the Lord may be said to awake, and it is what is here prayed for, when he stirs up himself and takes vengeance on his enemies, as he will ere long on antichrist and his followers; and when he takes in hand the cause and judgment of his people, and pleads it thoroughly, and delivers them out of the hands of all their oppressors, and gives them the dominion and kingdom under the whole heaven; see Isa. li. 9. Psal. lxxviii. 65, 66. and xxxv. 23. *Arise*; to revenge the blood of his people, and to have mercy on his Zion. *Cast us not off for ever*; as he might seem to do, by suffering their enemies to triumph over them: but in reality he does not; much less with loathing and abhorrence, as the word[r] used signifies, since his church is his Hephzi-bah, in whom he delights; and still less for ever, since his love to them is from everlasting to everlasting, and they shall be for ever with him; see the note on Psal. xliii. 2.

Ver. 24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* &c.] See Psal. x. 1. and xiii. 1. And *forgettest our affliction and our oppression?* Not that the Lord does really forget either the persons of his people, which he cannot, since they are engraven on the palms of his hands, and a book of remembrance is written for them: nor the afflictions of his people; he knows their souls in adversity; he chooses them in the furnace of affliction; he makes all afflictions work together for good, and delivers out of them. But because deliverance is not immediately wrought, and they sometimes continue long under their afflictions and oppressions, they seem to be forgotten by him, as during the ten persecutions and the long reign of antichrist.

Ver. 25. *For our soul is bowed down to the dust*, &c.] Which may signify great declension in spiritual things, much dejection of mind, and little exercise of grace, Psal. cxix. 25. Lam. iii. 29. or a very low estate in temporals; subjection to their enemies; they setting their feet upon their necks, and obliging them to lick the dust of them: and even it may signify nearness to death itself; see Josh. x. 24. Isa. xlix. 23. Psal. xxii. 16. *Our belly cleaveth to the earth*; as persons that lie prostrate, being conquered and suppliants.

Ver. 26. *Arise for our help*, &c.] Or, *arise our help*[s], God is the help of his people, and he is a present help in time of trouble; and he is the only one; and he can help and does, when none else can. *And redeem us for thy mercies' sake*; not for the sake of her integrity and faithfulness; nor for her sufferings for Christ's sake; but for his grace and mercy's sake, which is the source and spring of redemption or deliverance, both temporal and spiritual; and to that the saints ascribe it, and not to any merit of theirs, or works of righteousness done by them.

PSALM XLV.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves.

THERE are some things in this title we have met with already in other psalms; as the direction, *to the chief Musician, for the sons of Korah*; and one of its names, *Maschil*. The word *shoshannim*, according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, is the name of a musical instrument, on which this psalm was sung; an instrument of six strings, as Junius: but Aben Ezra thinks it was the first word of a song, to the tune of which it was sung; though others are of opinion that it points at the persons, the subjects of this psalm, and may be rendered, *concerning Shoshannim*; that is, as the Targum interprets it, *concerning those that sit in the sanhedrim of Moses*: and Jarchi's note is, *for the glory of the disciples of the wise men*, comparable to lilies; for so this word signifies, and may be translated, *concerning the lilies*[t]; that is, concerning Christ and his church, who are manifestly the subject of this psalm, and are compared to lilies, Cant. ii. 1, 2, 16. and v. 13. and vi. 2, 3. This psalm is called *a song of loves*, an epithalamy, or marriage-song, setting forth the mutual love of Christ and his church; or *a song of the beloved ones*[u], or *friends*: of Christ, who is the beloved and friend of

[q] כצאן טבחה ut pecus mactationis, Montanus, Vatablus; so Musculus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis, Ainsworth.
[r] אל תזנח ne abjicias cum fastidio, Gejerus.
[s] עזרתה לנו auxilium nostrum, Cocceius, Gejerus.
[t] על ששנים de liliis, Tigurine version.
[u] שיר ידידת canticum amicarum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; amatarum, Cocceius.

his church; and the church, who is the beloved and friend of Christ; see Isa. v. 1. and the word here used being in the feminine gender, some have supplied the word *virgins*, and render it thus, *a song of the beloved virgins*[w]; sung by them on account of the marriage between Christ and his church, who are the companions of the bride, mentioned in ver. 14, and friends and lovers of the bridegroom; see Cant. i. 3. John iii. 29. The writer of this psalm is not mentioned; it was not written by the sons of Korah, as say the Targum and Syriac version; but most probably by David, though not concerning his son Solomon, as some have thought, who, though wiser than all men, is never said to be fairer; nor was he a warrior, as the person is represented; nor was his throne and kingdom for ever and ever; nor he the object of worship; nor was his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter so commendable a thing; nor is she ever praised, as the queen herein mentioned is: but the person who is spoken of is the Messiah, as is owned by several Jewish writers: the Targum interprets the second verse of the King Messiah; and Ben Melech says, he is meant by the King in ver. 1. Aben Ezra observes, that this psalm is said concerning David, or concerning the Messiah his son, for so is his name, Ezek. xxxvii. 26. and Kimchi expressly says, it is spoken concerning the Messiah; and Arama affirms, that all agree that it treats of him.

Ver. 1. *My heart is inditing a good matter*, &c.] What is valuable and excellent, concerning the excellency of Christ's person, of his kingdom, of his love to the church, and of the church itself; what is pleasant and delightful, comfortable, useful, and profitable: this his heart was inditing; which shews that it was under the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, and denotes the fervour of it; it *boiling up*, as the word[x] signifies; being heated by the fire of the divine Spirit, whereby it was hot within him, and caused him to speak with his tongue; and also the abundance that was in it, it *bubbling up*[y], as some choose to render it: from whence this good matter flowed like water out of a fountain. *I speak of the things which I have made touching the King*: the King Messiah; the King of the whole world, and of the kings of it, and of the saints in it; over whom he reigns in a spiritual manner, and in righteousness; concerning whom this psalm or poem was composed by David under divine inspiration, and which he here delivers: *my tongue is the pen of a ready writer*; or as[z] one; such an one as Ezra was, Ezra vii. 6. that writes swiftly and compendiously; suggesting, that as he was full of matter, he freely communicated it, being moved by the Holy Spirit, who spake by him, and whose word was in his tongue; which made him so ready and expert in this work. The allusion is to scribes and notaries, and such-like persons, that are extremely ready and swift in the use of the pen. The word for *pen* is derived either from עוף, which signifies *to fly*[a], and from whence is a word used for a *flying fowl*: yet we are not to imagine that here it signifies a pen made of a bird's quill, as now in common use with us; for this did not obtain until many hundred years after David's time. It seems that Isidore of Seville, who lived in the seventh century, is the first person that makes mention of *penna*, a *pen*, as made of the quill of a bird[b]; but rather the pen has its name in Hebrew, if from the above root, from the velocity of it, as in the hand of a ready writer: or rather it may be derived from שנן, *to sharpen*, in which sense it seems to be used, Ezek. xxi. 15. and so a pen has its name from the sharp point of it: for when the ancients wrote, or rather engraved, on stone, brass, lead, and wood, they used a style or pen of iron; see Job xix. 24. Jer. xvii. 1. so when they wrote on tables of wood covered with wax, they used a kind of bodkin made of iron, brass, or bone; see the note on Hab. ii. 2. and when upon the rind and leaves of trees, and on papyrus and parchment, they made use of reeds, particularly the Egyptian calamus or reed; and the word here is translated calamus or reed by the Targum, Septuagint, and all the Oriental versions. Now as the Jews had occasion frequently to copy out the book of the law, and other writings of theirs, their scribes, at least some of them, were very expert and dexterous at it: but whether the art of *short-hand* was to any degree in use among them is not certain, as it was in after-times among the Romans, when they used marks, signs, and abbreviations, which seems to have laid the foundation of the above art, and had its rise, as is said, from Cicero himself, though some ascribe it to Mecænas[c]: and in Martial's time it was brought to such perfection, that, according to him, the hand could write swifter than a man could speak[d].

Ver. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men*, &c.] Here begins the psalm, and this is an address to the King Messiah, the subject of it, commending him for his beauty and comeliness; which is not to be understood of his divine beauty or his glory, as the only-begotten of the Father, in which he is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; for this admits of no comparison, nor is the beauty of angels and men to be mentioned with it; but of the beauty of his human nature, both in body and soul, which being the immediate produce of the Holy Spirit, and without sin, and full of wisdom, grace, and holiness, must transcend that of any or all the sons of Adam. They are all deformed by sin; and whatever spiritual beauty there is in any of them, they have it from Christ; they are comely through his comeliness; the outward beauty of men is vain and deceitful, and soon perishes; but Christ is ever the same, and he is esteemed of by all that know him, as exceeding precious, altogether lovely, and transcendently excellent and glorious. The Hebrew word here used is doubled in its radicals, which denotes the exceeding great fairness and beauty of Christ, especially as Mediator, and

[w] Dilectarum seu de dilectis Christo virginibus, Michaelis; a song of the well-beloved virgins, Ainsworth.
[x] רחש ebullit, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth.
[y] Eructavit, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus, Munster.
[z] So the Targum, Tigurine version, Gejerus, & Michaelis.
[a] Vid. Kimchi Sepher Shorash. rad. עט.
[b] Origin. l. 6. c. 13.

[c] Vid. Kipping. Antiqu. Roman. l. 2. c. 4. p. 554.
[d] Currant verba licet, manus est velocior illis: nondum lingua suum, dextra peregit opus, Martial. Epigr. l. 14. ep. 189. of the origin of short-hand with the Romans, and amongst us, with other curious things concerning writing, and the matter and instruments of it, see a learned treatise of Mr. Massey's, called, The Origin and Progress of Letters, p. 144, printed 1763.

as full of grace and truth. It follows, *grace is poured into thy lips:* by which is meant the matter of his speech, or the Gospel preached by him; those words of grace, as Kimchi on the text expresses himself; or gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, Luke iv. 22. The Gospel of the grace of God was given him to preach: it was put into his mouth, and that in great abundance; it was given at sundry times and in divers manners, and by piecemeal, to the prophets before him; but it was poured into his lips, and he was abundantly qualified for preaching it, by having the spirit without measure given him; and so was poured out in a graceful manner, with great authority, and as never man before him spake, in doctrines of grace, gracious invitations, precious promises, excellent prayers, and even words of eternal life; see Cant. v. 13. *Therefore God hath blessed thee for ever:* or, *because*[e] *God hath blessed thee for ever;* in his human nature, with the grace of union to the Son of God, and with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God; and as Mediator, with all spiritual blessings, with grace and glory for his people. Hence all his comeliness, grace, and gracefulness.

Ver. 3. *Gird thy sword upon* thy *thigh, O most mighty,* &c.] As Christ is, the mighty God, even the Almighty, and which appears by his works of creation and providence; by the redemption of his people; by his care and government of them; by succouring them under all their temptations and afflictions; by strengthening them for every service, duty, and suffering; by pleading their cause, and supplying their wants; by preserving them to his kingdom and glory; by raising them from the dead at the last day, and by introducing them into the possession of the heavenly inheritance. This mighty One is called upon to *gird* on his *sword;* by which is meant either the sword of the Spirit, the word of God; which is sharp in convincing of sin, reproving for it, and threatening on account of it, as well as in refuting error and heresy; and a two-edged one, consisting of law and Gospel, and which Christ made use of to great purpose, against Satan in the wilderness, and against the Scribes and Pharisees; and which he will make further use of in the latter day, against the man of sin, and his followers: or else the power of Christ, which, as the Leader and Commander of his people, and the Captain of their salvation, is called upon to exert, by preparing to engage with, and by destroying his and their enemies; and which he did put forth when the year of the redeemed was come, which was the day of vengeance in his heart; when he combated with and destroyed Satan, and spoiled his principalities and powers; when he abolished death itself, and took away sin the sting of it, and the law, the strength of sin; overcame the world, and delivered his people from it, and out of the hand of every enemy. It is added, *with thy glory and thy majesty;* which may be connected either with the phrase *and most mighty*, and so be expressive of the glory and majesty of Christ, as the mighty God; or with his *sword*, as an emblem of his authority and majesty as a King, and may denote the glory of his Gospel and of his power; or may point at the end of his girding his sword upon his thigh, which was to shew forth the glory of his majesty, or to obtain honour and glory: though the word *gird* may be supplied and repeated, and so make a distinct proposition, *gird with thy glory and thy majesty;* which was done when he was raised from the dead, and had glory given him; was crowned with it, and had the glory put upon him he had with his father before the world was.

Ver. 4. *And in thy majesty ride prosperously,* &c.] Not literally, as was prophesied of him he should, and as he did, Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xxi. 7, 9, 16. but mystically and spiritually, either in the chariots of angels up to heaven, Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. or on the white horse of the Gospel, with his bow and arrows after mentioned, conquering and to conquer, Rev. vi. 2. and where he rides *in* his *majesty*, shewing forth his glory both as a divine Person and as Mediator; and which is very conspicuous in the Gospel, and the ministry of it; and also *prosperously*, as he did in the first preaching of the word by the apostles, when it was made the power of God to salvation to multitudes, and the Lord caused them to triumph in Christ everywhere; and as he will in the latter day, when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in. *Because of truth, and meekness,* and *righteousness;* either because he himself is *truth*, the truth of all types, promises, prophecies, and doctrines; or because of the Gospel of truth which comes by him; or on account of his truth and faithfulness in fulfilling his own engagements, and the promises of his father: and because of the *meekness* which was so apparent in him, in taking upon him the form of a servant; in his carriage to sinners, and conversation with them; in ministering to his disciples; in his conduct towards his enemies; and in seeking not his own glory, but his father's: and because of *righteousness*, the holiness of his nature, the purity of his life and actions; and because of the righteousness he is the author of to his people, and of his righteous administration of his offices, especially as a King. *And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things;* or thy power, which the right hand is a symbol of, shall perform terrible things; as it did in the work of redemption, by conquering and destroying the enemies of his people, and of himself; and as it does in the conversion of men, which makes terrible work in their consciences, as the instances of the three thousand, of Saul, and of the jailer shew; and as it has in his judgments on his enemies the Jews, in the utter ruin of their nation, city, and temple; and will do on all the antichristian powers in the latter day. The Targum paraphrases it, "the Lord "shall teach thee to do terrible things with thy right "hand[f]."

Ver. 5. *Thine arrows* are *sharp in the heart of the king's enemies,* &c.] Meaning either the Jews, who were the implacable enemies of Christ, and who would not have him to reign over them; in the midst of whom were sent his arrows, of the sword, famine, and pestilence, and which were very sharp, and made

[e] על־כן eo quid, Tigurine version; propterea quod, Musculus, Piscator; quia, Gejerus.

[f] Dextra mihi Deus, &c. Virgil. Æneid. 10. prope finem.

sad havoc among them, and caused such a time of tribulation as was not before, or has been since, Matt. xxiv. 21. or else the doctrines of the Gospel. The Scriptures are the quiver out of which they are taken; the Gospel is the bow into which they are put, and out of which they are shot; and ministers are the archers that draw the bow at a venture, and shoot them; and which are compared to *arrows* for their swift, sudden, and secret motion, and for their piercing and penetrating power and efficacy: and these are Christ's, which he is the author of, and which he makes use of to good purpose, by striking the hearts of his people with them, who in their state of unregeneracy are enemies to him; which appears by their wicked works, and as they were when he died for them, and reconciled them to God; by means of which arrows fixed in them, and with which their hearts are pricked and wounded, they submit unto him, signified by the next clause: whereby *the people fall under thee;* acknowledge themselves sinners; fall down at his feet; humbly implore his grace and mercy; submit to his righteousness; depend on him alone for salvation; adore him, and give him the glory of it, as well as become subject to his laws and ordinances. This is to be understood of those who are God's covenant-people, whom he has given to Christ, and he has redeemed by his blood; and particularly the Gentiles, who were not a people, but now openly are, in distinction from the Jews, the enemies of the King Messiah.

Ver. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,* &c.] This verse and the following are cited in Heb. i. 8, 9. and applied to the Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity; and therefore are not an apostrophe to the Father, as some have said; nor will they bear to be rendered, *thy throne is the throne of God,* or *thy throne is God;* or be supplied thus, *God shall establish thy throne.* But they are spoken of the Son of God, who is truly and properly God, the true God and eternal life; as appears by the names by which he is called, as Jehovah, and the like; by his having all divine perfections in him; by the works which he has wrought, and by the worship which is given unto him; and to whom dominion is ascribed, of which the *throne* is an emblem, Gen. xli. 40. And this his government is either general, over angels, good and bad, and over men, even wicked men, and over the greatest among men, the kings of the earth; or special, over his own church and people, and which is exercised by his spirit and grace in them; by his word and ordinances among them; and which will be in a glorious manner in the latter day; and in heaven, though not in the same manner as now, and that to all eternity: for to this government duration for ever and ever is attributed; Christ will have no successor, he will die no more; nor can his government be subverted or taken out of his hands, or he be removed from his throne by any of his enemies, or by all of them; and though his kingdom will be delivered up to the Father, it will not cease, it is an everlasting one. *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre;* meaning either the Gospel, which is the golden sceptre of mercy and grace, stretched out and held forth for the encouragement of sensible sinners; and is a sceptre of righteousness, as it directs to the righteousness of Christ for justification, and encourages works of righteousness to be done by men: or rather the righteous administration of Christ's government is meant, the sceptre being an emblem of dominion and government, Gen. xlix. 10. Numb. xxiv. 17.

Ver. 7. *Thou lovest righteousness,* &c.] Either righteous persons, whom his countenance beholds, on whom his eyes are, and from whom they are never withdrawn, and with whom he is exceedingly delighted: or righteous things; a righteous administration of government; faithfulness and integrity in whatsoever he is intrusted with, or appointed to by his father; all righteous actions which the law requires, as appeared in the whole course of his life; and by working out a righteousness for his people, and by encouraging them in works of righteousness; and as also will appear by judging the world in righteousness at the last day, and by giving the crown of righteousness to his righteous ones. *And hatest wickedness:* which was manifest not only by his inveighing against it and dehorting from it, and by his severity exercised towards delinquents; but by suffering for it, and abolishing it, and by chastising his own people on account of it. *Therefore God, thy God;* or *because*[a] *God, thy God;* who is the God of Christ, as Christ is man; who prepared and formed his human nature, supported it in suffering, and glorified it, and to whom Christ prayed, and whom he believed in, loved, and obeyed as such: *hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;* who though he is called God, ver. 6, and is truly so, yet was not anointed as such, but as man and Mediator, to the office of Prophet, Priest, and King; and not with material oil, but with the Holy Ghost, his gifts and graces; see Acts x. 38. called *the oil of gladness,* in allusion to the use of oil at feasts and weddings, for the delight and refreshment of guests, and particularly of the oil of lilies, *oleum susinum,* so some[b] translate it; well known to the Hebrews, who inhabited Syria and Palestine, where red lilies grew, of which this was made, and had in great esteem; and because of its effects in the human nature of Christ, filling it with alacrity and cheerfulness to go through the work he came about. This unction refers to the time of his conception and birth, and also to the time of his baptism; and the phrase, *above thy fellows,* denotes the abundance of the Spirit's grace, his having it without measure, and in a transcendent manner to any of the sons of men, even his own people; for these, and not angels, nor the princes of the earth, are meant, neither of which are his fellows; but the saints, who are of the same nature with him, of the same family he is the head of, of the same dignity through him, being made kings and priests by him, partakers of the same spirit and grace; and will be companions with him, and sit on the same throne with him to all eternity. The Targum, in the king of Spain's Bible, begins the verse thus; "But thou, O "King Messiah, because thou lovest, &c."

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[a] על כן propterea quod, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Piscator, Gejerus; quia, Rivet. Noldius, p. 797, No. 1730.

[b] Vid. Schacchi Elæochrism. l. 1. c. 27 & 28.

Ver. 8. *All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia*, &c.] Either his human nature, as anointed with the oil of gladness, and filled with the graces of the Spirit, signified by the holy anointing oil in the tabernacle, of which the things mentioned were ingredients, Exod. xxx. 23, 24. or the garments of salvation and robe of righteousness, wrought out by him for his people, which are well-pleasing and acceptable to his Father, and of a sweet-smelling savour, being agreeable to his law and justice; and also to himself, as they are put upon his people; see Cant. iv. 11. And likewise to them who rejoice at being clothed with them, and desire to be found in them: or else his people themselves, who are sometimes compared to a clothing and to garments, Isa. xlix. 18. whose persons are to God as the smell of a field, whom the Lord has blessed; and whose sacrifices of prayer and praise are sweet odours to him, through the mediation of his Son. *Out of the ivory palaces*; see Cant. vii. 4. 1 Kings xxii. 39. Amos iii. 15. meaning the places from whence these garments were taken, the wardrobe; or from whence Christ came, and where he appears; as heaven, the palace of the great King, from whence he came down, whither he is gone, and from whence he is expected again; and the human nature of Christ, in which he tabernacled on earth, and was pure and clear from sin; and his churches, which are his temples and palaces, where he grants his presence. Or it may be rendered, *more than the ivory palaces* [i], and so be expressive of the excellency of Christ's garments above them; and denote the purity of his human nature, the spotlessness of his righteousness, and the comeliness of his people. *Whereby they have made thee glad*; or, *wherein* or *from whence* [k]; in which palaces, the churches, the saints make Christ glad, by speaking of his glory; by ascribing glory to him; and by the exercise of grace upon him, with which his heart is ravished, Cant. iv. 9, 10, 11. Or *for which* [l]; garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness; they being clothed with them, and rejoicing in them, cause joy and gladness in Christ: or *more than they*, or *theirs that make thee glad* [m]; meaning his fellows and their garments, his being more odorous than theirs.

Ver. 9. *Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women*, &c.] Or *maids of honour* [n]; who filled and adorned the king's court, and made a splendid appearance there, the same with the virgins, the companions of the bride, in ver. 14. and design truly gracious souls, believers in Christ, who are his *precious ones* [o], as the word may be rendered; the excellent in the earth, in whom is all his delight; the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold; his portion, his jewels, his peculiar treasure, and the apple of his eye: and since they have been precious to him, they have been *honourable*, as they are, both by birth and marriage, being born of God, and espoused to Christ; by their character, kings and priests; and by their company, being among princes, and especially by their having communion with Father, Son, and Spirit: and among these are *kings' daughters*; yea, they are all of them the sons and daughters of the King of kings; not by their first birth, by which they were mean, base, and dishonourable, wretched and miserable, and children of wrath, as others; but by their second birth, or regeneration, through being born from above, and of God, to an incorruptible inheritance; and so are clothed and fed like the daughters of kings, and have the attendance of such, angels to wait upon them and guard them; and through adopting grace, which regeneration is the evidence of, by virtue of which some of the children of men become the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty; and through their marriage to the King's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ: the words may be rendered, *Kings' daughters were in thy precious things* [p]; that is, were arrayed with them; meaning either the graces of the Spirit, comparable to gems, pearls, jewels, and precious stones; see Cant. i. 10. or else the rich robe of Christ's righteousness, and garments of salvation, with which believers being clothed, are as a bridegroom decked with ornaments, and as a bride adorned with jewels, Isa. lxi. 10. and this agrees with what follows. *Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir*; by whom is meant the church, whose title is a *queen*, being the bride, the Lamb's wife: wherefore, because he is King, she is queen; for this title she has not of herself; it is founded not in her own right, but upon her relation to Christ, being married to him; and so is expressive of relation to him, union with him, and of privilege and dignity through him; she sharing with him in all he has, even in his kingdom and government, reigning with him, and on the same throne: her being *on his right hand* shews the honour she is advanced unto; yet *standing* may denote subjection to him as her Lord and head; and being so close by him may suggest her fidelity and inviolable attachment to him, and strict adherence to his person, cause and interest; as well as her protection from him, being held and upheld by his right hand; and her reception of favours from thence, and her enjoyment of his presence, at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. Her dress is *gold of Ophir*; a place famous for gold, 1 Kings ix. 28. see the note there; with which the clothes of great personages used to be embroidered; so Esther is said [q] to put on her royal apparel, adorned with the good gold of *Ophir*: here it means, that the queen's or church's clothing was of wrought gold, as in ver. 13. and intends the righteousness of Christ, with which she is arrayed, comparable to it for its richness, purity, lustre, glory, and duration.

Ver. 10. *Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear*, &c.] These words are either spoken by the prophet, the author of the psalm; or by the King, the bridegroom himself; or, as others think, by Jehovah the Father, whose daughter the church is; unless it should be rather thought to be an address of the honourable women, the kings' daughters, the virgins and companions of the bride, delivered by them

[i] מן היכלי שן præ palatiis eburneis, Cocceius, Gejerus.
[k] מני unde, Montanus, Musculus, Muis, Noldius, p. 629, No. 1664.
[l] Propter quod, Muis.
[m] Præ iis, Junius & Tremellius; magis quam eorum, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

[n] ביקרותיך inter nobiles tuas, Tigurine version.
[o] Heb. pretiosas, Piscator; so Ainsworth.
[p] In pretiositatibus tuis, Montanus, Gejerus; so some in Vatablus.
[q] Targum Sheni in Esther v. 1.

to her under the character of the daughter of Zion, the King's daughter, as she is called, ver. 13. to *hearken, incline* her *ear*, and listen to her Lord and King, to his Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which are his voice and words, and to all his precepts and commands; and to *consider*, see, and behold the goodness of God unto her, the greatness, excellencies, and glories of her husband; to look to him by faith, as he is held forth in the word and ordinances, and to him only, and that constantly, which is well-pleasing to him. *Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house*; Christ is to be preferred before natural relations; converted persons are not to have fellowship with carnal men, though ever so nearly related; former superstitions, whether Jewish or Heathenish, are to be buried in forgetfulness: sinful self, and righteous self, are to be denied for Christ's sake; and the world, and all things in it, are to be treated with neglect and contempt by such who cleave to him. The Targum interpets this of the congregation of Israel hearing the law, beholding the wonderful works of God, and forgetting the idolatrous practices of their ancestors.

Ver. 11. *So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty*, &c.] Which lies in the comeliness or righteousness of Christ put upon her; in the holiness of Christ reckoned to her; in being washed from all sin in the blood of Christ; in the graces of the spirit being implanted in her, in which the beauty of holiness lies; in the salvation she is interested in, and beautified with; in enjoying the order and ordinance of Christ's house, and in having the presence of God and Christ with her: and this beauty is not natural, nor acquired by her, but what is given her; it is not an outward, but an inward beauty; nor is it fictitious, but real; it is perfect through the comeliness of her Lord upon her; and it is durable as the olive-tree: and this is greatly desired by Christ, who delights in her, and to behold her countenance; seeks after her company, and will have her where he is, that she may behold his glory, and he may behold her beauty. *For he is thy Lord*; not only by creation, but by redemption, and in right of marriage, as well as on account of other relations he stands in to her, as Father, Head, King, and Master; and it is her privilege that he is her Lord, as well as her duty to own the relation; since, though he is a sovereign Lord, he is no tyrannical one, but governs with gentleness, and he has all power to protect her, and all fulness to supply her wants; and on account of his being her Husband, Lord, and Head, he has a right of worship from her, as follows. *And worship thou him*; both internally, by the exercise of faith, hope, and love upon him; and externally, by praying to him, praising of him, and attending on all his ordinances, and doing every thing in a religious way, in his name, according to his word, and by his authority; and such worship should be in spirit and in truth, in sincerity, and without hypocrisy, in righteousness and true holiness, and with reverence and godly fear.

Ver. 12. *And the daughter of Tyre* shall be there *with a gift*, &c.] That is, among the honourable women in the king's court and palace: it is a prophecy of the conversion of the Tyrians, and their admission into a Gospel church-state, which had its accomplishment in the times of Christ and his apostles, Mark vii. 24. and iii. 8. Acts xxi. 3, 4. compare with this Psal. lxxxvii. 4. and though Tyre is only mentioned, it being, as Kimchi on this place observes, near to the land of Judea; yet all other Gentiles are meant, to whom the Gospel should come to the conversion of them, and thereby become members of churches; where they are *with a gift*, of themselves to the churches; see 2 Cor. viii. 5. joining themselves to them, to walk with them, and serve the Lord with one consent; and with the gift or offering of praise and thanksgiving, for the grace and blessings of it bestowed upon them; and with a free donation out of their substance, to support a Gospel church-state, its ministers, and the interest of religion; see Isa. xxiii. 18. the allusion may be to Exod. xxiii. 15. Even *the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour*; either such as are rich, in a literal sense, both among the inhabitants of Tyre, who were a very wealthy people, Isa. xxiii. 8. and among other Gentiles, especially in the latter day, when kings shall be the church's nursing fathers, and bow down to her, Isa. xlix. 23. or such who are so in a spiritual sense, enriched by Christ with all spiritual blessings, and who are particularly rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom; these shall *entreat* the *favour* of the queen the church; not pray unto her, or worship her in a religious way; for God is only the object of such worship; but do those things by which they would shew that they valued her friendship, and would gain her good will; as also acknowledge any former injury done her by them, and entreat her forgiveness; and particularly desire to have communion with her, and share in her prayers.

Ver. 13. *The King's daughter* is *all-glorious within*, &c.] The *King's daughter* is the same with the *queen*, ver. 9. the church, who is the King's daughter, the daughter of the King of kings, through adopting grace, by marriage to Christ the King's son, and by regeneration, or being born of God: and she is *all-glorious within*; within-doors, in the inner chamber of the King, where being brought, she enjoys such communion with him as reflects a glory upon her; in his banqueting-house, where his banner over her is love, and where her members enjoy fellowship with one another, and this in harmony, unity, and love; which make her look amiable, pleasant, beautiful and glorious: or *within* the hearts of her members, througn the internal graces of the spirit wrought there; the work of grace is an inward work; it has its seat in the heart or spirit of man, and is a glorious one, in its author, original, and usefulness; it is the workmanship of the spirit, and a curious piece it is; it is the image of Christ upon the soul, a partaking of the divine nature; it is pure and spotless; it is clear of all sin, there is no sin in it, nor any comes from it; it is the saints' meetness for glory; it is the pledge, earnest, and beginning of it; it is all-glorious, and so are the persons that are the subjects of it, as born of God: there is nothing glorious in the old man, or corrupt nature; but in the new man, or work of grace upon the soul, every thing is glorious, and it will issue in eternal glory and happiness: or *all-glorified within*[r]; like any house or build-

[r] כבורה honorata, Junius & Tremellius; glorificata, Gussetius, p. 369.

ing, to which the church is sometimes compared, particularly the tabernacle or temple, which were glorious within-side, being greatly adorned, and having many glorious things therein; as the church is with the graces of the spirit, and with the word and ordinances, and the presence of God in them. *Her clothing is of wrought gold:* this is different from internal grace, which is sometimes spoken of as a clothing, 1 Pet. v. 5. Col. iii. 12. since that is designed in the preceding clause; and yet this does not intend the outward conversation-garments of the saints, which, though ornamental, are not so glorious as to be said to be of wrought gold; and yet not the robes of immortality and glory are meant; but the robe of Christ's righteousness, which he has wrought out for his church, the Father imputes unto her, and bestows upon her, and faith receives at his hand, and puts it on as a clothing, to appear in before God; and this may be said to be *of wrought gold:* because rich and valuable, splendid and glorious, substantial and durable.

Ver. 14. *She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work,* &c.] Not in her sins, and under the sense and guilt of them; as souls are brought to Christ, at first conversion, under the drawings of the Father's grace; nor in the rags of her own righteousness; but in the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, the change of raiment Christ has put upon her, having before this caused her iniquities to pass from her; or in the shining robes of immortality and glory: for this introduction of the church to Christ, her King, Head, and Husband, will be upon the first resurrection; when she being as a bride adorned and prepared for her husband, will be brought unto him, and presented to him by himself, a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing: and she will be introduced, either by the angels, who will be employed in gathering the elect from the four winds; or by the ministers of the Gospel, who, at the general harvest, in the end of the world, will bring their sheaves with them; those souls they have been the instruments of converting, comforting, and ripening for glory; who will be their joy and crown of rejoicing then; these will be brought in several companies, which joining together, will make up the general assembly and church of the first-born, that will then be presented to Christ: or by Jehovah the Father, who, as he brought Eve to Adam, when he had formed her of his rib, and had prepared her as a help-meet for him; so when all the elect of God are formed by divine grace, and are prepared as a bride for the bridegroom, he will then bring them unto him, and they shall be with him where he is, and behold his glory; which is what he prays his father for, John xvii. 24. *The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee:* such who are betrothed as chaste virgins to Christ, who strictly and chastely adhere unto him, love him in the singleness of their hearts; are incorrupt in faith and worship, and of pure and upright conversations; see Rev. xiv. 4, these are the *companions* of the church, who are partakers of the same grace, enjoy the same privileges, and share in the common salvation; and, as they are partners together in sufferings, they will be in glory: these *follow* the footsteps of the flock, walk after the church in the path of doctrine and duty; are followers of her, as she is of the Lord, in the word and ordinances, and in the exercise of faith and patience; these, even every one, shall be brought unto the King, not one shall be lost, or left behind: whither they shall be brought, and the manner in which, are expressed in the following verse.

Ver. 15. *With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought,* &c.] With joy unspeakable, and full of glory in themselves, because of what they shall be delivered from; from all outward troubles and afflictions; from all inward distresses, darkness, doubts, and fears; from sin, Satan, and all spiritual enemies; and because of what they shall enjoy, communion with God, angels and saints, the vision of God in Christ, conformity to him, perfect knowledge, complete holiness and happiness, and a glory both upon their souls and bodies: they shall also be brought with the joy of Christ's faithful ministers, who will rejoice in that day that they have not run nor laboured in vain; and with the joy of all the holy angels; and with the joy of Christ the King himself, who always rejoiced in them and over them; yea, with the rejoicing of Father, Son, and Spirit: the Father will rejoice to see those brought in whom he has loved with an everlasting love, has chosen in Christ, given to him, and whom he sent his Son to redeem: the Son of God will rejoice to see those presented to him whom he has loved and betrothed to himself; who are the purchase of his blood, and the travail of his soul; who are his jewels, treasure, and portion: and the Holy Spirit will rejoice to see those brought to glory whom he has been the convincer, comforter, and sealer of; whom he has been at work upon, and has wrought them up for this self-same thing: *they shall enter into the King's palace;* into heaven, the palace of the King Messiah, the King of kings and King of saints; where are mansions preparing for them, suitable to their high birth and character, as the daughters of a king; and where they shall enter, not merely to see it and go out again, but to dwell in it with their Lord, Head, and Husband, for evermore; and that as in their own palace, upon the foot of their relation to Christ, interest in him, right and meetness by him.

Ver. 16. *Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children,* &c.] This is an address, not to the church, the queen, the King's daughter, spoken to and of in the preceding verses, but to the King Messiah himself, who was of the Jewish fathers, according to the flesh, Rom. ix. 4, 5. and though he was rejected by that people, yet he had children; not only the apostles, who are sometimes so called, whom he set on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, in a doctrinal way, and sent into all the world to preach his Gospel; and which being attended with his mighty power, made them triumphant conquerors everywhere; but also a numerous progeny among the Gentiles: all the elect of God are his children, and he stands in the relation of the everlasting Father to them, they being given unto him as such; and he being concerned in their adoption, by which they become children, and in their regeneratin, by which they appear to be such. Here the children of God, scattered abroad in the Gentile world, as distinct from the Jews, seem to be meant. *Whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth;* these

children are princes, being the sons of a King; they look like princes, and have the spirit of such; they are treated as princes, fed, clothed, and attended on as such; and are, as princes, heirs of a kingdom: but then, they are not so originally, they are *made princes*; not by themselves, but by Christ, and who even makes them kings and priests unto God and his father: and that *in all the earth*; not with respect to earthly things: they are not made the princes of this world; but while they are on earth they are translated into the kingdom of Christ, and have a kingdom which never can be moved; and besides, they shall reign with Christ on earth a thousand years: moreover, this may have respect to the several parts of the world where they shall be, even in all parts of the world, especially in the latter day; see Isa. xliii. 5, 6.

Ver. 17. *I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations*, &c.] These are the words of the psalmist, spoken to the King Messiah, declaring what he would do with respect to him; cause his name, that is, not any particular name or title of his, but rather his Gospel, the good matter he had endited concerning him; or he himself to be remembered, desired, loved, thought of, called upon, and praised in all succeeding generations; and which he did by penning of this psalm, which has been the occasion of the remembrance of Christ's name in all ages, to the present time; and of its being remembered by us now, and the same use it will have in time to come; see 2 Pet. i. 13, 15. *Therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever*; because of the excellencies of his person; and particularly because of his greatness and glory as a King; as well as for all mercies, temporal and spiritual, they have from him; and this is but just, meet, and lovely, and is and will be their employment, as long as they live in this world, and to all eternity. This must be understood not of all people, but of God's chosen and covenant-people; those that are given to Christ to be his people, and whom he has redeemed and purified to himself, a peculiar people; and particularly his people among the Gentiles: and so the Targum interprets it of such that are proselytes.

PSALM XLVI.

To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth.

THE word *Alamoth* is thought by some, as Aben Ezra, to be the beginning of a song, to which this psalm was set; and by others a high tune, such as virgins express; and by others the name of musical instruments, as Jarchi and Kimchi; which seems most likely, since it is mentioned with other instruments of music in 1 Chron. xv. 19—21. and may not unfitly be rendered *virginals*, from the sound of them being like the shrill voice of virgins, which this word signifies; though others choose to render it *of hidden things*[1], making it to design the subject-matter of the psalm, the secret counsels and purposes of God, both in a way of love and grace to his people, and of judgment to his enemies. Some think this psalm was occasioned by the victories which David obtained over the Ammonites and Moabites, and other neighbouring countries; and others are of opinion that it was penned on account of the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib being raised, in the times of Hezekiah: but it seems rather to be a prophecy of the church in Gospel times, and is applicable to any time of confusion and distress the nations of the world may be in through any kind of calamity, when those that trust in the Lord have no reason in the least to be afraid. Kimchi says this psalm belongs to future times; either to the gathering of the captives, or to the war of Gog and Magog; to which also R. Obadiah refers it, and Jarchi interprets it of time to come: according to the Targum it was written by the sons of Korah, when their father was hid from them, and they were delivered.

Ver. 1. *God is our refuge and strength*, &c.] That is, Christ, who is God as well as man, is the *refuge* for souls to fly unto for safety; as for sensible sinners, in a view of danger, wrath, and misery, so for saints, in every time of distress; typified by the cities of refuge under the legal dispensation; see the note on Psal. ix. 9. and he it is from whom they have all their spiritual strength, and every renewal and supply of it, to exercise grace, perform duties, withstand enemies, bear the cross patiently, shew a fortitude of mind under the sorest distresses, and hold on and out unto the end: in short, he is the strength of their hearts, under the greatest trials, of their lives, amidst the greatest dangers; and of their salvation, notwithstanding all their enemies. *A very present help in trouble*; whether inward or outward, of soul or body; the Lord helps his people under it to bear it, and he helps them out of it in the most proper and seasonable time: they are poor helpless creatures in themselves; nor can any other help them but the Lord, who made heaven and earth; and he helps presently, speedily, and effectually: in the Hebrew text it is, *he is found an exceeding help in trouble*[2]; in all kind of trouble that the saints come into, the Lord has been found, by experience, to be an exceeding great helper of them; moreover, he is easily and always to be come at, and found by them for their help.

Ver. 2. *Therefore will not we fear*, &c.] The consideration of the Lord's being the refuge, strength, and help of his people, in all times of trouble and distress, has a great influence on their faith and confidence, and makes them intrepid and fearless in the midst of the greatest dangers: nor indeed have they any reason to be afraid of men or devils, since the Lord is on their side; nor should they indulge a slavish

[1] על עלמות ὑπὲρ τῶν κρυφίων, Sept. pro arcanis, V. L.

[2] נמצא מאד inventum valde, Michaelis.

fear on any account whatever. *Though the earth be removed;* or *changed**, as to its position or fruitfulness; or whatever changes, vicissitudes, and revolutions may be in the kingdoms, nations, and among the inhabitants of the earth, through wars and desolations made thereby. *And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea:* so the destruction of kingdoms, empires, and cities, is expressed by a like phrase: as of Babylon, Jer. li. 25. and of the Roman and Pagan empire, Rev. vi. 12—14. and of the city of Rome, Rev. viii. 8.

Ver. 3. Though *the waters thereof roar* and *be troubled*, &c.] The noise of which causes men's hearts to fail them for fear, Luke xxi. 25, 26. Though *the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.* All these figurative expressions denote the hurlyburlies, confusions, and disorders that have been or will be in the world; amidst all which the people of God have no reason to fear; for it is always well with the righteous, let it go how it will with others. The passage may be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the wars preceding it, and the dispersion of the Jews upon it; when true believers in Christ found him to be their refuge, strength, and help in that time of trouble, such as never was the like, and were safe and without fear; and Aben Ezra, a Jewish commentator, thinks it is right to interpret this psalm concerning the wars of Jerusalem: moreover, these words may be applied to any other time of calamity, through war or persecution, that has been since; as also to any that is to come; as to the slaying of the witnesses, the hour of temptation that will try all that are upon the earth; and even to the day of judgment, when heaven and earth shall flee away from the face of the Judge; when the heavens shall be folded up as a garment, and the earth, and all that is therein, shall be burnt up, and the whole world of the ungodly shall be thrown into the utmost panic, the saints will be safe with Christ, and ever happy with him; and, in the worst of times in this world, God is always their covenant-God, their shield, portion, and exceeding great reward; Christ is their Redeemer and Saviour, their city of refuge, and strong hold; and though they may be plundered of their goods and property, they have a better and a more enduring substance in heaven; an estate, an inheritance there, that can never be taken away; and even should their enemies kill the body, that is the utmost they can do; their souls are safe in the hands of Christ; their life is hid with him; and when he shall appear, they shall appear with him in glory; and therefore they may well say, *we will not fear**.

Ver. 4. There is *a river*, &c.] The allusion is either to the river Kidron, which ran by Jerusalem; or to the waters of Shiloah, which by different courses and branches ran through the city of Jerusalem, and supplied the several parts of it with water, to the joy and comfort of its inhabitants: but the words are to be understood in a figurative sense, as applicable to Gospel times; and this river either designs the Gospel, the streams of which are its doctrines, which are living waters that went out from Jerusalem, and which publish glad tidings of great joy to all sensible sinners; or the Spirit and his graces, which are compared to a well, and rivers of living water, in the exercise of which the saints have much joy and peace; or else the Lord himself, who is a place of broad rivers and streams to his people, and is both their refreshment and protection; or rather his everlasting love to them is here intended; see Psal. xxxvi. 8. Ezek. xlvii. 1. Rev. xxii. 1. The head of this river is the heart of God, his sovereign good will and pleasure; the channel through which it runs is Christ Jesus; the rise of it was in eternity, when, like a river that runs under ground, it flowed secretly, as it does before effectual vocation; when it breaks up, and appears in large streams, and flows, and so it proceeds running on to all eternity. It is a river that is unfathomable, and cannot be passed over; it has heights and depths, and lengths and breadths, which cannot be fully comprehended: as for the quality of it, it is a pure river, clear as crystal; free of all dissimulation in the heart of God, and clear of all motives and conditions in the creature. Its water is living water; which quickens dead sinners, revives drooping saints, secures from the second death, and gives eternal life; it makes all fruitful about it, or that are planted by it. *The streams whereof shall make glad the city of God;* the *streams* of this river are eternal election; the covenant of grace its blessings and promises; the provision and mission of Christ as a Saviour, and redemption by him; justification, pardon, adoption, regeneration, perseverance in grace, and eternal life; called *streams*, because they flow from the fountain of divine love; and because of the rapidity, force, and power of the grace of God, in the application of them in conversion, which carries all before it; and because of the abundance, continuance, and freeness of them, and the gratefulness and acceptableness of them to those who see the worth of them, and their interest in them; see Cant. iv. 15. and these, when made known and applied, *make glad* the hearts of God's people under a sense of sin and guilt, under divine desertions, the temptations of Satan, and the various afflictions they meet with; for these are intended by *the city of God*, as the church is often called, because of his building, and where he dwells, and where the saints are fellow-citizens. And the same are signified by *the holy place;* being an holy temple to God, consisting of holy persons, such who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, and live holy lives and conversations: and by *the tabernacles of the most High;* being the dwelling-places of God, Father, Son, and Spirit. All which is a reason why the saints should not fear in the worst of times.

Ver. 5. *God* is *in the midst of her*, &c.] The church and people of God; not merely by his essence, power, and providence, as he is in the midst of the world; but by his gracious presence, and which always continues, though not always perceived; and is a sufficient antidote against all fear of men and devils. *She shall not be moved;* though the earth may; and when it is, ver. 2, neither from the heart of God, on which his people are set as a seal; nor from the hands of Christ,

* בהמיר cum mutabit, Pagninus; etiamsi permutarit, Vatablus; si commutaret, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

* Si fractus illabatur orbis, &c. Horat. Carmin. l. 3. Ode 3. v. 7.

from whence they can never be plucked; nor from the covenant of grace, which is immovable; nor off of the rock Christ, on which they are built; nor from the state of grace, of justification, adoption, and sanctification, in which they stand; nor out of the world, by all the cunning and power of antichrist. *God shall help her, and that right early*; or *when the morning looks out*[x]. When it is night with the church, it is the hour and power of darkness with the enemies of it; and this is the time of the reign of antichrist, whose kingdom is a kingdom of darkness: but the *morning cometh, and also the night*: the former being about to break forth, and the latter to be at an end; yea, at eventide it shall be light: and the Lord will be a suitable, seasonable, and timely help to his people; for though weeping endures the night, joy comes in the morning.

Ver. 6. *The Heathen raged*, &c.] As they did at Christ's first coming, against him, his Gospel, and his people; and which continued during the three first centuries; and then the Pagan kingdoms belonging to the Roman empire were removed; since then another sort of Heathens, the Papists, have raged, in violent persecutions and bloodshed of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, and will rage again, about and at the downfal of Babylon; see Rev. xi. 18. and xvi. 10. *The kingdoms were moved*; either from their Pagan or Papal religion, and became subject to Christ. So it was at the downfal of Rome Pagan; and so it will be at the downfal of Rome Papal; when the kings of the earth shall hate the whore, make her desolate, and burn her flesh with fire. Or they shall be destroyed; that is, those that shall be gathered together in Armageddon, to make war with the Lamb; see Rev. xvi. 14, 16. and xvii. 14. and xix. 15, 20, 21. *He uttered his voice, the earth melted*; like wax, as the inhabitants of the earth do at the voice of his thunder, and as antichrist will at the breath of his mouth; and all within the Romish jurisdiction, signified by *the earth*, as it often is in the book of the Revelation, when the voice of the mighty angel shall be heard, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*, Rev. xviii. 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Ver. 7. *The Lord of hosts is with us*, &c.] The Targum is, *the Word of the Lord of hosts*. He whose name is Immanuel, which is, by interpretation, *God with us*; who is King of kings, and Lord of lords; who has all creatures in heaven and earth at his command, whom all the hosts of angels obey; he is on the side of his people, and therefore they have nothing to fear from all the hosts and armies of men; seeing more are they that are for them than they that are against them. *The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah*. As, in the former clause, the argument against fear of men is taken from the power of God, and the extent of his dominion, here it is taken from the grace of God, and his people's covenant-interest in him: for by Jacob is meant the church of God, and all true believers, who are Israelites indeed; the Lord is the refuge and shelter of such in all times of distress and trouble, and therefore they need not fear; see the note on ver. 1.

Ver. 8. *Come, behold the works of the Lord*, &c.] Of nature and grace, especially those of Providence; both in a way of judgment, as in this verse; and of mercy, as in the following. These words are an address of the psalmist to his friends, as Apollinarius supplies it; or of the church to the fearful among them, who were dismayed at the commotions and disturbances that were in the world, ver. 2, 3. and who are encouraged to trust in the Lord, from the consideration of his works, particularly his providential dispensations. *What desolations he hath made in the earth*; in the land of Judea, at the time of the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, foretold by Moses, Deut. xxxii. 22—25. by Daniel, ch. ix. 26, 27. and by our Lord Jesus Christ, Matt. xxiii. 38. and xxiv. 2. Luke xix. 43, 44. and which desolations being the fulfilling of prophecy, may serve to strengthen the faith of God's people, that whatsoever he has said shall come to pass; and that seeing he made such desolations among the Jews, for their rejection of the Messiah, what may not be expected will be made in the antichristian states, for their opposition to him? and, besides, are a confirmation of the truth of his being come; since after his coming these desolations, according to Daniel, were to be made; nor was the sceptre to depart from Judah till he came, nor the second temple to be destroyed before he was in it. Moreover, these desolations may refer to those that have been made in the Roman empire, upon the blowing of the trumpets; the first *four* of which brought in the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, into the western part of it, which made sad ravages and devastations in it; see Rev. viii. 7—12. and the *fifth* and *sixth* brought in the Saracens and Turks into the eastern part of it, which seized and demolished it, and made dreadful havoc among men; see Rev. ix. 1—19. Likewise the desolations that will be made in the antichristian states may be here intended; when the seven vials of God's wrath will be poured out upon them, Rev. xvi. when the kings of the earth will hate the whore, and make her desolate, Rev. xvii. 16. and all her plagues shall come upon her in one day, Rev. xviii. 8, 9. And a view of these desolations, even in prophecy, may serve to cheer the hearts of God's people under the present reign of antichrist, and under all the rage, fury, and oppression of antichristian powers, since they will all in a little time become desolate. This will be the Lord's doing, and it will be wondrous in our eyes.

Ver. 9. *He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth*, &c.] As at the birth of Christ, the Prince of peace, in the times of Augustus Cæsar, when there was a general peace in the world, though it did not last long; and in the times of Constantine, signified by silence in heaven for half an hour, Rev. viii. 1. when for a while there was a cessation from wars and persecution; and as will be in the latter day, and which is here chiefly designed; when nations shall learn war no more, and Christ's kingdom will take place; of which and its peace there shall be no end, Isa. ii. 4. and ix. 6, 7. Psal. lxxii. 7. The consideration of which may serve to relieve distressed minds under terrible apprehensions of present troubles and

[x] לפנות בקר respiciente mane, Pagninus; ad prospectum auroræ, Musculus; at the looking forth of the morning, Ainsworth; i. e. speedily and quickly, as Suidas interprets it in voce Πρωι.

public calamities. *He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire:* that is, *chariots,* or *carts*[y], or *waggons,* in which, as Aben Ezra observes, arms and provision were carried for the use of soldiers; the Targum renders it *round shields*[z]: and the destroying of all these military weapons and carriages is a token of peace, and of war's being caused to cease, there being no more use for them; with this compare Ezek. xxxix. 8, 9. It was usual to burn the arms of enemies taken in war[a].

Ver. 10. *Be still, and know that I am God,* &c.] These words are thought by some to be spoken by the Lord to the nations of the world, to *cease from war,* as the Targum renders the words; or from going up any more against Jerusalem, as Jarchi interprets them; and that they were spoken to them before the breaking of their bows, &c. as Aben Ezra observes; or that they are an exhortation to them to cease from their evil works, and know that the Lord is God, and has power to raise up and to make low; which is Kimchi's sense of the words: but they are rather a continuation of the church's address to the fearful among them, as before to behold the works of the Lord, so here to hearken to what he says, as follows, *be still;* not that they should be like stocks and stones, stupid, indolent, and unconcerned at the commotions that were in the earth, and be unaffected with the judgments of God, and be wholly silent and inactive; but that they should not be fearful, nor fretful and impatient, or restless and tumultuous; but be quiet and easy, resigned to the will of God, and live in an assured expectation of the appearance of divine Providence in their favour. And *know;* own and acknowledge that he is God, a sovereign Being that does whatsoever he pleases; that he is unchangeable in his nature, purposes, promises, and covenant; that he is omnipotent, able to help them and deliver them at the last extremity; that he is omniscient, knows their persons, cases, and troubles, and how and where to hide them till the storm is over; that he is the all-wise God, and does all things after the counsel of his own will, and makes all things work together for good to them; and that he is faithful to his word and promise, and will not suffer them to be over-pressed and bore down with troubles. Who further says for their encouragement, and is to be hearkened to in it, *I will be exalted among the Heathen;* with it in the conversion of the Gentiles; when the kingdoms of this world shall become Christ's, and all nations shall come and worship before him, Rev. xi. 15, 17. and xv. 4. Or in the destruction of the Gentiles; the Papists, the antichristian states; which will cause great rejoicings, hallelujahs, and attributions of honour and glory to him, Rev. xvi. 5, 6. and xix. 1, 2. So Jarchi interprets the words, *I will be exalted,* בנקמתי, *in my vengeance;* that I will take upon the Heathen. *I will be exalted in the earth;* now Christ is exalted in heaven at the right hand of God, ere long he will be exalted in the earth, where he was despised and rejected, crucified and slain; he will be King over all the earth; his dominion will be from one end of it to the other; his tabernacle will be among men; and his people, as kings and priests, will reign with him on earth; by whom he, and he alone, will be exalted in the dignity of his person and offices, and especially in his kingly office, Zech. xiv. 9. and ix. 10. Rev. xxi. 3. and v. 10. Isa. ii. 17. The consideration of which may serve to remove fears and dismayings of mind under present troubles.

Ver. 11. *The Lord of hosts is with us,* &c.] The Targum paraphrases it, *the Word of the Lord of hosts,* as in ver. 7. and the same words are here repeated, to comfort those that were fearful and unbelieving, with which the church then comforted herself.

PSALM XLVII.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

THIS psalm is thought by some to be written on occasion of the ark being brought from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David, to the place he had prepared for it; which was attended with singing and dancing, with shouting, and the sound of a trumpet, 2 Sam. vi. 12—16. but it rather seems to be penned on account of the ascension of Christ to heaven, prophetically spoken of in this psalm; and of the spread of the Gospel, and the conquests it made in the Gentile world upon Christ's ascension; as the whole psalm shews: and even Aben Ezra and Kimchi apply it to the times of the Messiah; and so do some of their most ancient writers, who particularly interpret ver. 5 of him, as may be seen in the note upon it.

Ver. 1. *O clap your hands, all ye people,* &c.] Meaning the Gentiles more especially; see Psal. cxvii. 1. compared with Rom. xv. 9, 10, 11. who had reason to rejoice and be glad, since the ascended Lord and King here spoken of was given to be their Saviour, was the propitiation for their sins, and had given himself a ransom-price for them; and now the Gospel was preached among them, by an order from him after his resurrection; and upon his ascension gifts were bestowed on his apostles, qualifying them for it; when many of them were converted by it, and were made partakers of the same grace and privileges with the Jews that believed in Christ, and were formed into Gospel churches. Wherefore they are called upon to declare their joy and gladness by *clapping their hands;* which is a gesture expressive of exultation and joy; see Psal. xcviii. 8. Isa. lv. 12. Nah. iii. 19. It was used at the unction and coronation of a king, 2 Kings xi. 12. and so very proper to be used on occasion of the

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y עגלות plaustra, Paguinus, Montanus, Vatablus, Musculus, Gejerus, Michaelis.

z So the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic and Arabic versions.

a Vid. Lydium de Re Militari, l. 6. c. 4. p. 259, 260.

Messiah being made or declared Lord and Christ, as he was at his ascension, Acts ii. 36. *Shout unto God with the voice of triumph;* as when triumphs are made on account of victories obtained, which was now the case; Christ having conquered sin, Satan, and the world, by his sufferings and death, and having spoiled principalities and powers, made a shew of them, openly triumphing over them, when he ascended on high, and led captivity captive; and he having sent his apostles into the Gentile world with his Gospel, they were caused to triumph in him wherever they came. And now these external actions of clapping hands, and shouting with the voice, are expressive of inward spiritual joy; which those among the people who were conquered by the grace of God, and had a sight of their ascended Lord and Saviour, were filled with: and who are exhorted to express it in this manner, *unto God;* not to angels, nor to men, no, not to ministers, who brought the joyful tidings to them; but to God, either to God the Father, for all their temporal and spiritual blessings; especially for the unspeakable gift of his Son, to suffer and die for them: or to the Son of God, God manifest in the flesh; God that was gone up with a shout, ver. 5. and was now at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour; who, by the sufferings of death, had obtained eternal redemption for them.

Ver. 2. *For the Lord most high is terrible,* &c.] Christ is not only the Son of the Highest, but he himself is the most high God, God over all, blessed for ever. He is higher than the highest, than the angels in heaven, or any of the sons of men on earth. He is the high and lofty One, that dwells in the high and lofty place. And even this character agrees with him as the ascended Lord and King in his human nature; he is ascended on high, is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He is highly exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour; he is made higher than the heavens, and than the kings of the earth are; angels, authorities, and powers, are subject to him. And this is a reason exciting all the people to joy and gladness. And he is *terrible* to his enemies, being the Lion of the tribe of Judah; who will rule the nations with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces as a potter's vessel: and so he will be when he shall come in the clouds of heaven, and descend from thence, in flaming fire, to take vengeance on those who have despised and rejected him; and at the same time will be glorious to and admired by them that believe in him. His appearance, which will be terrible to others, will be matter of joy to them. Though the word used may be rendered as it is in Psal. cxi. 9. *reverend* or *to be feared* [b], as he is; see Isa. viii. 13, 14. both on account of his goodness, as the Redeemer and Saviour of his people, Hos. iii. 5. and of his greatness, being equal with God, and King of saints. As it follows; *he is a great King over all the earth;* as he must needs be, since he is the great God and our Saviour; and is King of kings, and Lord of lords. He is now King of Zion, and head over all things to the church; and ere long the kingdoms of this world will become his, and he will take to himself his great power and reign, and shall be King over all the earth openly and visibly; he shall be one, and his name One, Zech. xiv. 9. Mal. i. 14. which is another reason for joy and gladness among the people.

Ver. 3. *He shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet.*] As Joshua, his type, subdued the Canaanites; and as David, another type of him, subdued the Syrians, Moabites, and others: the Jews from these words expect, that, in the times of the Messiah they look for, the Gentiles in a literal sense will be subdued by him, and become subject to them; but these, and all other expressions of the like kind, are to be understood in a spiritual sense; such as Isa. xlix. 23. and lx. 10, 12, 14. and which will have their accomplishment in the latter day, in the subjection of the Gentiles to the word and ordinances of the Gospel administered in his churches: though the passage here refers to the times following the ascension of Christ to heaven, when he went forth in the ministry of his apostles conquering and to conquer; and which he made use of to cause the people to fall under him, and to be willing to be saved by him; to submit to his righteousness, and to his ordinances, the sceptre of his kingdom; and which was causing them to triumph, and subduing the people under them, who through the Gospel preached by them became obedient by word and deed; and which was an occasion of joy even to the conquered ones.

Ver. 4. *He shall choose our inheritance for us,* &c.] Either a portion in this life; God knows what is best for his people, and therefore they should leave it with him, who can make a better choice for them than for themselves: an Heathen [c] once gave this advice, "give "thyself wholly to the will and disposal of the celes-"tial ones; for they who are used to give good things "easily can also choose the fittest." Or the heavenly inheritance, so called in allusion to the land of Canaan, subdued and possessed by the Israelites, in which Christ is greatly concerned; his people are predestinated to the adoption of children, that is, to the inheritance they are adopted to by him, in whom they obtain it; through his death they receive the promise of eternal inheritance, he being the testator of that will of their heavenly Father which bequeaths it to them; it is his righteousness which gives them a title to it, and through his grace they have a meetness for it, and he will at last introduce them into it; all which is a reason for joy and gladness in them. The Arabic version renders it, *he hath chosen us an inheritance for himself;* so the Lord's people are, Deut. xxxii. 9. Christ asked them of his father, and he gave them for his inheritance, he having chosen them as such, and greatly delighted he is with them, Psal. ii. 8. and xvi. 6. *The excellency of Jacob whom he loved. Selah.* The saints, who are, in his esteem, the excellent in the earth, and who will be in the latter day an eternal excellency, Psal. xvi. 3. Isa. lx. 15. even the whole church, consisting of Jews and Gentiles, the spiritual Jacob or Israel of God, whom Christ has loved with an everlasting love, and there-

[b] נורא reverendus, Junius & Tremellius; timendus est, Cocceius; venerandus, Michaelis.

[c] Socrates apud Valer. Maxim. l. 7. c. 2. extern. 1.

fore has chosen them for his portion and peculiar treasure; as Jacob in person was loved when Esau was hated.

Ver. 5. *God is gone up with a shout,* &c.] That is, the Son of God, who is truly and properly God, equal to the Father, having the same perfections; God manifest in the flesh, the Word that was made flesh, and dwelt among men on earth; who in the next clause is called *Lord* or *Jehovah*, being the everlasting *I AM*, which is, and was, and is to come; he having done his work on earth he came about, went up from earth to heaven in human nature, really, locally, and visibly, in the sight of his apostles, attended by angels, and with their shouts and acclamations, which are here meant. *The Lord with the sound of the trumpet;* which circumstance, though not related in the account of Christ's ascension in the New Testament, yet inasmuch as the angels say he shall descend in like manner as he ascended, and that it is certain he will descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God; so that if his ascent was as his descent will be, it must be then with a shout, and the sound of a trumpet, Acts i. 10. 1 Thess. iv. 16. This text is applied to the Messiah by the ancient Jewish writers [d].

Ver. 6. *Sing praises to God,* &c.] That is gone up with a shout, Christ Jesus, our ascended Lord and King, as the apostles did at the time of his ascension, Luke xxiv. 52, 53. *Sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises:* who was then made Lord and Christ, declared King of saints, and crowned with glory and honour; the repetition of the phrase *sing praises* denotes frequency, constancy, fervency, and great devotion in the performance of this service; and that the ascension of Christ, the occasion of it, is of the greatest moment and importance, and requires it to be performed in such a manner.

Ver. 7. *For God is the King of all the earth,* &c.] Or *the king of all the earth is God* [e]; the same that is ascended into heaven, and is King of saints, even Christ Jesus; and so he will appear to be, especially in the latter day; see the note on ver. 2. *Sing ye praises with understanding;* or, as De Dieu renders it, *to him that understandeth*, that is, to God the only wise, whose understanding is infinite; even to Christ, who, as God, knows all things; and, as man and Mediator, is of quick understanding, and has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him; so R. Obadiah, *sing of him who understands;* or, *sing ye praises, O every one that understandeth* [f]; that is, how to sing, as every one does not; this is the sense of Aben Ezra and Kimchi; or *with understanding*, as we render it; with understanding of what is sung. The Apostle Paul seems to refer to this passage in 1 Cor. xiv. 15. The Targum renders it, *with a good understanding.*

Ver. 8. *God reigneth over the Heathen,* &c.] He reigned over Israel under the former dispensation, and now he reigns over the Gentiles under the Gospel dispensation; as appears by the numerous instances of conversion among them in the first ages of Christianity; and by the many churches that were planted by the means of the apostles; and by the destruction of the Roman Pagan empire under the sixth seal, Rev. vi. 12—14. and xii. 7—10. and which will still more appear by the destruction of Rome Papal, when all the Heathens shall perish out of the land; and by the fulness and forces of the Gentiles being brought into a submission to him; all which are reasons to sing praises to him. *God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness;* or his holy throne, which is heaven; on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; on his father's throne; having done his work on earth he is received up into heaven, and is set down on a throne at the right hand of God, an honour which none of the angels have: he has ceased from his work and entered into his rest, and sits and sees of the travail of his soul; all which is matter of joy to his people, and a reason why they should sing praises; and the rather, since they are set down with him in heavenly places: or this may be understood of his sitting on the throne of judgment to judge the world in righteousness at the last day, it following upon his reign over the Gentiles; though the other sense best agrees with his immediate ascension to heaven.

Ver. 9. *The princes of the people are gathered together,* &c.] Not against Christ, as at his first coming, but to him, and to his church and people; even the great men of the earth, the kings and princes of it, as they will in the latter day; see Isa. xlix. 23. and lx. 3, 10, 11. Rev. xxi. 24. or this may mean the saints in general, who are all of them the princes of his people, and are set among princes, yea, are kings and priests unto God; some render it, *the willing* or *voluntary ones of his people* [g]; the same word is here used as in Psal. cx. 3. where it is rendered *willing*, and designs such who are made willing to be saved by Christ, submit to his righteousness, and be subject to his word and ordinances. Even *the people of the God of Abraham;* whom the God of Abraham has chosen for his people, taken into covenant, given to his son, and who are redeemed by his blood, and effectually called by his grace; and who, though Gentiles, belong to the same covenant and the same covenant-God as Abraham did, and have the blessing of Abraham upon them; and are indeed his spiritual seed, being Christ's. The Targum is, *the people that believe in the God of Abraham.* The words may be rendered in connexion with the former clause, *gathered together unto the people of the God of Abraham* [h]; and so denote the association of the Gentiles converted with the believing Jews, as was at the first times of the Gospel, and will be at the latter day, 1 Cor. xii. 13. Gal. iii. 28, 29. Isa. lx. 4. *For the shields of the earth* belong *unto God;* that is, the rulers of the earth, as the word is rendered in Hos. iv. 18. who are as a shield and a protection to their subjects; these are set up and put down by the Lord at his pleasure; and their hearts are in his hands, and he can convert them when he pleases, and gather them to his son, and into his churches; or, as Jarchi

[d] Bemidbar Rabba, s. 15. fol. 219. 1.
[e] So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[f] משכיל זמרו canite, intelligens, Montanus; i. e. unusquisque, Vatablus.

[g] נדיבי עמים voluntarii populorum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.
[h] So Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus.

interprets it, "he has power in his hands to protect as "with a shield all that trust in him;" safety is of the Lord; the protection of the world and of the church is from him, who is King over all the earth. *He is greatly exalted;* that is, Christ, who has all power in heaven and in earth; he is highly exalted at the right hand of God, angels, authorities, and powers, being subject to him.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL, THE TANJORE

PSALM XLVIII.

A Song and *Psalm for the sons of Korah.*

THIS psalm is intitled *a song-psalm*, a psalm to be sung vocally; or *a song and psalm* to be sung both vocally and instrumentally; and is one of the spiritual songs the apostle speaks of, Eph. v. 19. It was occasioned, as some think, by David's spoiling the Philistines, 2 Sam. v. 17—21. or, as others, by the deliverance of the people from the Moabites and Ammonites in the times of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 27, 28. or, as others, by the deliverance of the inhabitants of Jerusalem from Sennacherib in the times of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xix. 34, 35. though as Kimchi, a celebrated Jewish commentator, owns, it belongs to the times of the Messiah, as the other preceding psalms; and treats of his greatness, and of the praise and glory due to him, and gives large encomiums of his church.

Ver. 1. *Great is the Lord*, &c.] The same that in the foregoing psalm is said to be gone up to heaven with a shout, to sit on the throne of his holiness, to reign over the Heathen, and to be King over all the earth; who is great, and the Son of the Highest; the great God and our Saviour; great in his person as God-man, God manifest in the flesh, his Father's fellow and equal; and in the perfections of his nature, being of great power, and of great wisdom, and of great faithfulness, and of strict holiness and justice, and of wonderful grace and goodness; great in his works of creation and providence; in his miraculous operations when on earth, and in the work of man's redemption and salvation; great is he in all his offices, a great Prophet risen in Israel, a great High-priest over the house of God, a Saviour, and a great one, and the great Shepherd of the sheep. *And greatly to be praised in the city of our God;* the city of Jerusalem, the city of solemnities, where was the worship of God, and where the tribes went up to worship, and God was present with his people; and where the great Lord of all shewed himself to be great; here Christ the great Saviour appeared, even in the temple, when a child, where Simeon and Anna saw him, and spoke great things of him; where he at twelve years of age disputed with the doctors, and shewed his great wisdom; here when grown up he wrought many of his great miracles, and taught his doctrines; here he entered in great triumph, attended with the shouts, acclamations, and hosannahs of the people; here he ate his last passover with his disciples; and in a garden near it was he taken and brought before the sanhedrim, assembled at the high-priest's palace at Jerusalem; and then tried and condemned at the bar of Pilate; when being led a little way out of the city he was crucified on Mount Calvary; and on another mount, the mount of Olives, about a mile from it, he ascended to heaven; and here in this city he poured forth the Spirit in an extraordinary manner on his disciples at the day of Pentecost, as an evidence of his ascension; and from hence his Gospel went forth into all the world; and therefore was greatly to be praised here, as he was by his disciples, church, and people, Acts ii. 46, 47. Jerusalem is a figure of the Gospel church, which is often compared to a city, Isa. xxvi. 1. and lxii. 12. of which saints are citizens and fellow-citizens of each other; this is a city built on Christ the foundation; is full of inhabitants, when together and considered by themselves; is governed by wholesome laws, enacted by Christ its King, who has appointed officers under him to explain and enforce them, and see that they are put in execution; and has many privileges and immunities belonging to it; and this is the city of God, of his building and of his defending, and where he dwells; it is, as in ver. 2. *the city of the great King*, the King Messiah, and where he displays his greatness; here he appears great and glorious, shews his power and his glory; is seen in the galleries and through the lattices of ordinances, in his beauty and splendour; here he grants his gracious presence, and bestows his favours and blessings; and is therefore greatly to be praised here, as he is by all his people on the above accounts. Even *in the mountain of his holiness;* as Mount Zion is called on account of the temple built upon it, and the worship of God in it; and a fit emblem it was of the church of Christ, which, as that is, is chosen and loved of God, and is his habitation, is impregnable and immovable, and consists of persons sanctified by God the Father, in the Son, and through the Spirit.

Ver. 2. *Beautiful for situation*, &c.] This, and what follows, are said of the city of God, the city of Jerusalem, which was delightfully situated on an eminence, in a wholesome air; the brook Kidron gliding by it, the water of Siloah running through it, or at least through some parts of it; fields and gardens adjoining to it, and mountains all around it: and so the church of Christ is built upon him, the Rock; the river of divine love runs by it, the streams whereof make it glad; the green pastures of the word and ordinances are in it; and salvation is as walls and bulwarks about it; and so healthful is it, that the inhabitants have no reason to say they are sick, since the people that dwell therein have their iniquities forgiven, Isa. xxxiii. 24. *The joy of the whole earth:* that is, the city of Jerusalem, Lam. ii. 15. especially it was so when Christ, whose birth near it was matter of great joy to all people; when he who is the desire of all nations was in it; and when the Gospel went out from it unto the whole earth, and caused joy wherever it came in power, and with the Holy Ghost; and the church of Christ, par-

ticularly in the latter day, will be an eternal excellency, and a joy of many generations, Isa. lx. 15. and even now the whole world has reason to rejoice and be glad, because of the church of Christ in it, who are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, and on whose account the world continues, and the men of it enjoy the blessings they do. Is *Mount Zion*: or *by Mount Zion*: Jerusalem was near it, and beautifully situated by it. On *the sides of the north*: Jerusalem was north of Zion, as Zion was south of Jerusalem; likewise the temple was on the north part of Mount Zion, Isa. xiv. 13. the altar and altar-gate were on the north side of the temple, and there were the tables on which the sacrifices were slain, Ezek. viii. 5. and xl. 35—40. and on the north side of the altar was the creature to be offered killed, Lev. i. 11. and perhaps some reference is here had to the church of Christ in the latter day, which for many years past has been chiefly in our northern part of the world: hence *the* Protestant doctrine is by the Papists called the Northern Heresy; and it will be *tidings out of the north* that shall trouble the man of sin, or some agent of his, to come forth with fury, and plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain, Dan. xi. 44, 45. *The city of the great King*: of Christ the King of kings; see the note on Psal. xlvii. 2. and xlviii. 1.

Ver. 3. *God is known in her palaces for a refuge.*] As there were palaces in Jerusalem; see ver. 13. and Psal. cxxii. 7. so there are in the church of Christ; every place in it is a palace fit for a king; and every one that has truly a name and a place there are kings and priests unto God: and here God is a *refuge* both for saints and sinners to fly unto; see the note on Psal. xlvi. 1. and is *known* to be so; the ministers of the Gospel being here appointed to direct and encourage souls to flee to Christ for refuge, who is the hope set before them in the everlasting Gospel, preached by them to lay hold upon; and all that do flee to him know, by experience, that he is a refuge for them; and as all the people of God do in every time of distress, and when all refuge fails them elsewhere.

Ver. 4. *For, lo, the kings were assembled*, &c.] As the princes of the Philistines to seek for David, when in the strong hold of Zion, 2 Sam. v. 17. as the Ethiopians in the time of Asa, 2 Chron. xiv. 9. and the Moabites and Ammonites in the times of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 1. and the kings of Syria and Israel in the times of Ahaz, Isa. vii. 1. and Sennacherib with his princes, who, in his esteem, were kings, in the times of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 17. which are instances of the kings of the nations gathering together against Zion, the city of Jerusalem, and people of the Jews, who were typical of the church of Christ; and that without success, and to their own confusion and destruction; though this seems to refer to the latter day of the Gospel dispensation, when all the kings of the earth, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, will be gathered together at the instigation of Satan, to the battle of the great day of the Lord God Almighty, in a place called Armageddon, where they will be defeated by Christ the King of kings, Rev. xvi. 13, 14, 16. and xix. 19—21. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret the passage of Gog and Magog gathering together to fight against Jerusalem, with which compare Rev. xx. 8, 9. *They passed by together*: either to the battle, as Jarchi explains it; or they passed by Jerusalem, the city of our God, the church, without entering into it, or doing it any hurt.

Ver. 5. *They saw it*, *&c.*] Either the city or the power of God, as Aben Ezra: or, as Jarchi, God himself going forth to fight against the nations. This refers to the power Christ will take to himself, and shew forth, by reigning in his church, and protecting it, which will not only be visible to the saints, but to the nations of the world; and to the brightness of Christ's coming in his spiritual reign, with the lustre of which antichrist will be destroyed, Rev. xi. 17, 18. 2 Thess. ii. 8. and to the glorious state of the church, signified by the rising of the witnesses, and their standing on their feet, and ascending to heaven, which will be seen by their enemies, Rev. xi. 11, 12. and to the destruction of Rome, the smoke of whose burning, the kings of the earth, that have committed fornication with her, will see and lament, Rev. xviii. 8, 9, 10. And *so they marvelled*: at the glory of the church, the security of it, the power of Christ in it and over it, and at the destruction of mystical Babylon; see Isa. lii. 14, 15. and xiii. 8. Jer. li. 41. *They were troubled*: as Herod and all Jerusalem were, upon hearing of the birth of Christ, Matt. ii. 3. so these kings will be, upon seeing the coming and power of Christ in the latter day, the invincibleness of his church, and their own immediate and utter ruin: this will be the time of the howling of the shepherds, both civil and ecclesiastical, when all hands will be faint, and every man's heart will melt, Zech. xi. 2. Isa. xiii. 6, 7. And *hasted away*: fled for fear of the great King at the head of his armies, in the defence of his church and people: and as the kings of the earth also at the destruction of Rome will flee and stand afar off, for fear of her torment, Rev. xviii. 10.

Ver. 6. *Fear took hold upon them there*, &c.] That is, either when they came up to the city, and passed by it, and saw what they did; or, as Kimchi observes, in the place where they thought to have made a great slaughter; that is, in Armageddon, Rev. xvi. 16. so upon the slaughter of the seven thousand names of men, or men of name and renown, such as the kings here assembled, the remnant will be affrighted, Rev. xi. 13. And *pain, as of a woman in travail*: this figure is made use of elsewhere, when the destruction of Babylon and the coming of Christ are spoken of; see Isa. xiii. 8. 1 Thess. v. 2, 3.

Ver. 7. *Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east-wind.*] This is either another simile, expressing the greatness of the dread and fear that shall now seize the kings of the earth; which will be, as Kimchi observes, as if they were smitten with a strong east wind, which breaks the ships of Tarshish; and to the same purpose is the note of Aben Ezra; who says, the psalmist compares the pain that shall take hold upon them to an east wind in the sea, which breaks the ships; for by Tarshish is meant, not Tartessus in Spain, nor Tarsus in Cilicia, or the port to which the Prophet Jonah went and took shipping; but the sea in general: or else this phrase denotes the manner in which the antichristian kings, and antichristian states,

will be destroyed; just as ships upon the ocean are dashed to pieces with a strong east wind; or it may design the loss of all their riches and substance brought to them in ships; hence the lamentations of merchants, and sailors, and shipmasters, Rev. xviii. 15—19.

Ver. 8. *As we have heard, so have we seen*, &c.] These are the words of the people of God making their observations on the above things; and so Aben Ezra and Kimchi understand them of the people of Israel; and the former, referring them to the war of Gog and Magog, paraphrases them thus: "the Israelites shall "say in that day, as we have heard the prophets, who "prophesied of the fall of Gog and Magog, so have "we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts." The words may be understood, either of facts which have been reported and heard to have been done in time past, to which others will correspond, and will be seen to do so in the latter day; as, for instance, as it has been heard that God inflicted plagues upon Egypt; so it will be seen that he will pour out the vials of his wrath upon the great city, which is spiritually called Egypt and Sodom: as it has been heard that God brought his people Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand; so it will be seen that he will deliver his people from the captivity and tyranny of the man of sin, and will call them out from Babylon a little before the destruction of it: as it has been heard that Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the Red sea; so it will be seen that Babylon shall be thrown down like a millstone cast into the sea, and be found no more: as it has been heard that literal Babylon is destroyed; so it will be seen that mystical Babylon will be destroyed also: and as it has been heard that the kings of the nations, at several times, have gathered themselves together against Jerusalem, without effect; so it will be seen that the kings of the earth will assemble together against the church of Christ; but, as soon as they shall come up to her, and look upon her, they shall be astonished and flee with the utmost consternation, fear, and dread, and be utterly ruined: or else the sense is, as it has been heard, from the promises and prophecies delivered out from time to time, that God will grant his presence to his church and people, and will be the protection of them, and will destroy all his and their enemies; so it has been seen that these have been fulfilled, more or less, in all ages; in the latter day their accomplishment will be full and manifest, even *in the city of the Lord of hosts*; of the hosts of heaven and earth, of all armies above and below; and therefore the church must be safe under his protection. *In the city of our God*; the covenant-God of his people; wherefore, as the former title declares his power, this shews his love and affection, and both together secure the happiness of the saints: wherefore it follows, *God will establish it for ever. Selah*. Not only particular believers, of which the church consists, are established on the foundation, Christ; but the church itself is built on him, the Rock against which the gates of hell cannot prevail; yet as they are not always in a settled and constant condition, so neither is that, being sometimes tossed with the tempests of afflictions and persecutions, and sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; but in the latter day it will be established on the top of the mountains; and which is a desirable thing by all the saints, and what they should, as many do, earnestly pray for; and which God will do in his own time; and then it shall be established for ever, and be a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of its stakes shall be removed, nor any of its cords broken, Isa. ii. 2. and lxii. 7. Psal. lxxxvii. 5. Isa. xxxiii. 20.

Ver. 9. *We have thought of thy loving-kindness, O God*, &c.] Jarchi interprets it, *we have waited for thy loving-kindness*; to see thy salvation; and some, as Ben Melech observes, explain it of hope and expectation; as if the sense was, *we have hoped for thy loving-kindness*; so the Syriac version renders it, and the word used has the signification of tarrying, 1 Sam. xiv. 9. God has his set time to favour his Zion, and till that time comes it is right in them to be hoping, expecting, and waiting for it. The Chaldee paraphrase is, *we have esteemed thy goodness*; it being very excellent, exceeding valuable, and better than life itself; but other Jewish writers, as Menachem, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, render it as we do, *we have thought*, &c. The loving-kindness of God towards his people in Christ is a very delightful and profitable subject to dwell in meditation upon, to consider the objects, instances, cause, and nature of it; and serves greatly to encourage faith and hope, to draw out love to God, and engage to a ready and cheerful obedience to his will; and this is sometimes done in public, as well as in private conversation, and in the closet; as follows. *In the midst of thy temple*; the church of Christ, which is of his building, where he dwells, and grants his presence, and is often called the temple of God in the New Testament, in allusion to Solomon's temple; see 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 21. here the word of God is preached, his ordinances administered, and his presence granted; which are instances of his loving-kindness, and lead his people to think of it; and particularly when the faithful ministers of the Gospel make mention of it, and the ordinance of the supper is administering, which is intended to bring to remembrance the love of God and Christ; moreover, in the latter day, to which this psalm belongs, the temple of God will be opened, Rev. xi. 19. and xv. 5. that is, the true worship of God will be restored, and pure and undefiled religion freely exercised; the Gospel will be clearly and fully preached; and the ordinances administered as they were first delivered, which will lead the saints to think of the loving-kindness of God unto them; and particularly when they shall see the angels with the seven vials, the executioners of God's wrath on the antichristian states, go forth from the temple to pour them out upon them, Rev. xv. 6. and xvi. 1.

Ver. 10. *According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth*, &c.] That is, as he himself is in the perfections of his nature, which are displayed in the works of his hands, throughout the whole creation; so is or ought his praise to be: or rather, as in the latter day his name will be great in all the earth, Mal. i. 11. so will his praise be; and as his name will be One, Zech. xiv. 9. he will be one Lord, there will be one faith and one baptism; his worship, word, and ordinances, will be uniformly observed and

attended to; so will be his praise: all the saints will unite together in giving glory to him: he, and he alone, shall be exalted. Moreover, his Gospel is his name, Acts ix. 15. and that in the latter day will be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, Rev. xiv. 8. and multitudes, both of Jews and Gentiles, will be converted, and from the uttermost parts of the earth will be heard songs of praise and glory unto him, Isa. xxiv. 15, 16. *Thy right hand is full of righteousness:* of all spiritual blessings for his people; and particularly of the righteousness of Christ, which God accepts of, imputes unto, and liberally bestows upon them: and it is also full of punitive justice, which he inflicts on his and their enemies; his right hand teaches him terrible things, and these terrible things he does in righteousness; all his works are in righteousness, which the right hand, being the instrument of action, is a token of. Moreover, Christ is the right hand of God; he is the man of his right hand, and as dear to him as his right hand; he is the right hand of his righteousness, by which he upholds his people; and this right hand of his is full of righteousness; he does nothing else but righteousness; he is the author and donor of it to his people, and will execute righteousness upon his enemies; in righteousness he will make war with them, Rev. xix. 11. and which is greatly the sense of this passage, as appears by the following verse.

Ver. 11. *Let Mount Zion rejoice*, &c.] The church in general; see ver. 1, 2. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xiv. 1. *Let the daughters of Judah be glad;* particular churches; and so the Targum renders it, *the congregations of the house of Judah;* or particular believers; such as are called the daughters of Jerusalem, and the daughters of Zion, Cant. iii. 10, 11. these are exhorted to joy and gladness, at the loving-kindness of God, at the spread of his name and glory to the ends of the earth, and at his righteousness his right hand is full of; and as it follows, *because of thy judgments;* executed on the antichristian kings, ver. 4—7. and on all the antichristian states, and on the whore of Babylon, and those who have committed fornication with her; see Rev. xix. 1, 2.

Ver. 12. *Walk about Zion, and go round about her*, &c.] These words are either an address to the enemies of the church, sarcastically delivered; calling upon them to come, and surround, and besiege Zion, and see what the issue and consequence of it will be, even the same as that of the kings, ver. 4—6. or to the builders of Zion, as Jarchi observes, to come and take a survey of it, and see what repairs were necessary; or rather to the saints, to the daughters of Judah before mentioned, to take a view of the strength and defence of the church, for their own comfort and encouragement, and to report the same to others for theirs also; for by walking around it may be observed the foundation, the rock and eminence on which it is built, Christ Jesus; the wall of it, the Lord himself, a wall of fire; the entrance into it, Christ the gate of righteousness; the fortress and strong hold of it the same; and the guards about it, the watchmen on its walls, the ministers of the Gospel, and an innumerable company of angels, that in a circle surround both ministers and people; see Rev. vii. 11. *Tell the towers thereof;* see 2 Chron. xxvi. 9. Isa. xxxiii. 18. the Lord himself is the tower of his people, high and strong, which secures and defends them from all their enemies, Psal. xviii. 2. and lxii. 3. Prov. xviii. 10. the ministers of the Gospel, who are immovable, and are set for the defence of it, Jer. vi. 27. the Scriptures of truth, which are like a tower built for an armoury, out of which the saints are furnished and provided with proper armour, whereby they are able to engage with false teachers, and to overcome the evil one, Cant. iv. 4. and the ordinances of the Gospel, the church's two breasts, said to be as towers, Cant. viii. 10. some render the words, *tell in the towers*[1]; publish on the house-tops, declare in the high places of the city, in the most public manner, the great things of the Gospel, which relate to the glory of Christ and his church.

Ver. 13. *Mark ye well her bulwarks*, &c.] Such as the free favour of God in Christ; which is not only as a shield, but as a bulwark to the church; his everlasting love, electing grace, the covenant of grace, with its blessings and promises, all which are more immovable than rocks and mountains; and especially the power of God, which surrounds his church, as the mountains did Jerusalem; and by which they are kept and preserved as in a garrison, Psal. cxxv. 2. 1 Peter i. 5. Also salvation by Christ; his righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction, which God has appointed for walls and bulwarks, and which make the city, the church, a strong and impregnable one, Isa. xxvi. 1. Likewise the Spirit of God, and his operations and influences, which are a standard against the enemy's flood of opposition and persecution; and who being in his church and people, is greater than he that is in the world, Isa. lix. 19. 1 John iv. 4. Some render the words, *set your hearts on her strength*, as the Vulgate Latin version; that is, on Christ, who is the strength of the poor and needy in their distress; the strength of their hearts, of their lives, and of their salvation; and the security of the church. Others render them, *set your hearts on her armies;* as the Targum is; her volunteers, her soldiers, who endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ, fight the Lord's battles, and are more than conquerors through him; and a lovely sight it is to behold them, with Christ at the head of them; see Rev. xix. 14. *Consider her palaces;* for Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, have their dwelling-places in Zion; and here, besides apostles, prophets, evangelists, and ordinary ministers of the word, who are rulers and officers set in the first place, every saint is a prince and a king; and has a place and a name here, better than that of sons and daughters of the greatest potentate on earth; every dwelling-place in Mount Zion is a palace. *That ye may tell it to the generation following;* that is, the beauty and glory, strength and safety of the church; and even all that is spoken of her in this psalm, as well as what follows: this is the end proposed by taking a circuit round Zion, and making the above observations on it.

Ver. 14. *For this God is our God for ever and ever*, &c.] Who is spoken of throughout the whole psalm as greatly to be praised, as well as is known in Zion,

[1] מגדליה ἐν τοῖς πύργοις αὐτῆς, Sept. in turribus ejus, V. L.

as the stability, security, and protection of her. This is said as pointing unto him as if visible, as Christ is God manifest in the flesh, now in Gospel times, to which this psalm belongs; as distinguishing him from all others, from the gods of the Gentiles, rejected by the people of God; as claiming an interest in him as their covenant-God; as exulting in the view of such relation to him; as suggesting how happy they were on this account; and especially since this relation will always continue, being founded in an everlasting covenant, and arising from the unchangeable love of God. *He will be our guide*, even *unto death*; the Lord orders the steps of the righteous, holds them by the right hand, and guides them with his counsel and in judgment: Christ, the great Shepherd of the flock, feeds them, as the antitype of David, according to the integrity of his heart, and guides them by the skilfulness of his hands; he guides their feet in the ways of peace, life, and salvation, by himself; he leads them into green pastures, beside the still waters, and unto fountains of living waters: the Spirit of the Lord leads them to the fulness of Christ; guides them into all truth, as it is in him; directs them into his and his Father's love, and leads them on to the land of uprightness. And this guide is an everlasting one; *even unto death*, or *in death*, or *above death*[x]; so as not to be hurt of the second death. He guides not only to the brink of Jordan's river, but through the deep waters of it, and never leaves till he has landed them safe on the shores of eternity: and some, as Aben Ezra, render the word as if it was עלמית, *for ever*; and others, as Abendana observes, render it *secretly*: the Lord sometimes leading his people in ways dark and hidden to them: and others give the sense of it, *as in the days of youth*; that is, God is the guide of his people in old age as in youth; he is always their guide, and ever will be: to which sense incline R. Moses in Aben Ezra, others in Kimchi and Abendana, and as also Jarchi and the Chaldee paraphrase; but Kimchi and Ben Melech render it as we do, *unto death*, or *unto our death*.

PSALM XLIX.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

ABEN Ezra says this psalm is a very excellent one, since in it is explained the Light of the world to come, and of the rational and immortal soul; and Kimchi is of opinion that it respects both this world and that which is to come: and indeed it treats of the vanity of trusting in riches; of the insufficiency of them for the redemption of the soul; of the short continuance of worldly honour and substance; of the certainty of death, and of the resurrection of the dead. And the design of it is to expose the folly of trusting in uncertain riches, and to comfort the people of God under the want of them.

Ver. 1. *Hear this*, &c.] Not the law, as some Jewish writers[l] interpret it, which was not desirable to be heard by those that did hear it; it being a voice of wrath and terror, a cursing law, and a ministration of condemnation and death; but rather אורייתא דא, *this news*, as the Targum; the good news of the Gospel; the word of *this* salvation; the voice from heaven; the word not spoken by angels, but by the Lord himself: or זאת הרכמה, *this wisdom*, as Kimchi interprets it; which the psalmist was about to speak of, ver. 3. also the parable and dark saying he should attend unto and open, ver. 4. and indeed it may take in the whole subject-matter of the psalm. *All ye people*: not the people of Israel only, but all the people of the world, as appears from the following clause; whence it is evident that this psalm belongs to Gospel times; in which the middle wall of partition is broken down, and there is no difference of people; God is the God both of Jews and Gentiles; Christ is the Saviour and Redeemer of one as well as of the other; the Spirit of God has been poured out upon the latter; the Gospel has been sent into all the world, and all are called upon to hear it. *Give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world*, or *of time*: so the word is rendered *age*, the age of a man, Psal. xxxix. 5. The inhabitants of this world are but for a time; wherefore Ben Melech interprets the phrase by אנשי הזמן, *men of time*, the inhabitants of time; it is peculiar to the most High to *inhabit eternity*, Isa. lvii. 15. Under the Gospel dispensation there is no distinction of places; the Gospel is not confined to the land of Judea; the sound of it is gone into all the world, and men may worship God, and offer incense to his name, in every place; and whoever fears him in any nation is accepted of him.

Ver. 2. *Both low and high*, &c.] Or *both the sons of* Adam *and the sons of men*. By the sons of *Adam* are meant the multitude of the people, as Ben Melech explains it; the common people, the meaner sort, the base things of this world; and such are they, generally speaking, who are called by grace under the Gospel dispensation: and by *the sons of men* are meant the princes, nobles, and great men of the earth; men of high birth and illustrious extraction: so Adam is rendered, *the mean man*, and *Ish*, the word here used, *the great man*, in Isa. ii. 9. And though not many, yet some of this sort are called by grace; and all of them have a peculiar concern in many things spoken of in this psalm; see ver. 12, 16, 17, 20. *Rich and poor together*: these are called upon to hearken to what is after said, that the one may not be elated with and trust in their riches, and that the other may not be dejected on account of their poverty; and seeing both must die, and meet together at the judgment-day; and inasmuch as the Gospel is preached to one as to another; and for the most part the poor hear it, receive it, and are called by it.

[x] על מות super mortem, Montanus; supra mortem, Cocceius, Gussetius, Michaelis; so Syr. vers. in ipsa morte, Pfeiffer, Dub. Vex. loc. 96.

[l] Midrash Tillim in loc. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 106. 2.

Ver. 3. *My mouth shall speak of wisdom,* &c.] Or *wisdoms*[m]; of Christ, who is so called, Prov. i. 20. and ix. 1. He being as a divine Person the wisdom of God, and the only wise God; and having all the treasures of wisdom in him, as man and Mediator: of him the prophet spake, and of him the apostles and all Gospel ministers speak; of the glories of his Person, of the fulness of his grace, and of his wonderful works; especially of that of redemption and salvation by him, in which there is an abounding of wisdom and prudence. Or the Gospel may be meant, and all the truths of it, in which there is a glorious display of divine wisdom; it is the wisdom of God in a mystery; hidden and ancient wisdom; and which, when truly understood, makes a man wise unto salvation; see 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7. *And the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding;* or *understandings*[n]; and this is in order to the former; what the heart meditates the mouth speaks. If the heart meditates on understanding, the mouth will speak of wisdom; and a man should think before he speaks, especially the ministers of the Gospel: they ought to meditate on the word of God, the Gospel, and the truths of it, that their profiting may appear to all; that they may understand divine things themselves, and deliver them out to the understanding of others: their concern should be, that through meditation they may have a good treasure of wisdom and knowledge in their hearts, that out of it they may bring forth things pleasant and profitable unto others.

Ver. 4. *I will incline mine ear to a parable,* &c.] In which way of speaking the doctrines of the Gospel were delivered out by Christ, Matt. xiii. 3, 35. Wherefore the prophet, personating his apostles and disciples, signifies that he would listen thereunto, that he might attain to the knowledge thereof, and communicate it to others. *I will open my dark saying upon the harp;* the enigmas, riddles, and mysteries of the Gospel, being understood by the ministers of it, are opened and explained in a very pleasant and delightful manner; they are made clear and evident, and are as a lovely song upon a harp; see Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil,* &c.] This is the principal thing that all are before called to hearken to. This is the wisdom and understanding the psalmist had been meditating upon, and was about to utter; this is the parable he inclined his ear to, and the dark saying he would open; namely, that a saint has nothing to fear in the worst of times; which is a riddle to a natural man. Aben Ezra interprets *the days of evil* of the days of old age, as they are called, Eccl. xii. 1. which bring on diseases, weakness, and death; in which a good man has no reason to fear; as that he should want the necessaries of life, since they that fear the Lord shall want no good thing; or that he should not hold out to the end, seeing God, who is the guide of youth, is the staff of old age, and carries to hoary hairs, and will never leave nor forsake; and though the wicked man in old age has reason to be afraid of death and eternity at hand, the saint has not; but may sing, on the borders of the grave, *O death! where is thy sting?* &c. Also days in which iniquity abounds, and error and heresy prevail, are days of evil; and though the good man may fear he shall be led aside by the ill example of some, or by the craft of others; yet he need not, since the foundation of God stands sure, and he knows them that are his, and will take care of them and preserve them. Moreover, times of affliction and persecution are evil days; see Ephes. v. 16. and vi. 13. and such will be the hour of temptation, that shall try the inhabitants of the earth, Rev. iii. 10. Yet the righteous man need not fear, since it is always well with him, let his case and circumstances be what they will. Yea, the day of death, and the day of judgment, are days of evil to wicked men; and therefore they put them away far from them, Amos vi. 3. but believers have reason to rejoice at them, the day of their death being better than the day of their birth; and the day of judgment will be the time of the glorious appearing of Christ to them. It is added, when *the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about;* that is, the sins of life and conversation; *heels* denote *steps,* and the word is sometimes so rendered, as in Psal. lvi. 6. and *iniquity* intends sin committed in walking; and so designs not original sin, as some have thought, but actual sins and trangressions: and these may be said to *compass* the saints *about,* when they are chastised for them, and so are brought to a sense and acknowledgment of them, and to be humbled for them; and then they have nothing to fear in a slavish way, since these chastisements are not in wrath, or in a way of vindictive justice, or punishment for sin; but the fruits of love and favour. Or the sense may be, when death, the fruit of iniquity, the wages of sin, surrounds and seizes upon me; בסופי, *in my end,* as the Targum; in my last days, at the heel or close of them, I will not fear; the saint has no reason to fear, when he walks through death's dark valley; for death is abolished as a penal evil, its sting is took away, and its curse removed. Some render the words, *when the iniquity of my supplanters shall compass me about*[o]; meaning his enemies, who either lay in wait for him privately, and endeavoured to supplant him; or that pursued him closely, and pressed upon his heels, just ready to destroy him; yet even then he signifies he should not fear: and then the sense is the same with Psal. xxvii. 1, 2, 3. to which agree the Syriac and Arabic versions, which render it, *the iniquity of mine enemies;* or, *when my enemies surround me:* and it may be literally rendered, when *iniquity surrounds me at my heels*[p]; that is, when men, who are iniquity itself, encompass me, are at my heels, ready to seize me, I will not fear.

Ver. 6. *They that trust in their wealth,* &c.] In their outward force, power, and strength; their horses, chariots, and armies; see Psal. xxxiii. 16. and xx. 7. Isa. xxxi. 1. or in their worldly goods and substance; which seems to be the sense of the word here, as appears from ver. 10. To *trust* in them is to set the eye and heart upon them; or to take up rest in them, to depend on them, to the neglect of divine Providence, with respect to future living in this world; and to ex-

[m] חכמות sapientias, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.
[n] תבונות intelligentias, Pagninus, Montanus.

[o] עון עקבי iniquitas supplantatorum meorum, Gejerus; insidiatorum meorum, some in Vatablus.
[p] Iniquitas oppressorum, i. e. iniquissimi mei oppressores ambiunt me, Gejerus.

pect eternal happiness hereafter, because favoured with many earthly enjoyments here: so to do is evil. Wherefore the Targum is, *wo to the wicked that trust in their substance.* And it is also very weak and foolish to trust in riches, since they are uncertain, are here to-day, and gone to-morrow; and are unsatisfying, he that has much would still have more: nor can they deliver from evil, from present judgments, from the sword, the pestilence, and famine; nor from death, nor from the future judgment, and wrath to come; and are often injurious to the spiritual and eternal welfare of men; see 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, 17. Mark x. 24. *And boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;* of their acquisition of them by their own diligence and industry; and of their having them because of some peculiar virtue and excellency in themselves; and of the abundance of them. Such rejoicing and boasting is evil; since riches are the gifts of God, the blessings of his Providence; and are often bestowed on persons neither wise nor diligent, and much less deserving; see Jer. ix. 23. The whole may be applied to the Romish antichrist and his followers, who trust in and boast of their temporal riches, which in one hour will come to nought, Rev. xviii. 7, 17. and of the treasure of the church, of merit, and works of supererogation; with all which they cannot redeem one soul from ruin and destruction, as follows:

Ver. 7. *None* of them *can by any means redeem* his *brother*, &c.] That is, *with their substance*, or *riches*, as the Targum and Jarchi supply. Some, according to the order of the words in the original, render them, *a brother redeeming cannot redeem a man*, or *any one*[q]: but, as Aben Ezra observes, אח, *a brother*, is the effect, and איש, *a man*, is the efficient. The Targum is, *his brother that is a captive, a man redeeming cannot redeem with his substance;* or by any means redeem. Indeed a rich man may redeem his brother from debt, or from a prison, into which he is cast for it, by paying his debts for him; or from thraldom and bondage, being taken captive and becoming a prisoner of war, by giving a ransom for him. This he may do with respect to man; but, with respect to God, he cannot, with all his riches, pay the debts he owes to the law and justice of God; nor free him from his bondage to sin, Satan, and the law, by whom he is held a captive. The sense here is, that he cannot redeem him from death; he cannot, with all his money, secure him from dying; nor, when dead, bring him back from the grave; and much less deliver him from eternal death, or wrath to come; this only God can do, see ver. 15. *Nor give to God a ransom for him;* a ransom to redeem from sin, and so from the curse of the law and eternal death, must be given to God, against whom sin is committed, the lawgiver that is able to save and destroy; whose law is transgressed by it, and must be fulfilled; and whose justice is affronted and injured, and must be satisfied: and who is the creditor to whom men are debtors, and therefore the payment must be made to him. Hence our Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of his people, paid the ransom-price to God, and offered himself a sacrifice to him; see Ephes. v. 2. Rev. v. 9. But this ransom is not of man's giving, but of God's; it is of his finding out in his infinite wisdom: he set forth and sent forth Christ to be the ransom or *propitiation*[r], as the word here used signifies; and Christ came to give his life and himself a ransom for many, and is the propitiation for their sins: and this is a sufficient one, a plenteous redemption, and there needs no other, nor is there any other; there were typical atonements under the law, but there is no real atonement, propitiation, or ransom, but by the precious blood of Christ; not by corruptible things, as silver and gold; with these a man cannot give to God a ransom for himself, or for his brother.

Ver. 8. *For the redemption of their soul is precious*, &c.] Or *heavy*[s]; it is, as Jarchi observes, *heavier than their substance:* it is too weighty a matter for the richest man in the world to engage in; he is not equal to it; his riches are not an equivalent to the redemption of a soul which has sinned, and which is of more worth than the whole world: *what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* or another for him? all the substance of his house would be utterly despised. It requires a greater price for the redemption of it than gold and silver, and therefore it is impossible to be obtained by any such means; and which may be the sense of the word here, as Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it; and so it is used for that which is *rare, difficult*, yea, *impossible*, not to be found or come at, in 1 Sam. iii. 1. Dan. ii. 10, 11. The only price of redemption of the soul is the precious blood of Christ; his life is the ransom-price, yea, he himself, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Matt. xx. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 6. nor is the redemption of the soul possible upon any other foot. *And it ceaseth for ever;* that is, the redemption of the soul; it must have ceased, it could never have been accomplished, had not Christ undertook it and performed it; he has obtained eternal redemption, and in him we have it, and in no other. Or the words may be rendered, *and he ceaseth for ever;* the brother, whose soul or life is to be redeemed, he dies; see Psal. xii. 1. and dies the second and eternal death, for aught his brother can do for him, with all his riches: or he that attempts to redeem him, *he leaves off for ever*[t]; see Psal. xxxvi. 3. whether he will or no, as Jarchi observes; he ceases from redeeming his brother: he finds he cannot do it; his endeavours are vain and fruitless. Some join and connect these words with the following, *and it ceaseth for ever, that he should still live for ever*, &c. that is, it is impossible that such an one by such means should live for ever. Gussetius[u] renders and interprets the words quite to another sense, *but the redemption of their soul shall come;* the true redemption-price by Christ; and which, being once paid and perfectly done, *ceaseth for ever*, and shall never be required more; so that he for whom it is made *shall live for ever*, as in the next verse; which is a truly evangelic sense.

Ver. 9. *That he should still live for ever*, &c.] Or *though he should live*, &c.[w]. Though the rich man should live ever so long, a thousand years twice told,

[q] So Cocceius; and some in Michaelis.
[r] כפרו propitiationem suam, Pagninus, Montanus.
[s] יקר gravis, De Dieu, Michaelis.

[t] וחדל defecit, Montanus, Vatablus.
[u] Ebr. Comment. p. 345.
[w] ויחי etiamsi vivat, Gejerus.

as in Eccl. vi. 6. yet he could not in all this time, with all his riches, redeem his brother; and at last must die himself, and so must his brother too, as his own experience and observation may assure him, ver. 10. Or the meaning is, he cannot so redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him, that he should live a corporeal life for ever, and never die; since all men die, wise men and fools, rich and poor; and much less that he should live and enjoy an *eternal life*, as the Targum; a life of happiness and bliss hereafter, which is not to be obtained by gold and silver, but is the pure gift of God. And *not see corruption;* the grave, the pit of corruption, the house appointed for all living: or *the judgment of hell*, according to the Chaldee paraphrase.

Ver. 10. *For he seeth* that *wise men die*, &c.] This is a reason convincing the rich man, that with all his riches he cannot redeem his brother from death; since he must see, by daily and constant experience, that none are exempted from dying, no, not even the wise man; and therefore not the rich, since wisdom is better than riches, and is said to give life, Eccl. vii. 12. and yet wise men die, yea, Solomon, the wisest of men, died. Worldly-wise men, such who are wiser in their generation than the children of light, know how to get money and estates, and to provide for futurity, and yet cannot secure themselves from death: men that are wise in natural things, know the secrets of nature, the constitution of human bodies, what is proper to preserve health and life, as philosophers and physicians, and yet cannot deliver themselves from death: wise politicians, prudent magistrates, instructors of mankind in all the branches of useful knowledge, who are profitable to themselves and others, and are the most deserving to live because of usefulness, yet these die as well as others: such as are spiritually wise, wise unto salvation, who know themselves, and know Christ, whom to know is life eternal; and the wisest among them, such as are capable of teaching others the hidden and mysterious wisdom of God; even these wise men and prophets do not live for ever. The Targum interprets this of wicked wise men, adjudged to hell; or as it is in the king's Bible, "the wicked wise men, who die the second death;" see Rev. ii. 11. and xx. 6. and xxi. 8. and are adjudged to hell. *Likewise the fool and the brutish person perish;* the worldly fool, who trusts in his riches, and boasts of them; his soul is at once required of him. The atheistical fool, who says there is no God, no judgment, no future state; has made a covenant with death, and with hell is at an agreement; this covenant does not stand, he dies, and finds himself dreadfully mistaken: the fool that is so immorally, who makes a mock at sin, a jest of religion, and puts away the evil day far from him; his great wickedness, to which he is given, shall not deliver him from death. Every man is become brutish in his knowledge; but there are some among the people more brutish than others, who are as natural brute beasts, and shall utterly perish in their own corruptions. The wise good man dies, but perishes not; he inherits eternal life; but the wicked fool and brute not only perish by death, but are punished with everlasting destruction in soul and body. *And leave their wealth to others;* they cannot carry it with them, so that it will be of no service to them after death any more than at it: if the Judge could be bribed by gold, as he cannot, they will not have it with them to do it; they came into the world naked, and so they will go out, and carry nothing with them, but leave all behind them; either to their babes, their children, and heirs, Psal. xvii. 14. or to strangers, they know not who; and if they do, they do not know whether they will be wise men or fools, or what use they will make of it, Psal. xxxix. 6. Eccl. ii. 18, 19.

Ver. 11. *Their inward thought* is, that *their houses shall continue for ever*, &c.] This is the thought of their hearts, what they secretly imagine, and conclude within themselves; either that their families, which may be meant by their houses, see 2 Sam. iii. 1. shall continue in succeeding ages, to the end of the world, to inherit their possessions, and perpetuate their name; though often so it is, that great families become extinct, and the seed of the wicked is cut off: or that their magnificent buildings, which they have erected to dwell in, and for their honour and glory, shall abide for ever; though in a little time, so it is by one means or another, like the buildings of the temple, not one stone is left upon another. Or the words may be rendered, *in the midst of them* (their heirs to whom they leave their wealth) *their houses shall remain for ever*, so Aben Ezra; that is, so they fancy they will; but this is not always true, for fine houses and large estates belonging to them often pass into other hands and families. The word קרבם, rendered *their inward part*, by a transposition of two letters in it may be read קברם, *their graves*, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech observe; and to this sense the Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions render the words: and then the meaning is, that of all the houses they have built or been possessed of, they have only one left, and that is the grave; in which they shall dwell until the resurrection, and therefore is called *a long home*, Eccl. xii. 5. see Job xvii. 13. and xxx. 23. And *their dwelling-places to all generations;* which signify the same as before. *They call* their *lands after their own names;* as Egypt was called Mizraim, Ethiopia was called Cush, and Palestine Canaan, from men who were the first possessors of them, Gen. x. 6. Or *they proclaim their names throughout the land*[x]; they seek to get a name, and spread and continue it in all parts of the world; being unconcerned about their names being written in heaven, or about having a house not made with hands eternal there.

Ver. 12. *Nevertheless man* being *in honour abideth not*, &c.] Or Adam; and some understand this of the first man Adam, who was created and crowned with glory and honour; but it did not abide with him, nor he in that: so some Jewish writers[y] interpret it. But whether the words will admit of this sense or no, the general view of the psalmist, which is to shew the inconstancy and instability of worldly honour, may be exemplified in the case of the first man; he was in honour, he was created after the image and likeness of God, and so was the glory of God, being his image;

[x] So Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[y] Bereshit Rabba, s. 11. fol. 9. 1. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 19.

he was in friendship with God, as many instances shew, and had dominion over all the creatures below; he had much knowledge of God, and communion with him, and was a pure, holy, and upright creature; but he continued not long in this state of honour and glory; *he lodged not a night*[z], as the words may be rendered; see Gen. xxviii. 11. and as they are by some, who conclude from hence that Adam fell the same day in which he was created; and which is the sense of the above Jewish writers, who say, he was driven out of paradise the evening of that day; but though he might stand longer, and the word is sometimes used of a longer continuance; see Psal. xxv. 13. yet by the account in Genesis it looks as if he continued in his state of honour but a short time. *He is like the beasts* that *perish*; becoming mortal in his body, and brutish and stupid in his understanding. Or, *he is like the beasts, they perish*, or are *cut off*[a]; the word being in the plural number, which shews that not a single individual person is meant, but men in general; or, however, such of the sons of Adam that come to honour; these do not abide long in it, their honour is a very short-lived one, sometimes it does not last their lives: they that are in high places are in slippery ones, and are often cast down from the pinnacle of honour in a moment; and if their glory does abide with them throughout the day of life, yet it shall not lodge with them in the night of the grave; thither their glory shall not descend after them, ver. 17. and when they die, they perish like the beasts; as they are like them in life, stupid, brutish, and ignorant, so in death; as the beast dies, so do they, Eccl. iii. 19. as the one dies without any thought of or preparation for death, so do the other; as the one carries nothing along with it, so neither do the other: as beasts that die of themselves, for such are here meant, as Junius well observes, are good for nothing but to be cast into the ditch; so are wicked men, notwithstanding all their riches and honours; yea, it is worse with them than with the beasts, since after death comes judgment, and after that the second death, the wrath of God.

Ver. 13. *This their way* is *their folly*, &c.] This their last end becoming like the beasts that perish, which is the issue and event of all their confidence, ambition, and honour, shews the folly of their lives and conduct: or this their course of life, in trusting to their riches; boasting of their wealth; pleasing themselves with the thoughts of the continuance of their houses and dwelling-places to all generations; and calling their lands after their own names; all proclaim their folly. Or, as some render the words, *this their way* is *their hope* or *confidence*[b]; they place all their hope and confidence in their riches and honour, which is but a vain hope and a foolish confidence. *Yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah*; they are of the same sentiments with their fathers; they say the same things, and do the same actions; tread in their steps, and follow the same track; though there have been such innumerable instances of the vanity and inconstancy of all worldly riches and grandeur.

Ver. 14. *Like sheep they are laid in the grave*, &c.] They are not in life like sheep, harmless and innocent; nor reckoned as such for the slaughter, as the people of God are; unless it be that they are like them, brutish and stupid, thoughtless of death, and unconcerned about their estate after it; and so die and go into the grave, like natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, 2 Pet. ii. 12. or rather like sheep that have been grazing in good pasture in the daytime, at night are put into a dark and narrow pinfold; so wicked rich men, having lived in great abundance and plenty in the day of life, when the night of death comes, they are put into the dark and narrow grave. And it is further to be observed, that the comparison is not to sheep prepared for slaughter, and killed for food; for these are not laid in a ditch, to which the grave may answer; but, as Junius observes, to those that die of themselves; to rotten sheep, and who are no other than carrion, and are good for nothing but to be cast into a ditch; so wicked men are laid in the grave; but as to be laid in the grave is common to good and bad after death, rather the words should be rendered, *like sheep they are laid in hell*[c]; as the word is in Psal. ix. 17. a place of utter darkness and misery, where the wicked rich man was put when he died, Luke xvi. 19, 22, 23. *Death shall feed on them*; or *rule them*[d]; as shepherds rule their flocks, in imitation of whom kings govern their subjects; the same word is used of both; and so death is represented as a king, or rather as a tyrant reigning over the sons of men; even over kings and princes, and the great men of the earth, who have reigned over others; see Rom. v. 14. or *shall feed them*[e], as the shepherd feeds the sheep; not by leading them into green pastures, into the Elysian fields; but where a drop of water cannot be obtained to cool the tongue; into utter darkness, where are weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth; into the apartments of hell, and habitations of devils, to be guests with them, and live as they do: or *shall feed on them*: as the wolf on the sheep, devouring their strength, and consuming their bodies, Job xviii. 13. but as this is no other than what it does to every one, rather the second, or an eternal death, is here meant; the wrath of God, the worm that is always gnawing, eating, and consuming, and never dies. *And the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning*; the *upright* are such to whom the uprightness or righteousness of Christ is shewn or imputed, and who have right spirits renewed, and principles of grace and holiness formed in them, and walk uprightly in their lives and conversations; these, in the morning of the resurrection-day, when Christ the sun of righteousness shall arise, when the light of joy and gladness shall break forth upon his coming, at the beginning of the day of the Lord, which will last a thousand years; they, the dead in Christ, rising first, shall, during that time, reign with him as kings and priests; when the wicked, being destroyed in the general conflagration, shall become the footstool of Christ, and be like ashes under the soles of the feet of his people; and the kingdom,

[z] בל ילין non pernoctabit, Montanus, Amama; so Ainsworth.
[a] נדמו excisi sunt, Montanus.
[b] כסל למו est fiducia ipsorum, Cocceius, Gejerus; stolida fiducia vel spes, Michaelis.

[c] לשאול in inferno, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.
[d] ירעם reget eos, Vatablus.
[e] Pascet eos, Musculus, Tigurine version, Gejerus, Coccoius.

the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints; see 1 Thess. iv. 16. Rev. xx. 5, 6. Mal. iv. 2, 3. Dan. vii. 27. and though this is a branch of the happiness and glory of the people of God, yet it is here mentioned as an aggravation of the misery of the wicked, who, in another state, will be subject to those they have tyrannized over here. *And their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling*; or *their form*[f] and figure; diseases often destroy the beauty of a man, death changes his countenance, and makes a greater alteration still; but the grave takes away the very form and figure of the man; or, as it is in the Keri, or margin of the Hebrew text, *and their rock shall consume*[g]; that is, their riches, which are their rock, fortress, and strong city, and in which they place their trust and confidence; these shall fail them when they come to the grave, which is *their dwelling*, and is the house appointed for all living: and seeing it is so, rather this should be understood of *hell*[h], which will be the everlasting mansion of wicked men, and in which they will be punished in soul and body for ever; though rather the sense is, *when their rock*, i. e. Christ, shall come *to consume the grave*, and destroy its power; when he, I say, shall come *out of his habitation*, heaven, then shall the righteous have the dominion, 1 Thess. iv. 16.

Ver. 15. *But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave*, &c.] The psalmist expresses his faith, that though he should die, and for a while be under the power of the grave, yet he should be redeemed from it in the resurrection; which to the saints will be *the day of redemption*, Eph. iv. 30. their bodies then will be redeemed from mortality, weakness, corruption, and dishonour, which attend them now, and in the grave; and which will be in consequence of the redemption both of their souls and bodies, through the blood of Christ; see Hos. xiii. 14. or the words may be rendered, *but God will redeem my soul from the power of hell*; and so the Targum, "David said by the spirit "of prophecy, but God will redeem my soul from the "judgment of hell;" that is, will keep and preserve from the second death, from being hurt by it, or from its having any power over him; and Christ, who is the Redeemer of his people, and who, being God over all, is an able and mighty one, has redeemed the souls of his from wrath to come, hell, or the second death, by destroying sin, the cause of it, by satisfying the law, the ministration of it, and by abolishing death itself; all which he has done by giving himself a ransom-price for them, whereby he has procured the redemption which rich men, with all their gold and silver, could never obtain for themselves or others. The reason why the psalmist believed Christ would do this for him, follows. *For he shall receive me. Selah.* Or, *for he hath received me*[i]; into his arms of love, into his grace and favour; which he does openly at conversion, and in effectual vocation; men being drawn to Christ by the cords of love, come to him, and are received by him, who casts none out; and the argument from hence is very strong, that such whom Christ receives by his grace, he will redeem from the grave, or raise at the last day to the resurrection of life: or, *for he will receive me*; as he does the souls of his people to glory at death, when, during their separate state, they will be happy with him, and takes their bodies into his care and custody; from whence it may be strongly concluded he will raise them up again at the resurrection-morn, and then will receive them soul and body to himself, and present them to his father, and introduce them into his kingdom and glory; wherefore, as in ver. 5, the good man has no reason to fear any thing in the day of evil; for when it goes ever so ill with others, it is well with him. The Targum in the king's Bible is, "he will lead me into his part or portion in "the world to come."

Ver. 16. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich*, &c.] Who before was poor, or not so rich; but now become so, either by inheritance, or by his own diligence and industry, through the permission of Providence. This is to be understood, not of a good man, from whom oppression is not to be feared; but it may be hoped he will do good with his riches, by relieving the poor, and ministering to the support of the interest of religion, and using what power and authority he may have in defence of it: but it is to be interpreted of a wicked man; of one who neither fears God, nor regards man; who makes an ill use of his riches, power, and authority, to the oppression of the poor, and the persecution of the saints, and who seeks to be feared when he is not loved; see Prov. xxviii. 12, 28. and xxix. 2. but the people of God should not be afraid when this is the case, since God is their strength, their light, and their salvation; and since wicked men can go no further than permitted, and at most can do no more than kill the body; see Psal. xxvii. 1—3. Matt. x. 28. these words are an apostrophe of the psalmist, either to his own soul, or to the saints, and every particular believer. *When the glory of his house is increased*; either the same with riches, so called, Gen. xxxi. 1. Rev. xxi. 24, 26. because men are apt to glory in them, and for the most part obtain honour and glory from men by them; or children, and an increase of them, and especially when they come to honour; as also the advancement of themselves to high places of honour and trust; as well as additional buildings, large stately edifices, to make them look great, and perpetuate their names.

Ver. 17. *For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away*, &c.] Such men, with all their riches and honour, must die; therefore why should men be afraid of them? or wherein are they to be accounted of, whose breath is in their nostrils? nor can they carry either of them with them; their riches will be of no profit to them after death, when they will be upon a level with the poor, who will have nothing to fear from them; see 1 Tim. vi. 7. *His glory shall not descend after him*; either into the grave, the pit of corruption, the lower part of the earth, where kings, princes, counsellors, and peasants, are all alike, Job iii. 14, 15, 19. or into

[f] צירם figura eorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; forma eorum, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

[g] צורם auxilium eorum, Sept. V. L. Eth. Ar. robur illorum, Musculus; petra illorum, Cocceius.

[h] שאול infernus, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[i] יקחני suscepit me, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Musculus, Gejerus.

hell, where are no titles of honour, nor respect of persons: no Pharaoh king of Egypt, or Sennacherib king of Assyria, there; but plain Pharaoh, *&c.* see Ezek. xxxii. 31, 32.

Ver. 18. *Though while he lived he blessed his soul,* &c.] Praised and extolled himself on account of his acquisitions and merit; or proclaimed himself a happy man, because of his wealth and riches; or foolishly flattered himself with peace, prosperity, and length of days, and even with honour and glory after death. *And men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself;* or *but*[k] *men will praise thee,* &c. both rich and poor, all wise men; when, as the Jewish interpreters[l] generally explain the word, a man regards true wisdom and religion, and is concerned for the welfare of his soul more than that of his body; or *when thou thyself doest well:* that is, to others, doing acts of beneficence, communicating to the necessities of the poor; or rather, *when thou doest well to thyself,* by enjoying the good things of life, taking his portion, eating the fruit of his labour, which is good and comely; see Eccl. v. 18—20. and vi. 1, 2. and xi. 9.

Ver. 19. *He shall go to the generation of his fathers,* &c.] Be gathered to them at death; or *to the dwelling-place of his fathers*[m]; either the grave, or hell, or both; the habitation of his wicked ancestors: unless the words be rendered, as they are by some, though *he shall come to the age of his fathers*[n]; live as long as they have done; yet he must die at last, and leave all behind, as they have done. *They shall never see light:* neither he nor his fathers; they shall never see the light of the sun any more, nor return to the light of the living, but shall lie in the dark and silent grave until the resurrection; or rather, they shall never enjoy eternal light, glory, and happiness. The ultimate state of glory is sometimes expressed by *light,* John viii. 12. Col. i. 12. this the people of God, such who are made light in the Lord, and are the children of the day, shall see; but wicked men shall not; they will be cast into outer darkness, where are weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Ver. 20. *Man* that is *in honour,* &c.] A wicked man, as the Targum; see the note on ver. 12. *And understandeth not:* from whence his riches and honour come, and what use he should make of them, and for what end he has them; or that understandeth not spiritual things, which relate to the salvation of his soul; who does not know God in Christ, nor the way of salvation by Christ; nor has any experience of the work of the Spirit of God upon his soul; nor has any spiritual understanding of the doctrines of the Gospel; nor knows himself, his state and condition, and what true happiness is: *is like the beasts* that *perish;* see the note on ver. 12.

[k] ויודך atque celebraverint te, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
[l] Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi & Ben Melech in loc.
[m] עד־דור ad habitationem, Gejerus.
[n] Usque ad ætatem, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

PSALM L.

A Psalm of Asaph.

THIS psalm is called a psalm of Asaph; either because it was composed by him under divine inspiration, since he was a prophet and a seer, 1 Chron. xxv. 2. 2 Chron. xxix. 30. or because it was delivered to him to be sung in public service, he being a chief musician; see 1 Chron. xvi. 7. and so it may be rendered, *a psalm for Asaph;* or *unto Asaph*[o]; which was directed, sent, and delivered to him, and might be wrote by David; and, as Junius thinks, after the angel had appeared to him, and he was directed where he should build an altar to the Lord, 1 Chron. xxi. 18. The Targum, Kimchi, and R. Obadiah Gaon, interpret this psalm of the day of judgment; and Jarchi takes it to be a prophecy of the future redemption by their expected Messiah; and indeed it does refer to the times of the Gospel dispensation; for it treats of the calling of the Gentiles, of the abrogation of legal sacrifices, and of the controversy the Lord would have with the Jews for retaining them, and rejecting pure, spiritual, and evangelical worship.

Ver. 1. *The mighty God,* &c.] In the Hebrew text it is *El, Elohim,* which Jarchi renders *the God of gods;* that is, of angels, who are so called, Psal. viii. 5. and xcvii. 7. so Christ, who is God over all, is over them; he is their Creator, and the object of their worship, Heb. i. 6, 7. or of kings, princes, judges, and all civil magistrates, called gods, Psal. lxxxii. 1, 6. and so Kimchi interprets the phrase here *Judge of judges.* Christ is King of kings, and Lord of lords, by whom they reign and judge, and to whom they are accountable. The Targum renders it *the mighty God:* as we do; which is the title and name of Christ in Isa. ix. 6. and well agrees with him, as appears by his works of creation, providence, and redemption, and by his government of his church and people; by all the grace, strength, assistance, and preservation they have from him now, and by all that glory and happiness they will be brought unto by him hereafter, when raised from the dead, according to his mighty power. It is added, even *the Lord, hath spoken;* or *Jehovah.* Some have observed, that these three names, El, Elohim, Jehovah, here mentioned, have three very distinctive accents set to them, and which being joined to a verb singular, דבר, *hath spoken,* contains the mystery of the trinity of Persons in the unity of the divine Essence; see Josh. xxii. 22. though rather all the names belong to Christ the Son of God, and who is Jehovah our righteousness, and to whom, he being the eternal Logos, speech is very properly ascribed. He hath spoken for the elect in the council and covenant of grace and peace, that they might be given to him; and on their behalf, that they might have grace and glory, and he

[o] לאסף ipsi Asaph, Tigurine version, Vatablus; Asapho, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

might be their Surety, Saviour, and Redeemer. He hath spoken all things out of nothing in creation: he spoke with Moses at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai: he, the Angel of God's presence, spoke for the Old-Testament saints, and spoke good and comfortable words unto them: he hath spoken in his own person here on earth, and such words and with such authority as never man did; and he has spoken in his judgments and providences against the Jews; and he now speaks in his Gospel by his ministers: wherefore it follows, *and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof;* which may be considered as a preface, exciting attention to what is after spoken, as being of moment and importance; see Deut. xxxii. 1. or as calling the earth, and so the heavens, ver. 4, to be witnesses of the justness and equity of his dealings with the Jews, for their rejection of him and his Gospel; see Deut. iv. 26. or rather as a call to the inhabitants of the earth to hear the Gospel, which had its accomplishment in the times of the apostles; when Christ having a people, not in Judea only, but in the several parts of the world from east to west, sent them into all the world with his Gospel, and by it effectually called them through his grace; and churches were planted everywhere to the honour of his name; compare with this Mal. i. 11.

Ver. 2. *Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.*] Or *shall shine*[p]; the past for the future, as Kimchi observes; or *the perfection of the beauty of God hath shined out of Zion*[q]; that is, Christ; he is the perfection of beauty; he is fairer than the children of men; he is more glorious than the angels in heaven: as Mediator, he is full of grace and truth, which makes him very lovely and amiable to his people: he is the express image of his father's person; and the glory of all the divine perfections is conspicuous in his work of salvation, as well as in himself: now as he was to come out of Zion, Psal. xiv. 7. that is, not from the fort of Zion, or city of Jerusalem; for he was to be born at Beth-lehem; only he was to be of the Jews, and spring from them; so he shone out, or his appearance and manifestation in Israel was like the rising sun; see Mal. iv. 2. Luke i. 78, 79. and the love and kindness of God in the mission and gift of him appeared and shone out in like manner, Tit. iii. 4. or else the Gospel may be meant, which has a beauty in it: it is a glorious Gospel, and holds forth the beauty and glory of Christ. All truth is lovely and amiable, especially evangelical truth: it has a divine beauty on it; it comes from God, and bears his impress; yea, it is a perfection of beauty: it contains a perfect plan of truth, and is able to make the man of God perfect; and this was to come out of Zion, Isa. ii. 3. and which great light first arose in Judea, and from thence shone out in the Gentile world, like the sun in all its lustre and glory, Tit. ii. 11. or, according to our version, *God hath shined out of Zion:* which, as Ben Melech on the text observes, is the perfection of beauty; see Lam. ii. 15. by which is meant the church under the Gospel dispensation, Heb. xii. 22. which, as in Gospel order, is exceeding beautiful; and as its members are adorned with the graces of the Spirit, by which they are all-glorious within; and especially as they are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and so are perfectly comely through the comeliness he hath put upon them; and here it is that Christ, who is the great God, and our Saviour, shines forth upon his people, grants his gracious presence, and manifests himself in his ordinances, to their great joy and pleasure.

Ver. 3. *Our God shall come,* &c.] That is, Christ, who is truly and properly God, and who was promised and expected as a divine Person; and which was necessary on account of the work he came about; and believers claim an interest in him as their God; and he is their God, in whom they trust, and whom they worship: and this coming of his is to be understood, not of his coming in the flesh; for though that was promised, believed, and prayed for, as these words are by some rendered, *may our God come*[r]; yet at his first coming he was silent, his voice was not heard in the streets, Matt. xii. 19. nor did any fire or tempest attend that: nor is it to be interpreted of his second coming, or coming to judgment; for though that also is promised, believed, and prayed for; and when he will not be silent, but by his voice will raise the dead, summon all before him, and pronouce the sentence on all; and the world, and all that is therein, will be burnt with fire, and a horrible tempest rained upon the wicked; yet it is better to understand it of his coming to set up his kingdom in the world, and to punish his professing people for their disbelief and rejection of him; see Matt. xvi. 28. Heb. x. 37. *And shall not keep silence;* contain himself, bear with the Jews any longer, but come forth in his wrath against them; see ver. 21, 22. and it may also denote the great sound of the Gospel, and the very public ministration of it in the Gentile world, at or before this time, for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom in it. *A fire shall devour before him;* meaning either the fire of the divine word making its way among the Gentiles, consuming their idolatry, superstition, &c. or rather the fire of divine wrath coming upon the Jews to the uttermost; and even it may be literally understood of the fire that consumed their city and temple, as was predicted, Zech. xi. 1. Matt. xxii. 7. *And it shall be very tempestuous round about him:* the time of Jerusalem's destruction being such a time of trouble as has not been since the world began, Matt. xxiv. 21.

Ver. 4. *He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth,* &c.] To hear what he shall say, when he will no longer keep silence; and to be witnesses of the justice of his proceedings; see Isa. i. 2. Deut. iv. 26. The Targum interprets this of the angels above on high, and of the righteous on the earth below; and so Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, explain it of the angels of heaven, and of the inhabitants of the earth. *That he may judge his people:* not that they, the heavens and the earth, the inhabitants of either, may judge his people; but the Lord himself, as in ver. 6. and this designs not the judgment of the whole world, nor that of his own covenant-people, whom he judges when he corrects them in love, that they might not be condemned with the world; when he vindicates them, and avenges them on their enemies, and when he pro-

[p] יופיע emicabit, Tigurine version; vel effulgebit, Vatablus; illucescet, Amama, Gotius

[q] So De Dieu.

[r] יבא veniat, Junius & Tremellius; so Ainsworth.

tects and saves them; but the judgment of the Jewish nation, his professing people, the same that Peter speaks of, 1 Pet. iv. 17.

Ver. 5. *Gather my saints together unto me*, &c.] These words are spoken by Christ to the heavens and the earth; that is, to the angels, the ministers of the Gospel, to gather in, by the ministry of the word, his elect ones among the Gentiles; see Matt. xxiv. 30. called his *saints*, who had an interest in his favour and loving-kindness, and were sanctified or set apart for his service and glory. *Those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice*; or, *who have made my covenant by*, or *on sacrifice* [t]; the covenant of grace, which was made with Christ from everlasting, and which was confirmed by his blood and sacrifice; this his people may be said to make with God in him, he being their head, surety, and representative: now these covenant-ones he will have gathered in to himself by effectual vocation, which is usually done by the ministry of the word; for this is not to be understood of the gathering of all nations to him, before him as a Judge; but of his special people to him as a Saviour, the *Shiloh*, to whom the gathering of the people was to be, Gen. xlix. 10. Isa. xxvii. 12, 13. and lvi. 8. Zech. x. 8.

Ver. 6. *And the heavens shall declare his righteousness*, &c.] That is, either the heavens shall bear witness to his justice and equity in judging his people; or the angels, the ministers of the Gospel, shall declare his justifying righteousness, which is revealed in it, to the saints and covenant-ones they shall be a means of gathering in: or rather the justice of Christ in the destruction of the Jews shall be attested and applauded by angels and men, just as the righteousness of God in the destruction of the antichristian powers is celebrated by the angel of the waters, Rev. xvi. 5, 6. *For God is Judge himself. Selah.* And not another, or by another; and therefore his judgments must be just and righteous, seeing he is just and true, loves righteousness, and is righteous in all his ways and works.

Ver. 7. *Hear, O my people*, &c.] This is an address to the people of the Jews, whom God had chosen to be his people above all others, and who professed themselves to be his people; but now a *lo-ammi* was about to be written upon them, being a people uncircumcised in heart and ears, refusing to hear the great Prophet of the church, him that spake from heaven. *And I will speak*: by way of accusation and charge, and in judgment against them for their sins and transgressions. *O Israel, and I will testify against thee*; or *to thee* [u]; to thy face produce witnesses, and bring sufficient evidence to prove the things laid to thy charge. *I am God*: even *thy God*: which is an aggravation of their sin against him, and is the reason why they should hearken to him; see Psal. lxxxi. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 8. *I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices*, &c.] For the neglect of them; this they were not chargeable with; and had they omitted them, a charge would not have been brought against them on that account, since these were not what God commanded when he brought them out of Egypt, Jer. vii. 22. and were now abrogated; and when they were in force, acts of mercy, kindness, and beneficence, were preferred unto them, Hos. vi. 6. *Or thy burnt-offerings*, to have been *continually before me*: or, *for thy burnt-offerings are continually before me* [w]; so far were they from being reprovable for not bringing their sacrifices, that they were continually offering up before the Lord even multitudes of them, though to no purpose, being offered up without faith, and in hypocrisy; and could not take away sin, and make atonement for it: and besides, ought now to have ceased to be offered, Christ the great sacrifice being now offered up, as he was in the times to which this psalm belongs; see Isa. i. 14. Mic. vi. 6, 7. Heb. x. 3, 4, 14. wherefore it follows:

Ver. 9. *I will take no bullock out of thy house*, &c.] That is, will accept of none; such sacrifices being no more agreeable to the will of God, Heb. x. 5, 6, 8. the *bullock* is mentioned, that being a principal creature used in sacrifice; as also the following, nor *he-goats out of thy folds*: the reasons follow.

Ver. 10. *For every beast of the forest is mine*, &c.] By creation and preservation; and therefore he stood in no need of their bullocks and he-goats. *And the cattle upon a thousand hills*: meaning all the cattle in the whole world.

Ver. 11. *I know all the fowls of the mountains*, &c.] God not only knows them, but takes care of them; not a sparrow falls to the ground without his knowledge, and all the fowls of the air are fed by him, Matt. x. 29. and vi. 26. and therefore needed not their turtle-doves and young pigeons, which were the only fowls used in sacrifice. *And the wild beasts of the field are mine*; which are mentioned in opposition to domestic ones, such as they had in their houses or folds, ver. 9.

Ver. 12. *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee*, &c.] Or *say to thee* [x]; ask for any thing: *for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof*; with which, was the former his case, he could satisfy himself; see Psal. xxiv. 1.

Ver. 13. *Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?*] That is, express a pleasure, take delight and satisfaction, in such kind of sacrifices, which can never take away sin: no, I will not; wherefore other sacrifices, more agreeable to his nature, mind, and will, and to the Gospel dispensation, are next mentioned.

Ver. 14. *Offer unto God thanksgiving*, &c.] Which is a sacrifice, ver. 23. Psal. cxvi. 17. Heb. xiii. 15. and the Jews say [y], that all sacrifices will cease in future time, the times of the Messiah, but the sacrifice of praise; and this should be offered up for all mercies, temporal and spiritual; and unto God, because they all come from him; and because such sacrifices are well-pleasing to him, and are no other than our reasonable service, and agreeably to his will; and then are they offered up aright when they are offered up through Christ, the great High-priest, by whom they are acceptable unto God, and upon him the altar, which sanctifies every gift, and

[t] So Pagninus.
[u] לך tibi, V. L. Vatablus; so Ainsworth.
[w] So Tigurine version, Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius, and Ainsworth.
[x] לא אמר לך non dicam tibi, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus; non dicerem tibi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.
[y] Vajikra Rabba, fol. 153. 1. & 168. 4.

by faith in him, without which it is impossible to please God. Some render the word *confession*[1]; and in all thanksgivings it is necessary that men should confess their sins and unworthiness, and acknowledge the goodness of God, and ascribe all the glory to him; for to him, and him only, is this sacrifice to be offered: not to man; for that would be to sacrifice to his own net, and burn incense to his drag. *And pay thy vows unto the most High*: meaning not ceremonial ones, as the vow of the Nazarite; nor to offer such and such a sacrifice, since these are distinguished from and opposed unto the sacrifices of the ceremonial law before mentioned; and much less monastic ones, as the vow of celibacy, and abstinence from certain meats at certain times; but moral, or spiritual and evangelical ones; such as devoting one's self to the Lord and to his service and worship, under the influence and in the strength of grace; signified by saying, I am the Lord's, and the giving up ourselves to him and to his churches, to walk with them in all his commands and ordinances, to which his love and grace constrain and oblige; see Isa. xliv. 5. 2 Cor. viii. 5. and particularly by them may be meant giving God the glory and praise of every mercy and deliverance, as was promised previous to it; hence those are put together, Psal. lxv. 1. This Scripture does not oblige to the making of vows, but to the payment of them when made; see Eccl. v. 4, 5. and may refer to every thing a man lays himself in a solemn manner under obligation to perform, especially in religious affairs.

Ver. 15. *And call upon me in the day of trouble*, &c.] This is another part of spiritual sacrifice or worship, which is much more acceptable to God than legal sacrifices. Invocation of God includes all parts of religious worship, and particularly designs prayer, as it does here, of which God, and he only, is the object; and which should be performed in faith, in sincerity, and with fervency; and though it should be made at all times, in private and in public, yet more especially should be attended to in a time of affliction, whether of soul or body, whether of a personal, family, or public kind, Jam. v. 13. and the encouragement to it is, *I will deliver thee*: that is, out of trouble: as he is able, so faithful is he that hath promised, and will do it. The obligation follows, *and thou shalt glorify me*: by offering praise, ver. 23. ascribing the glory of the deliverance to God, and serving him in righteousness and true holiness continually.

Ver. 16. *But unto the wicked God saith*, &c.] By whom are meant, not openly profane sinners; but men under a profession of religion, and indeed who were teachers of others, as appears from the following expostulation with them: the Scribes, Pharisees, and doctors among the Jews, are designed; and so Kimchi interprets it of their wise men, who learnt and taught the law, but did not act according to it. It seems as if the preceding verses respected the truly godly among the Jews, who believed in Christ, and yet were zealous of the law; and retained legal sacrifices; as such there were, Acts xxi. 20. and that these words, and what follow, are spoken to hypocrites among them, who sat in Moses's chair, and said, and did not; were outwardly righteous before men, but inwardly full of wickedness, destitute of the grace of God and righteousness of Christ. *What hast thou to do to declare my statutes*; the laws of God, which were given to the people of Israel; some of which were of a moral, others of a ceremonial, and others of a judicial nature; and there were persons appointed to teach and explain them to the people, as the priests and Levites: now some of these were abrogated, and not to be declared at all in the times this psalm refers to; and as for others, those persons were very improper to teach and urge the observance of them, when they themselves did not keep them; and especially it was wrong in them to declare them to the people, for such purposes as they did, namely, to obtain life and righteousness by them. *Or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?* which is to be understood, not of the covenant of works made with Adam, and now broke; nor of the pure covenant of grace, as administered under the Gospel dispensation, of which Christ is the Mediator, and the Gospel a transcript, since both were rejected by these persons; but the covenant at Mount Sinai, which was a typical one; and being in some sense faulty, was now antiquated, and ought to have ceased; and therefore these men are blamed for taking it in their mouths, and urging it on the people: and besides, they had no true sight of and faith in the thing exhibited by it; and moreover were not steadfast, nor did they continue in it, like their fathers before them, Psal. lxxviii. 37. Heb. viii. 7, 8, 13.

Ver. 17. *Seeing thou hatest instruction*, &c.] Or *correction*[2]; to be reproved or reformed by the statutes and covenant they declared to others; they taught others, but not themselves, Rom. ii. 21—23. or evangelical instruction, the doctrines of grace, and of Christ; for, as concerning the Gospel, they were enemies, Rom. xi. 28. and since they were haters of that, they ought not to have been teachers of others. *And castest my words behind thee*; the doctrines of the Gospel, which they despised and rejected with the utmost abhorrence, as loathsome, and not fit to be looked upon and into; and also the ordinances of it, the counsel of God, which they rejected against themselves, Acts xiii. 45, 46. Luke vii. 30.

Ver. 18. *When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him*, &c.] Or *didst run with him*[3]; joined and agreed with him in the commission of the same things; which was literally true of the Scribes and Pharisees: they devoured widows' houses, and robbed them of their substance, under a pretence of long prayers; they consented to the deeds of Barabbas, a robber, when they preferred him to Jesus Christ; and they joined with the thieves on the cross in reviling him: and, in a spiritual sense, they stole away the word of the Lord, every man from his neighbour; took away the key of knowledge from the people, and put false glosses upon the sacred writings. *And hast been a partaker with adulterers*; these teachers of the law were guilty both of theft and adultery, Rom. ii. 21, 22. they are called by our Lord an adulterous ge-

[1] תודה confessionem, Montanus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.
[2] מוסר correctionem, Vatablus; correptionem, Gejerus.

[3] ותרץ עמו συνετρεχες αυτω, Sept. currebas cum eo, V. L. sic Eth. Syr. Targum, so Vatablus, Musculus, Piscator, Ainsworth.

neration, Matt. xii. 39. and they were so in a literal sense; see John viii. 4—9. and in a figurative one, adulterating the word of God, and handling it deceitfully.

Ver. 19. *Thou givest thy mouth to evil*, &c.] To speak evil things against Christ, his doctrines, ordinances, ministers and people; and to deliver out evil doctrines, pernicious to the souls of men. *And thy tongue frameth deceit*; puts and joins together deceitful words in a very artful manner, by which simple and unstable minds are beguiled.

Ver. 20. *Thou sittest*, &c.] Either in the chair of Moses, or on the seat of judgment, in the great sanhedrim of the nation; or, as Aben Ezra paraphrases it, *in the seat of the scornful*. And *speakest against thy brother*; even to pass sentence upon him, to put him to death for professing faith in Christ, Matt. x. 21. *Thou slanderest thine own mother's son*; the apostles and disciples of Christ, who were their brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh; and even our Lord Jesus Christ himself, who was bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh.

Ver. 21. *These things hast thou done*, &c.] *These evil works*, as the Targum; which they had done over and over again without remorse, with the greatest pleasure, and with promises of impunity to themselves. This is a confirmation of the charge made by the omniscient God, who saw and knew all their actions. *And I kept silence*; spoke not by terrible things in righteousness, deferred the execution of judgment, exercised forbearance and patience, and gave space to repent; which being despised, they were hardened yet more and more in sin; see Eccl. viii. 11. Rom. ii. 4, 5. This refers to the space of time between the crucifixion of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem. *Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself*; either that he did not see the things committed by them in secret, as the things before mentioned, theft, adultery, slander, and detraction, commonly are; because they could not see such actions done by others: or that he took pleasure in them, as they did, and that he approved of their crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, and of their contempt of his Gospel, and of the persecution of his followers. But *I will reprove thee*: not verbally by the ministry of the word, much less effectually and savingly by his spirit; nor in a way of fatherly correction and chastisement; but by sore judgments; by sending the Roman armies to burn their city and temple, and carry them captive. *And set* them *in order before thine eyes*; that is, their sins, and thereby fully confute their vain imagination, that either he did not take notice of them, or else approved of them. This signifies a formal process against them, as in a court of judicature; bringing in a regular charge and accusation against them, and an orderly disposition of their sins, as to time, place, and circumstances, committed by them, and a strong evidence or thorough conviction of them, so as not to be denied and gainsaid by them: or a setting them in battle-array, as in Job vi. 4. in rank and file; sins being what war against men, and bring upon them utter ruin and destruction; as the sins of the Jews fought against them, and destroyed them; see Jer. ii. 19.

Ver. 22. *Now consider this*, &c.] The evils that had been committed, and repent of them; for repentance is an after-thought and reconsideration of sin, and humiliation for it; that the Lord was not like them, not an approver of sin, but a reprover for it; and what would be their latter end, what all this would issue in, in case of impenitence. *Ye that forget God*; that there is a God, his being, perfections, word, works, and benefits. *Lest I tear* you *in pieces*; as a lion, leopard, or bear; see Hos. xiii. 7, 8. which was accomplished in the destruction of Jerusalem; when both their civil and ecclesiastical state were torn in pieces; their city and temple levelled with the ground, and not one stone left upon another; and they scattered about in the earth. *And* there be *none to deliver*; which denotes their utter and irreparable ruin, till the time comes they shall turn to the Lord; see Isa. xlii. 22.

Ver. 23. *Whoso offereth praise*, &c.] Which is exhorted to, ver. 14. see the note there. *Glorifieth me*; celebrates the divine perfections, gives God the glory of all mercies; which honours him, and is more grateful and well-pleasing to him than all burnt-offerings and sacrifices. *And to him that ordereth his conversation* aright; according to the rule of God's word, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ; who walks inoffensively to all, circumspectly and wisely in the world, and in love to the saints; in wisdom towards them that are without, and in peace with them that are within; who is a follower of God, of Christ, and of his people; and who lives so as to glorify God, and cause others to glorify him likewise: or that chooses for himself the right way, as Aben Ezra, the right way to eternal life; and the sense is, he that puts or sets his heart upon it, and is in pursuit after the evangelical way of life. To him *will I shew the salvation of God*; or, *cause to see* or *enjoy it*[b]; not only temporal salvation from time to time, but spiritual and eternal salvation; to see interest in it, and to possess it; and particularly Christ, the author of it, who is the salvation of God's providing, appointing, and sending, and whose glory is greatly concerned therein; see Isa. lii. 10. Luke ii. 25, 30.

[b] אראנו videre faciam eum, Montanus; faciam ut is fruatur, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

PSALM LI.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

THE occasion of this psalm was the sin of David with Bath-sheba, signified by *going in to her;* an euphemism for *lying with her:* which sin was a very aggravated one, she being another man's wife, and the wife of a servant and soldier of his, who was at the same time exposing his life for his king and country's good; and David besides had many wives, and was also king of Israel, and should have set a better example to his subjects; and it was followed with other sins, as the murder of Uriah, and the death of several others; with scandal to religion, and with security and impenitence in him for a long time, until Nathan the prophet was sent to him of God, to awaken him to a sense of his sin; which he immediately acknowledged, and shewed true repentance for it: upon which, either whilst Nathan was present, or after he was gone, he penned this psalm; that it might remain on record, as a testification of his repentance, and for the instruction of such as should fall into sin, how to behave, where to apply, and for their comfort. The history of all this may be seen in the 11th and 12th chapters of the second book of Samuel.

Ver. 1. *Have mercy upon me, O God,* &c.] David, under a sense of sin, does not run away from God, but applies unto him, and casts himself at his feet, and upon his mercy; which shews the view he had of his miserable condition, and that he saw there was mercy in God, which gave him hope; and upon his bended knees, and in the exercise of faith, he asks for it. *According to thy loving-kindness;* not according to his merits, nor according to the general mercy of God, which carnal men rely upon; but according to his everlasting and unchangeable love in Christ; from which as the source, and through whom as the medium, special mercy comes to the children of men. The acts of special mercy are according to the sovereign will of God: he is not moved to mercy neither by the merits nor misery of men, but by his free grace and favour; it is love that sets mercy to work: this is a most glaring gleam of Gospel-light, which none of the inspired writers besides, except the Apostle Paul, saw, Eph. ii. 4. Titus iii. 4, 5. *According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions;* for his sin was complicated, attended with many others; and, besides, upon a view of this, he was led to observe all his other sins; and particularly the corruption of his nature, his original sin, which he mentions, ver. 5. These he desires might be *blotted out;* out of the book of account, out of God's debt-book; that they might not stand against him, being debts he was not able to pay or make satisfaction for; and out of the table of his own heart and conscience, where they were ever before him, and seemed to be engraven; that they might be caused to pass from him, and he might have no more conscience of them; or that they might be blotted out, as a cloud by the clear shining of the sun of righteousness, with the healing of pardoning grace in his wings; or that they might be wiped away, as any filth is wiped from any person or thing: and all this *according to the multitude of his tender mercies.* The mercy of God is plenteous and abundant; he is rich in it, and various are the instances of it; and it is exceeding tender, like that of a father to his children, or like that of a mother to the son of her womb; and from this abundant and tender mercy springs the forgiveness of sin, Luke i. 77, 78. The psalmist makes mention of the multitude of the mercies of God, because of the multitude of his sins, which required a multitude of mercy to forgive, and to encourage his hope of it.

Ver. 2. *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,* &c.] Which supposes defilement by sin, and that very great, and such as none can remove but the Lord himself; who, when he takes it in hand, does it effectually and thoroughly; see Ezek. xxxvi. 25. David's sin had long lain upon him, the filth of it had as it were eaten into him, and spread itself over him, and therefore he needed much washing: *wash me much,* all over, and thoroughly: *and cleanse me from my sin;* which only the blood of Christ can do, 1 John i. 7. The psalmist makes use of three words to express his sin by, in this and the preceding verse; פשע, which signifies *rebellion,* as all sin has in it rebellion against God the lawgiver, and a contempt of his commandments; עון, *perverseness, crookedness,* sin being a going out of the plain way of God's righteous law; and חטאת, *a missing the mark;* going besides it or not coming up to it: and these he makes use of to set forth the malignity of sin, and the deep sense he had of the exceeding sinfulness of it; and these are the three words used by the Lord in Exod. xxxiv. 7. when he declares himself to be a sin-forgiving God; so that David's sin came within the reach of pardoning mercy.

Ver. 3. *For I acknowledge my transgressions,* &c.] Before God and man. Acknowledgment of sin is what the Lord requires, and promises forgiveness upon, and therefore is used here as a plea for it; and moreover the psalmist had done so before, and had succeeded in this way, which must encourage him to take the same course again; see Psal. xxxii. 5. *And my sin is ever before me;* staring him in the face; gnawing upon his conscience, and filling him with remorse and distress; so that his life was a burden to him: for though God had put away sin out of his own sight, so that he would not condemn him for it, and he should not die; notwithstanding as yet it was not caused to pass from David, or the guilt of it removed from his conscience.

Ver. 4. *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,* &c.] All sin, though committed against a fellow-creature, being a transgression of the law, is against the lawgiver; and, indeed, begins at the neglect or contempt

of his commandment, as David's sin did, 2 Sam. xii. 9. and being committed against God, that had bestowed so many favours upon him, was a cutting consideration to him, which made his sorrow appear to be of a godly sort; wherefore he makes his humble and hearty confession to the Lord, and who only could forgive his sin. *And done this evil in thy sight:* for with respect to men it was secretly done; and was only known to God, with whom the darkness and the light are both alike. *That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest:* not that David committed this sin that God might be just, and pure, and holy; but this was the event and consequence of it: God, by taking notice of it, resenting it, and reproving for it, appeared to be a righteous Being, and of purer eyes than to behold sin with pleasure; see Exod. ix. 27. Or these words may be connected with his acknowledgment and confession of sin; which were done to this end and purpose, to justify God in his charge of it upon him, and in threatening him with evils on account of it, by the mouth of Nathan the prophet: or with his petitions for pardoning grace and mercy; that so he might appear to be just to his promise, of forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, to humble penitents; and particularly that he might appear to be just and faithful to his son, in forgiving sin for his sake; whom he had set forth, in his purposes and promises, to be the propitiation for sin, to declare his righteousness, Rom. iii. 25, 26. see Rom. iii. 4.

Ver. 5. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity,* &c.] This cannot be understood of any personal iniquity of his immediate parents; since this respects his wonderful formation in the womb, in which both he and they were wholly passive, as the word here used is of that form; and is the amazing work of God himself, so much admired by the psalmist, Psal. cxxxix. 13—16. and cannot design any sinfulness then infused into him by his Maker, seeing God cannot be the author of sin; but of original sin and corruption, derived to him by natural generation: and the sense is, that as soon as ever the mass of human nature was shaped and quickened, or as soon as soul and body were united together, sin was in him, and he was in sin, or became a sinful creature. *And in sin did my mother conceive me:* by whom cannot be meant Eve; for though she is the mother of all living, and so of David, yet could not, with any propriety, be said to conceive him: this only could be said of his immediate parent, not even of his next grandmother, much less of Eve, at the distance of almost three thousand years. Nor does the sin in which he was conceived intend any sin of his parents, in begetting and conceiving him, being in lawful wedlock; which acts cannot be sinful, since the propagation of the human species by natural generation is a principle of nature implanted by God himself; and is agreeably to the first law of nature, given to man in a state of innocence, *increase and multiply.* Marriage is the institution of God in paradise; and in all ages has been accounted *honourable in all,* when *the bed is undefiled.* Nor does it design his being conceived when his mother was in *profluviis,* of which there is no proof, and is a mere imagination, and can answer no purpose; much less that he was conceived in adultery, as the contenders for the purity of human nature broadly intimate; which shews how much they are pinched with this text, to give into such an interpretation of it, at the expense of the character of an innocent person, of whom there is not the least suggestion of this kind in the holy Scriptures; but on the contrary, she is represented as a religious woman, and David valued himself upon his relation to her as such, Psal. lxxxvi. 16. and cxvi. 16. Besides, had this been the case, as David would have been a bastard, he would not have been suffered to enter into the congregation of the Lord, according to the law in Deut. xxiii. 2. whereas he often did with great delight, Psal. xlii. 4. and lv. 14. Moreover, it is beside his scope and design to expose the sins of others, much less his own parents, whilst he is confessing and lamenting his own iniquities: and to what purpose should he mention theirs, especially if he himself was not affected by them, and did not derive a corrupt nature from them? Nor is the sin he speaks of any actual sin of his own, and therefore he does not call it, as before, *my* iniquity and *my* sin: though it was so, he having sinned in Adam, and this being in his nature; but *iniquity* and *sin,* it being common to him with all mankind. Hence we learn the earliness of the corruption of nature; it is as soon as man is conceived and shapen; and that it is propagated from one to another by natural generation; and that it is the case of all men: for if this was the case of David, who was born of religious parents, was famous for his early piety, and from whose seed the Messiah sprung, it may well be concluded to be the case of all. And this corruption of nature is the fountain, source, and spring of all sin, secret and open, private and public; and is mentioned here not as an extenuation of David's actual transgressions, but as an aggravation of them; he having been, from his conception and formation, nothing else but a mass of sin, a lump of iniquity; and, in his evangelical repentance for them, he is led to take notice of and mourn over the corruption of his nature, from whence they arose. The Heathens themselves affirm, that no man is born without sin [r].

Ver. 6. *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts,* &c.] With delight and pleasure, as the word [s] signifies: meaning either Christ, the truth and the life, formed and dwelling in the hearts of his people; or the Gospel, the word of truth, which has a place there; and particularly that branch of it which proclaims pardon to sensible sinners, and is the ground of hope within them: or else a true and hearty confession of sin, which David now made; or rather internal holiness and purity of heart, in opposition to the corruption of nature before acknowledged: this is what is agreeable to the nature of God, is required by his holy law, and is wrought in the hearts of his people in regeneration; and this is *truth,* real, and not imaginary, genuine and unfeigned; where it is there is a true sense of sin, a right sight of Christ, unfeigned faith in him, sincere love to him, hope in him without hy-

[r] Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur—Horat. Sermon. l. 1. Satyr. 3.

[s] חפצת delectaris, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; delectatus es, Cocceius; so Ainsworth.

pocrisy, and a reverential fear of God upon the heart; the inward parts are the seat of all this, and in the exercise of it the Lord takes great delight and pleasure. *And in the hidden* part *thou shalt make me to know wisdom*: either Christ, the wisdom of God; or the Gospel, and particularly that part of it which concerns the pardon of sin; or a true knowledge of sin, and of the way of life and salvation by Christ, which is the truest and highest wisdom: and the phrase *hidden* or *secret* may either denote the nature of the wisdom made known, which is hidden wisdom, the wisdom of God in a mystery; or the manner in which it is made known; it is in a hidden way, privately, and secretly, and indiscernibly like the wind, by the spirit and grace of God; or the seat and subject of it, *the hidden part*, as we supply it; the hidden man of the heart. David begins to rise in the exercise of his faith in the grace of God, *thou shalt make me to know*, &c. unless the words should be rendered as a prayer, as they are by some, *make me to know* [e], &c. and as are the following.

Ver. 7. *Purge me with hyssop*, &c.] Or *thou shalt purge me with hyssop* [f]; or *expiate me*; which was used in sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb on the door-posts of the Israelites in Egypt, that the destroying angel might pass over them, Exod. xii. 22, 23. and in the cleansing of the leper, Lev. xiv. 4—7. and in the purification of one that was unclean by the touch of a dead body, &c. Numb. xix. 6, 18. which the Targum on the text has respect to; and this petition of the psalmist shews that he saw himself a guilty creature, and in danger of the destroying angel, and a filthy creature like the leper, and deserving to be excluded from the society of the saints, and the house of God; and that he had respect not hereby to ceremonial sprinklings and purifications, for them he would have applied to a priest; but to the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, typified thereby; and therefore he applies to God to purge his conscience with it; and, as Suidas [g] from Theodoret observes, hyssop did not procure remission of sins, but has a mystical signification, and refers to what was meant by the sprinkling of the blood of the passover; and then he says, *and I shall be clean*: thoroughly clean; for the blood sprinkled on the heart by the spirit clears it from an evil conscience, purges the conscience from dead works, and cleanses from all sin. *Wash me*; or *thou shalt wash me* [h]; alluding to the washing at the cleansing of a leper, and the purification of an unclean person, Lev. xiv. 8. Numb. xix. 19. but had in view the fountain of Christ's blood, in which believers are washed from all their sins, Zech. xiii. 1. Rev. i. 5. *And I shall be whiter than snow*; who was black with original corruption, and actual transgressions; but the blood of Christ makes not only the conversation-garments white that are washed in it; but even crimson and scarlet sins as white as wool, as white as snow, and the persons of the saints without spot or blemish, Rev. vii. 14. Isa. i. 18. Eph. v. 25—27. whiter than the snow is a phrase used by Homer [i], and others, to describe what is exceeding white.

Ver. 8. *Make me to hear joy and gladness*, &c.] Which he had not heard for some time; sin had sadly broke in upon and interrupted his spiritual peace and joy; for though the love and favour of God cannot be lost, yet his sensible presence, which puts joy and gladness into the heart, may; and though an interest in Christ ever continues, and union to him is always the same; yet a view of interest in him, which fills with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and communion with him, may not be had for a time: and though justification by his righteousness, from whence flows much peace, is an invariable blessing; yet the comfortable perception of it may be taken away: and though salvation by Christ is a certain thing, yet the joy of it may be lost for a season; which was now the case of the psalmist: and when he desires that God would cause him to hear joy and gladness, his meaning is, that he might have that made known unto him; namely, the forgiveness of his sins, which would give him joy; not by an articulate voice from heaven, which he did not expect; nor by an angel from thence, which was not usual; but by the prophet, who as yet might not have declared to him that God had put away his sin; or, if he had, he might desire to have it repeated, for his fuller assurance, and greater joy; or by his spirit, in an impulse on his mind, saying to him, thy sins are forgiven thee; which would give him great joy, fulness of it, even what is inconceivable and inexpressible, signified by these two words, *joy* and *gladness*. That *the bones* which *thou hast broken may rejoice*; a backsliding believer is not only like a bone out of joint, Gal. vi. 1. but his falls are sometimes both to the bruising of him, and to the breaking of his bones; of which when he is sensible, the quick sense of his sin is as the pain of a broken bone; see Psal. xxxviii. 3, 6, 8, 9. and here the breaking of them is ascribed to God; not that he is the cause or occasion of falling into sin, which breaks the bones, Jam. i. 13. but of afflictions, corrections, and chastisements for sin, which are sometimes expressed by this phrase, Isa. xxxviii. 13. Lam. iii. 4, 16. and which David was threatened with, and gave him great uneasiness; and of the menaces and threatenings of the law, which being let into his conscience, worked wrath and terror there; and also of that true contrition of heart, and brokenness of spirit, which the Lord produces, and can only cure, by the discoveries of pardoning grace; which affects the whole frame of nature, the report of which makes the bones fat, and all of them to say, who is a God like unto thee? Prov. xv. 30. Psal. xxxv. 9, 10.

Ver. 9. *Hide thy face from my sins*, &c.] In whose sight they were committed, being now ashamed of them himself, and ashamed that any should see them, and especially his God; and being filthy and nauseous, he knew they must be abominable to him, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; and being breaches

[e] תודיעני notam mihi fac, Gejerus.

[f] תחטאני purificabis me, Pagninus, Montanus; expiabis me, Vatablus, Musculus, Cocceius, Gejerus.

[g] In voce Υσσωπος.

[h] תכבסני lavabis me, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Musculus, Cocceius.

[i] Iliad. 10. v. 437. So Martial. l. 7. Epigr. 27. Ovid. Amor. l. 3. Eleg. 6.

of his law, must be offensive to him, and provoke the eyes of his glory; and were such that he knew would not bear the examination of justice; and that if God was strict to mark them, he could not stand before him: moreover, in this petition the psalmist deprecates a severe chastisement of them, which is sometimes expressed by setting sins before him, Psal. xc. 8. and entreats the pardon of them, or oblivion and non-remembrance of them, that they might be cast behind his back, and into the depths of the sea. *And blot out all mine iniquities*: as in ver. 1. here repeated, to shew his deep sense of them, and his great importunity for the forgiveness of them; and adds the word *all*, including all his other sins, with those he had lately committed; for he knew that, if any one was left unpardoned, he could never answer for it.

Ver. 10. *Create in me a clean heart, O God*, &c.] Which was now defiled with sin, and of which being convinced, he was led more and more to see the impurity of his heart and nature, from which all his evil actions flowed; and being sensible that he could not make his heart clean himself, and that this was the work of God, and a work which required creating power, he entreats it of him: for as the first work of conversion is no other than a creation, or a production of something new, which was not before; so the restoring of a backslider, as it goes by the same name, it requires the same power; and as the implantation of grace at first, and particularly of faith, is a work of almighty power; so the same power must be put forth to bring it into exercise, after falls into sin; that it may afresh deal with the heart-purifying blood of Christ, which only can make it clean, and is what is here meant. *And renew a right spirit within me*; by which is designed, not the Holy Spirit of God[k]; for he is the renewer; nor the spirit or soul of man as to its essence; but with respect to the qualities of it; and here it signifies a renewing of the inward man, or an increase of grace, and causing it to abound in act and exercise; and intends a spirit of uprightness and integrity, in opposition to dissimulation and hypocrisy; a spirit *prepared* and *ready*[l] to every good work, Matt. xxvi. 41. one *firm*[m] and unmoved from obedience to the Lord, by sin, temptations, and snares; a heart fixed, trusting in the Lord, and comfortably assured of an interest in pardoning grace and mercy.

Ver. 11. *Cast me not away from thy presence*, &c.] As abominable; as a vessel in which he had no pleasure; with indignation and wrath; as one that is angry with another, cannot bear him in his sight, but bids him be gone from him. Nothing is more desirable to a child of God than the presence of God; and nothing gives him more sensible pain than his absence; and even to be deprived of or denied the means of enjoying his presence, the word and ordinances, makes them very uneasy: to be utterly, and for ever deprived of it, is the case of the damned in hell, and is the punishment of loss they sustain; and, on the other hand, the happiness of the saints in heaven is to enjoy it without interruption. The people of God are never cast away from his favour, or out of his heart's love; but they may for a while be without his gracious presence, or not see his face, nor have the light of his countenance, nor sensible communion with him, which is here deprecated. David might call to mind the case of Cain, Gen. iv. 14, 16. or rather the more recent one of Saul, whom the Lord rejected, and from whom he departed upon his sinning, and which he might fear would be his case, 1 Sam. xxviii. 15. *And take not thy Holy Spirit from me*; or *the Spirit of thine holiness*; the third Person in the Trinity; so called, not because this epithet of *holy* is peculiar to him; for it is used also of the Father, and of the Son, John xvii. 12. Psal. xvi. 10. but because he is equally holy with them, and is the author of holiness in his people, which is therefore called the sanctification of the Spirit, 1 Pet. i. 2. and without whom David knew that purity and holiness of heart and spirit he had desired could not be renewed and increased in him; and therefore deprecates the taking of him away; which shews that he was not as yet removed from him, notwithstanding he had fallen into great sins; and his sense of sin, and confession of it, and his fervent application for pardoning grace, and purity of heart, abundantly prove it. The spirit of God is a gift of his, which is without repentance, and where he once is as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, he ever abides: his external gifts may be taken away; but internal grace is an incorruptible seed, and always continues. By sin the spirit of God may be grieved, so as to withdraw his gracious influences, and his powerful operations may not be felt; and this is what is here deprecated. The Targum interprets this of the spirit of prophecy which David had, by which he composed psalms and songs prophetic of Christ, and of Gospel times, and which was not taken away from him; see 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2.

Ver. 12. *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation*, &c.] Not temporal, but spiritual and eternal; and designs either Christ himself, who is God's salvation, of his appointing and providing, in the view of whom, as such, David had much spiritual joy; or the salvation he was to work out, which God the Father had contrived the scheme of in him, had covenanted with him to do, and had appointed his people to: salvation itself is a sure thing, and can never fail, being founded upon the purpose and counsel of God, which shall ever stand; and is secured in the covenant of grace, which can never be removed; and is now completely wrought out by Christ, and is applied by his spirit to the heirs of it, who shall certainly and fully enjoy it; otherwise the glory of all the three Persons in it would be lost: but the joy of it may be interrupted and discontinued for a while, through falls into sin, as this case of David, and the case of Peter, shew; and therefore a restoration of it is desired, by shewing a fresh interest in this salvation; and particularly by an application of pardoning grace and mercy; see Psal. xxxv. 3, 9. and li. 8. *And uphold me with thy free Spirit*: or *let thy free Spirit uphold me*[n]; the same with the Holy Spirit of God; called *free*, because he is a most free and munificent giver: he gives his

[k] Vid. Zohar in Gen. fol. 107. 3.

[l] [נכון] paratum seu promptum, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth

[m] Firmus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

[n] So Vatablus, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus, Schmidt.

grace, and bestows his gifts severally, as he pleases, and liberally, and upbraids not; and because he is freely given of God; his graces are freely given, as faith, hope, love, &c. and because he frees them to whom he is given from the bondage of sin and corruption, and makes them Christ's free men, and delivers them into the liberty of the children of God; and so is a spirit of adoption, in opposition to a spirit of bondage, by which they have freedom and boldness to call God their Father; and by whom also they have liberty of soul at the throne of grace, and can freely make known their requests, and spread their cases before God; see Rom. viii. 15, 16. 2 Cor. iii. 17. also he may be so called, because he makes the saints ready and willing to obey the will of God, and to run with cheerfulness the way of his commandments; and is moreover *a princely spirit* [s], or *beneficent*, as some choose to render the words; and which becomes such who are set among princes, and are made kings and priests unto God: and with this spirit the psalmist desires to be *upheld*, to be strengthened by it, to do the will and work of God, that so he might not stumble and fall into sin as he had done; that he might be stayed, supported, and comforted with it, as the Holy Spirit of promise; that so he might not faint and sink under his present sense of sin, and the guilt of it; and that he would be not only a guide unto him in the ways of God, but that he would hold up his goings in them, that so he might walk both at liberty and in safety. The Targum interprets this also of the spirit of prophecy.

Ver. 13. Then *will I teach transgressors thy ways*, &c.] David was a prophet as well as a king; see Acts ii. 30. and taught men the fear of the Lord, Psal. xxxiv. 11. and instructed them in his ways, as he here promises he would; by which are meant, either the ways which God prescribes and directs men to walk in, as the paths of faith, holiness, and truth, and the ways of his commandments; or which he himself has walked in; meaning not the ways of his providence, which are sometimes past finding out; but the ways of his grace, the steps and methods he has taken in the salvation of men, by forming the scheme of it, by choosing unto it, by making a covenant with his son, and appointing him to effect it; and particularly his ways and methods in receiving and pardoning backsliders, when returned by repentance to him; and who may be meant by *transgressors* here: and then the sense is, that David, upon his being received and pardoned, would teach others like himself how graciously God had dealt with him; how plenteous he is in mercy; how ready to forgive, and how faithful to his promises; and so encourage them to go to him, and acknowledge their transgressions, and seek pardoning grace at his hands, who does abundantly pardon, and whose ways are not as theirs; see Isa. lv. 7—9. *And sinners shall be converted unto thee*: or *that sinners may be converted unto thee* [t]; this being the end of teaching by the word, and the means of the conversion of profane and unregenerate sinners, through the power of divine grace; though rather this seems to be understood of the conversion of God's own people after backslidings, and not of first conversion; see Luke xxii. 32. Jam. v. 19, 20.

Ver. 14. *Deliver me from blood-guiltiness*, &c.] Or *from bloods* [u]; meaning not the corruption of nature; see Ezek. xvi. 6. though to be rid of that, and to be free from the guilt and condemnation of it, is very desirable, Rom. vii. 24. but either from capital punishment in his family, the effusion of blood and slaughter in it, threatened him on account of his sin, 2 Sam. xii. 10. so the Targum is, "deliver me from the judgment "of slaying or killing;" or rather from the guilt of the blood of Uriah, and other servants of his, he had been the occasion of shedding, and was chargeable with, being accessary thereunto, 2 Sam. xi. 15—17. and xii. 9. which lay heavy upon his conscience, pressed him on every side, as if he was in prison, and brought upon him a spirit of bondage to fear; and therefore he prays to be delivered from it, by the application of pardoning grace, which would be like proclaiming liberty to the captive. *O God, thou God of my salvation*; who has contrived it for his people, chosen them to it, secured it for them in covenant, and provided his Son to be the author of it, and sends his Spirit to apply it. The psalmist knew, that being God he could pardon his sin, remove his guilt, and free him from obligation to punishment, which none else could; and being the *God of* his *salvation*, and his covenant-God, he had reason to hope and believe he would. And *my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness*; goodness, grace, and mercy, in forgiving sin; for *righteousness* sometimes designs clemency, goodness, and mercy; see Psal. xxxi. 1. and faithfulness in making good the divine promise to forgive such who are sensible of sin, and repent of it, acknowledge it, and ask for mercy; or the righteousness of Christ, well known to David, Rom. iv. 6. which justifies from all sin, removes the guilt of it, and fills the soul with joy and gladness, Isa. lxi. 10.

Ver. 15. *O Lord, open thou my lips*, &c.] The Targum adds, *in the law*; which were shut with a sense of sin, with shame of it, and sorrow for it; and though they were in some measure opened in prayer to God for the forgiveness of it, as appears by various petitions in this psalm, yet he still wanted a free spirit and boldness at the throne of grace, which the believer has when his heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Christ; and especially his lips were shut as to praise and thanksgiving; the guilt of sin had sealed up his lips, that he could not sing the praises of God as he had formerly done; and only a discovery of pardoning grace could open them, and for this he prays: *and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise*; the praise of his mercy, grace, goodness, truth, and faithfulness, in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; see Psal. ciii. 1—5.

Ver. 16. *For thou desirest not sacrifice*, &c.] Legal sacrifice; for there was no sacrifice appointed under

[s] רוח נדיבה πνευματι ἡγεμονικῳ, Sept. spiritu principali, V. L. Tigurine version; munifico, so same in Vatablus.

[t] וחטאים at peccatores convertantur, Junius & Tremellius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[u] מדמים de sanguinibus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Musculus; so Ainsworth.

the law for murder and adultery. *Else would I give it*; he would gladly have offered it up. *Thou delightest not in burnt-offering*: at least such kind of sacrifices, though they were of divine appointment, and at that time in full force and use; yet they were not the only and principal sacrifices God desired and delighted in; nor were they at all acceptable to him without faith in Christ, and an humble sense of sin; and when offered in the best manner, yet spiritual obedience, acts of mercy, and sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, were more pleasing to him, 1 Sam. xv. 15, 22. Hos. vi. 6. Psal. lxix. 30, 31. wherefore the psalmist proposed to offer praise in the preceding verse, and adds what follows.

Ver. 17. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit*, &c.] That is humbled under a sense of sin; has true repentance for it; is smitten, wounded, and broken with it, by the word of God in the hand of the Spirit, which is a hammer to break the rock in pieces; and that not merely in a legal, but in an evangelical way; grieving for sin as committed against a God of love; broken and melted down under a sense of it, in a view of pardoning grace; and mourning for it, whilst beholding a pierced and wounded Saviour: the sacrifices of such a broken heart and contrite spirit are the sacrifices God desires, approves, accepts of, and delights in. *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*: but regard, and receive with pleasure; see Psal. cii. 17. the Lord binds up and heals such broken hearts and spirits, Psal. cxlvii. 3. Isa. lxi. 1. he is nigh to such persons, looks upon them, has respect unto them, and comes and dwells among them, Psal. xxxiv. 18. Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. and lvii. 15.

Ver. 18. *Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion*, &c.] This, and the following verse, are thought, by a Spanish Rabbi mentioned by Aben Ezra, to have been added by one of the holy men that lived in the time of the Babylonish captivity; though rather it is thought, by the latter, to be wrote by David, under a spirit of prophecy, concerning times to come; and so Kimchi thinks they are prophetical of future things; of the destruction of the first and second temple, and of the acceptableness of sacrifices in the times of the Messiah: and by Zion is meant the church, under the Gospel dispensation, Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xiv. 1. and the *good* prayed for includes all the good and glorious things spoken of the church of Christ in the latter day; such as an increase of its numbers, the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, the conversion of the Jews, and the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; the spread of the Gospel all over the world, the purity of Gospel doctrine, worship, and ordinances, the spirituality of religion, the power of godliness, and an abounding of brotherly love, and the like. The *good pleasure* of God, *in* which this is desired to be done, may denote either עת רצון, *the acceptable time*; or *time of good pleasure*; the Gospel dispensation, so called Isa. xlix. 8. 2 Cor. vi. 2. in which it has been foretold, and may be expected these things shall be done; or else the cause, source, and spring of them, which is the sovereign good will and pleasure of God, from whence flow all the blessings of grace and goodness. *Build thou the walls of Jerusalem*; not literally taken; for these do not appear to have stood in need of being repaired or rebuilt in David's time; but the church of God, which is a spiritual house, built up of lively stones, true believers; which may be said to be more and more built up by an addition of such unto it: it is as a city compact together, whose walls are salvation, and its gates praise, Isa. xxvi. 1. and lx. 18. of the wall of the new Jerusalem, see Rev. xxi. 12, 18, 19.

Ver. 19. *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness*, &c.] Which must be different from the legal ones he desired not, and did not delight in, ver. 16. but design sacrifices under the Gospel dispensation, as the word *then* shews, which connects this verse with the preceding: and in the first place intend the sacrifice of Christ, which is of a sweet-smelling savour to God; and his righteousness, with which he is well pleased, because the law is magnified and made honourable by it; and next the saints themselves, who present their bodies to him a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice, they being accepted with him in Christ the beloved; as also their good works, particularly acts of charity and beneficence, with which sacrifices God is well pleased; and especially the spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, which are acceptable to him through Jesus Christ; as all are that are offered in faith through him, and from love, and with a view to the glory of God; see Eph. v. 2. Rom. xii. 1. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. *With burnt-offering, and whole burnt-offering*: the difference between these two, according to Aben Ezra and Kimchi, was, that the עלה, *olah*, or *burnt-offering*, was the daily sacrifice; and the additional ones, which were of beasts and birds, Lev. i. and the כליל, *calil*, was the meat-offering of the priests, which was wholly consumed, Lev. vi. 22, 23. though this also is sometimes used of beasts, 1 Sam. 7. 9. and both may signify love to God, and to our neighbour; or a man's devoting himself to the Lord in the flames of love, as a whole burnt-offering to him, and which is better than all burnt-offerings, Mark xii. 33. *Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar*; or *calves*[r]; meaning the calves of the lips, Hos. xiv. 2. interpreted the fruit of the lips, even giving thanks to the name of God, Heb. xiii. 16. which sacrifices of praise being offered up on the altar Christ, come with acceptance before God, Heb. xiii. 10, 16. Isa. lvi. 7.

[r] פרים vitulos, V. L. Pagninus, Tigurine version, Musculus.

PSALM LII.

To the chief Musician, Maschil, A Psalm *of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.*

OF the title *Maschil*, see the note on Psal. xxxii. The occasion of this psalm is here related, the history of which is in 1 Sam. xxi. 7. and xxii. 8, 9, 10, 18, 21, 22. The sum of it is this; David having fled from Saul, came to Ahimelech the priest at Nob, and desired bread and a sword of him, which were given him, Doeg the Edomite being present at the same time. Sulpicius Severus [s] calls him a Syrian, following the Greek version of 1 Sam. xxi. and xxii. and so does Josephus [t], through a mistake of the letter ר for ד, an Aramite instead of an Edomite; see the note on 1 Sam. xxi. 7. and xxii. 9. this man observed what was done for David by the priest; and when Saul complained to his captains that they all conspired against him, and no man was sorry for him, or shewed him the intrigue between David and his son; Doeg stood up and related what, and more than what he had heard and seen pass between David and Ahimelech; upon which Saul sent for the priest, and all his father's house with him, and charged him with treasonable practices; and though he solemnly protested his innocency, Saul would not believe him, but ordered his footmen to fall upon him, and upon all the priests with him; but they refusing, he commanded Doeg to do it, who accordingly did, and slew eighty-five priests, and destroyed all in the city of Nob, men, women, children, and sucklings, oxen, asses, and sheep; only Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, escaped, who fled to David, and reported the whole affair; upon which he penned this psalm: in which he has respect not only to the then present case, but to future times, Doeg being a type of antichrist, the man of sin; in his name, which signifies *anxious* and *solicitous* [u], as he was to gain the king's favour, and obtain wealth and honour; so is antichrist to grasp all power, civil and ecclesiastical, and to get worldly honour and riches: in the country he was of, being an Edomite; and it is easy to observe, that Edom is the name which the Jews commonly give to the Roman empire, in which antichrist has his seat and power: in his religion, being a proselyte of the Jews, and was at an act of devotion, detained before the Lord, when he saw and heard what passed between David and Ahimelech; so antichrist appeared with the mask of religion, rose up out of the church, and sat in the temple of God, shewing himself as though he was God: in his office, the chiefest of the herdmen, or mightiest among the shepherds of Saul; so antichrist calls himself *princeps pastorum, the chief of pastors*; assuming to himself the title which belongs to Christ, the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls: and, lastly, in his cruelty in slaying the priests of the Lord. Antichrist is notorious for shedding and drinking the blood of the saints, the faithful confessors and witnesses of Jesus Christ. In this psalm David upbraids him with his glorying in his wickedness, and checks it by observing that the grace and goodness of God to his people ever endures, ver. 1. charges him with devising mischief, and loving it, ver. 2—4. and foretels his everlasting ruin and destruction, ver. 5. which will be seen by the righteous with pleasure, who will have just reason to insult over him, ver. 6, 7. and the psalm is concluded with an account of the happy condition and comfortable frame of soul the psalmist was in, in a view of all his troubles and enemies; he was flourishing in the church of God, trusted in the mercy of God for ever, and determined always to praise him and wait upon him, which is good for the saints to do, ver. 8, 9.

Ver. 1. *Why boastest thou thyself in mischief?* &c.] Or *in evil* [w]; in that which is sinful; to glory in riches, wisdom, and strength, which are not in themselves evil, is wrong; and to rejoice in such boastings, all such rejoicing is evil; to be a doer of mischief, or sin, is bad; to make a sport of it, worse; but to glory in it, and boast of it when done, is worse still: to be boasters of evil things, is the character of antichrist and his followers, 2 Tim. iii. 2. who not only boast of their merit, their good works, and works of supererogation, and of their riches, and honour, and grandeur, saying, *I sit as a queen,* Rev. xviii. 7. but of their wickedness in shedding the blood of the saints, thinking thereby they do God good service, and merit heaven, and eternal happiness; as Doeg boasted of his slaughter of the priests, and of his gaining the king's favour by it. *O mighty man!* referring either to his office, being the chief of Saul's herdmen, and set over his servants, 1 Sam. xxi. 7. and xxii. 9. or ironically, to the mighty deed he had done, in slaying the unarmed priests, and putting to death the very sucklings at the breast, and even the innocent sheep, oxen, and asses; or to his great wickedness and power to commit it; though man has no power and free will to that which is good, yet he has to that which is evil; so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and the eastern versions render it, *O thou! mighty in wickedness*; and to the same purpose the Targum paraphrases it, *mighty to shed innocent blood*; and the note of Aben Ezra is, *mighty to do evil.* A learned writer [x] thinks this relates to Saul, and describes him as a man of power and dignity. The character well agrees with the little horn and Romish beast, Dan. vii. 20. Rev. xiii. 2, 4, 7. *The goodness of God endureth continually*; that is, the love, grace, and mercy of God; this is observed as what is the matter of the saints' boasting, in opposition to the wicked boasting of Doeg; they glory in the love of God, and

[s] Sacr. Hist. l. 1. p. 43.
[t] Antiqu. l. 6. c. 12. s. 1. 4.
[u] A rad. דאג solicitus, anxius fuit, Buxtorf.

[w] ברעה in malo, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Gejerus.
[x] Delaney's Life of King David, vol. 1. p. 119.

in that they know him who exerciseth loving-kindness, which is the source of all the blessings of grace and goodness; and in Christ, through whom all are communicated to them; and in him, as made every blessing to them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: they ascribe the whole of their salvation, and all they have, to the grace of God, and glory in nothing as of themselves, and as though not received of the Lord. Moreover, the psalmist may take notice of this, as what was his support under all the persecutions he endured from men; that he had an interest in the grace and goodness of God, which is immutable and everlasting, invariably the same in all states and conditions; and that he was encompassed about with the favour of God as with a shield; and that it was not in the power of his most implacable enemies to separate him from the love of God; and therefore it was egregious folly in Doeg to boast himself in mischief; for, be he as mighty as he might, he could not prevent his sharing in the divine goodness, which always continues.

Ver. 2. *Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs*, &c.] Abundance of mischiefs, in a variety of ways, against many persons, even all good men. What properly belongs to the heart is here ascribed to the tongue; because, as Aben Ezra observes, it is the interpreter and discoverer of the thoughts of the heart: out of the abundance of that the tongue speaks and declares the mischief it has devised. Doeg intended mischief to David, when he spoke to Saul, 1 Sam. xxii. 9, 10. so antichrist devises mischiefs against the saints of the most High, to wear them out, and thinks to change times and laws, Dan. vii. 25. *Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully*; that is, his tongue was like a razor; the razor is but a small instrument, and the tongue is but a little member: the razor is a sharp and cutting one, and so is the tongue; and therefore compared to a sharp sword, Psal. lvii. 4. see Jer. xviii. 18. the razor takes off the beard cleanly and wholly; Doeg's tongue was the cause of the utter ruin of Ahimelech's family and the city of Nob; and as a razor may be said to *work deceitfully*, when it turns aside in the hand of him that useth it, and with the hair takes off more than it should, even skin and flesh, or cuts the man's throat; so in a deceitful and insidious manner did Doeg work the destruction of Ahimelech and the priests of the Lord.

Ver. 3. *Thou lovest evil more than good*, &c.] Indeed not good at all; such comparatives being strong negatives; see Psal. cxviii. 8, 9. a wicked man loves evil, and nothing else; his carnal mind being enmity to all that is good. And *lying rather than to speak righteousness*; as appears by his affirming that Ahimelech inquired of the Lord for David, when he did not, 1 Sam. xxii. 10, 15. and by suffering some things to pass for truths which were falsehoods, when it lay in his power to have disproved them; and such a lover of lies is antichrist; see 1 Tim. iv. 2. 2 Thess. ii. 11. *Selah*; of this word, see the note on Psal. iii. 2.

Ver. 4. *Thou lovest all devouring words*, &c.] Or *words of swallowing up*[y]; such as lies, calumnies, and detractions are, which devour the characters and reputations of men, and are the cause sometimes of their utter ruin and destruction: of the devouring and blasphemous words of antichrist see Rev. xiii. 5, 6. *O thou deceitful tongue*; as in ver. 2.

Ver. 5. *God shall likewise destroy thee for ever*, &c.] As a just retaliation for the mischief done to others; or, *therefore God shall destroy*[z], &c. even body and soul in hell, with an everlasting destruction, which will be the case of every wicked man, and particularly of the antichristian party, Rev. xiv. 10, 11. the word is used of breaking down the house in which the leprosy was, Lev. xiv. 45. and denotes the utter extinction of Doeg's family, and the irrecoverable ruin of antichrist, Rev. xviii. 21. *He shall take thee away*; as fire from the hearth, Isa. xxx. 14. or as burning coals from the altar: a word from the root here used signifies a censer: and the meaning is, that as his tongue was a fire, and set on fire of hell, and he was as a burning coal, he was fit for nothing but to be cast into everlasting burnings. *And pluck thee out of thy dwelling-place*; tent, or *tabernacle*[a]; referring to the tents of shepherds, he being the chief of Saul's shepherds, or to some stately palace he had built for himself to dwell in, upon his advancement at court; or rather to the tabernacle of the Lord, where he had been an hypocritical worshipper; but now should be cut off from the church of God, as a rotten member, and cast out of the tabernacle of Jacob, Mal. ii. 12. whilst David flourished as an olive-tree in the house of the Lord, ver. 8. *And root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.* In retaliation for his rooting out Ahimelech's family, and the inhabitants of Nob; so in like manner he and his should be destroyed root and branch, and not see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, nor enjoy eternal life in the world to come. The Targum renders the word *Selah* here *for ever*, as in ver. 3.

Ver. 6. *The righteous also shall see*, &c.] The Targum adds, *the punishment of the wicked*: particularly what is before predicted of Doeg. The judgments of God upon the ungodly, as they are certain, so they will be visible, either in this world, or in that to come, Rev. xv. 4. Isa. lxvi. 24. *And fear*; the Targum adds, *from before the Lord*; not with a slavish fear, with a dread of the same punishment, from which they are free, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, by which they are denominated righteous ones; though the judgments of God on others strike them with solemn awe and reverence, Psal. cxix. 120. but with a filial godly fear; with a fear of God for his goodness to them, in delivering them out of the hands of wicked men, which engages them more and more to fear the Lord, and to serve and worship him; see Rev. xv. 4: *and shall laugh at him*; at Doeg; and so at any other wicked man, when they see the vengeance of God upon him, Psal. lviii. 10. not that they rejoice at that, barely considered in itself, or as it is an evil and mischief to wicked men; for that does not become them, Prov. xxiv. 17, 18. but as it is expressive of the care of God over them, and love to

[y] דברי בלע verba absorptionis, Vatablus, Gejerus, Schmidt.
[z] גם διὰ τοῦτο, Sept. propterea, V. L. idcirco etiam, Piscator; ideo etiam, Michaelis.

[a] מאהל de tabernaculo, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus; e tentorio, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius.

them, in avenging their enemies: and more especially as the glory of divine justice is displayed therein; see Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2. for all this will be eminently fulfilled in the destruction of antichrist.

Ver. 7. *Lo*, this is *the man* that *made not God his strength*, &c.] The Targum renders it, *that made not the Word of the Lord his strength.* These are the words the righteous would say, when they should see the destruction of Doeg: see the man, the mighty man, and his end; what all his ill-gotten honour and riches are come to; and what his wickedness, deceit, and cruelty, have brought upon him. The righteous make the Lord their strength, put their trust in him, in whom is everlasting strength; do all they do in his strength; fly to him as their *strong hold*, as the word [b] may be rendered; thither they run, and are safe: but the rich man's wealth is his strong city, Prov. xviii. 10, 11. there he thinks himself safe, and places his confidence in it, as follows: *but trusted in the abundance of his riches;* see the note on Psal. xlix. 6. so the antichristian whore is represented as boasting of her riches and honour, and trusting in them, that they would always continue, Rev. xviii. 7. like the fool in Luke xii. 19, 20. And *strengthened himself in his wickedness;* encouraged and hardened himself in sin, gave up himself to it; and, by an obstinate continuance in it, strengthened the vicious habits contracted; stretched out his hand against God, and strengthened himself against the Almighty; went on in a daring manner, promising himself impunity; and as if his wickedness was his strength, his safeguard and protection: or *in his mammon,* his wealth and substance; as the Targum interprets it; and so R. Saadiah Gaon [c], and with which the Syriac version agrees; and then the sense is the same with the other clause. But, alas! what are all such forces of strength, when wrath comes forth from the Lord of hosts? Job xxxvi. 18, 19. Prov. xi. 4.

Ver. 8. *But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God*, &c.] Or rather it should be supplied, *I shall be* [d]; since David was at this time an exile from the house of God: and this expresses his faith and confidence, that, notwithstanding his present troubles, he should be restored again, and be in a very flourishing condition, in the church of God; which is here meant by *the house of God:* it being of his building, and where he dwells, and where to have a place is the great privilege of the saints; they are planted there by the Lord himself, and shall never be rooted up; they are fixed there, and shall never go out; which was David's confidence, Psal. xxiii. 6. and where he believed he should be as *a green olive-tree;* which is a very choice and fruitful tree, has fatness in it, produces an excellent oil; is beautiful to look at; delights in hot climates and sunny places; is found on mountains, we read of the mount of Olives; is ever green and durable, and its leaves and branches are symbols of peace: all which is applicable to truly righteous persons and believers in Christ; who are the excellent of the earth, are filled with the fruits of righteousness; are fat and flourishing; have the oil of grace, the anointing which teacheth all things; are a perfection of beauty, made perfectly comely through Christ's comeliness; thrive under him, the sun of righteousness; grow in the mountain of the Lord's house, the church: their grace is incorruptible, their leaf withers not; they are rooted in Christ, and ever continue; they are the sons of peace, and their last end will be eternal peace. Now as such David was assured he should be, when his enemy would be rooted up out of the land of the living, and cast like a dry and worthless branch into everlasting burnings; the ground of which confidence follows: *I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever;* the mercy of God is not only an encouragement to trust, but the object of it; not the absolute mercy of God, but the grace and goodness of God in Christ Jesus, which endures continually, ver. 1. and so does hope in it, which never makes ashamed, but abides to the end. The psalmist seems to have respect to the mercy promised him, that he should sit upon the throne. This he believed, and therefore was assured he should be in the flourishing circumstances in the house of God before mentioned.

Ver. 9. *I will praise thee for ever*, &c.] Both in this world, as long as he lived, and had a being in it; and in the world to come, to all eternity. This is a resolution respecting what he would do, when he should be in the happy condition he was confident of. *Because thou hast done* it; the Targum interprets it, *the revenge of my judgment;* meaning the vengeance of God on Doeg; and to the same sense Aben Ezra and Kimchi: though it may refer to the comfortable and happy condition he should be in, ver. 8. and which he wholly ascribes to the grace and goodness of God, and not to any merits of his own, and therefore determines to praise him for it. *And I will wait on thy name;* on the Lord himself, in his house and ordinances, for his presence and fresh supplies of grace and strength, when he should be restored. Or the sense is, that in the mean while he would wait patiently on the Lord, until he had accomplished what he had promised, and David believed. *For it is good before thy saints;* the sense is, either that it is good to wait upon the Lord and for him; which appears to be so to all the saints, by the comfortable experience they have had of it, Isa. xl. 31. Lam. iii. 26. or the name of the Lord is good unto them, pleasant, delightful, and comfortable, as proclaimed, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. see Cant. i. 3. and also Rev. xv. 4.

[b] מעזו arcem suam, Cocceius; presidium, munimentum, Michaelis.
[c] Apud Kimchi in loc.
[d] Ero, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus.

PSALM LIII.

To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, A Psalm of David.

THE word *mahalath* is only used here and in Psal. lxxxviii. Some, with Aben Ezra, take it to be the first word of a song, to the tune of which this psalm was set; others, with Jarchi, that it is the name of a musical instrument on which it was sung; a hollow instrument, of the same nature with *nehiloth*, Psal. v. Though it may relate to the argument or subject-matter of the psalm, and be rendered, *concerning sickness* or *infirmity* *; and, as Jarchi observes, some interpret it, *concerning the sickness or weakness of Israel*, when the temple was destroyed. But it seems much better to understand it of the sickness and disease of sin, and the weakness following upon that, to which all mankind are subject; since the psalm manifestly treats of the general corruption and depravity of human nature. This psalm is the same with Psal. xiv. and is expressed in the same words, with some little difference; the reason of its repetition is variously conjectured. Some think that the compiler of the book of Psalms, observing various readings in it occasioned by copying, thought fit to insert it both ways; but it is most likely to be composed by David himself, at different times, and it may be on different occasions, and with different views. Some think the former, namely Psal. xiv. was written concerning Nabal, and this concerning Doeg; according to Jarchi, that was concerning Nebuchadnezzar, this concerning Titus Vespasian; or, as others think, Antiochus Epiphanes. Kimchi is of opinion that this psalm, being placed between one that relates to Doeg, and another that refers to the Ziphites, points at the likeness there is between the case of David and the Messiah; that as David had many who sought to insnare him, yet God rewarded them, and established him in the kingdom; so it will be with the Messiah: but it is much more reasonable with others to conclude, that it is repeated either because of the importance of it; because that as the former may refer to the corruption of the Jews in the times of David, this to the corruption of men in the times of Christ and his apostles, and under the Gospel dispensation, until the second coming of Christ, especially under the reign of antichrist. The argument of the psalm, according to the Syriac version, is concerning Ahithophel, who gave counsel to Absalom to pursue his father David and kill him: and, according to the Arabic version, it is a prophecy concerning Babel and Sennacherib; so Theodoret: but rather concerning mystical Babylon, and the man of sin.

Ver. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart*, there is *no God*, &c.] The Targum adds, *of whom is revenge*: or there is no God to punish and avenge the wicked. *Corrupt are they*; the Chaldee paraphrase is, *the wicked have corrupted their ways*; as all flesh had done in the old world, Gen. vi. 12. *And have done abominable iniquity*; iniquity is the abominable thing that God hates, and makes men abominable in his sight; in Psal. xiv. 1, it is read, *abominable works*: the Targum paraphrases the words, *they are far from good, for iniquity is found in them*; see Rev. xxi. 8, 27. There is *none that doeth good*; see the note on Psal. xiv. 1.

Ver. 2. *God looked down from heaven upon the children of men*, &c.] In Psal. xiv. 2, it is read, *the Lord* or *Jehovah*; in every thing else there is an agreement in this verse; see the note there. *To see if there were any that did understand*; the Targum is, *that were understanding in the law*; it doubtless means understanding in divine and spiritual things. *That did seek God*; the above paraphrase is, *seeking doctrine from before the Lord*.

Ver. 3. *Every one of them is gone back*, &c.] From God, and the way of his commandments. In Psal. xiv. 3, it is, *they are all gone aside*; see the note there. What follows in this verse is the same as there.

Ver. 4. *Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?* &c.] In Psal. xiv. 4, it is, *have all the workers*, &c. There are none of them but what have, unless given up to judicial blindness, and hardness of heart, to believe a lie, as antichrist and his followers, 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11. Who *eat up my people*, as *they eat bread*; and drink their blood, and are drunken with it, Rev. xvii. 6. *They have not called upon God*; but upon their idols, upon the Virgin Mary, and saints departed. In Psal. xiv. 4. it is, *upon the Lord*.

Ver. 5. *There were they in great fear*, where *no fear was*, &c.] Before; neither of God nor man, nor any dread of punishment, but the utmost security, Rev. xviii. 7, 8, 10. *For God hath scattered the bones of* him *that encampeth against thee*; either against Christ, or against his church and people; who set themselves against the person, office, and grace of Christ, and seek to distress and destroy his interest: *the bones* of such *God will scatter*; that is, he will destroy antichrist and his armies, which are his strength, as the bones are the strength of the human body; and make such a carnage of them, that the fowls of the air shall eat their flesh, and their bones shall be scattered here and there; see Rev. xix. 17—21. So the Targum, "for God scatters "the strength of the armies of the wicked." Kimchi interprets it of the bones of the nations that shall encamp against Jerusalem, in the days of Gog; see Rev. xx. 8, 9. and Aben Ezra observes, that *thee* respects either God or the Messiah. *Thou hast put them to shame*; this is either an address of the psalmist unto God, declaring what he had done; or rather of God the Father to his Son Christ Jesus; and so Kimchi and Ben Melech say this refers to the Messiah: and it may be expressive of the shame and confusion that antichrist and his followers will be thrown into, when they shall make war with the Lamb, and he shall overcome them, Rev. xvii. 14. *Because God hath despised them*;

* על מחלת de miseria, Tigurine version, vel infirmitate; so Ainsworth.

or rejected them as reprobates; given them up to a reprobate mind; and being ungodly men, has before ordained them to this condemnation. The Targum is, "for the Word of the Lord hath rejected them;" as filthy, loathsome, and abominable, and cast them alive into the lake of fire, Rev. xix. 20.

Ver. 6. *O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!* &c.] Or, *who will give*[f] *out of Zion the salvation of Israel?* The Targum adds, *except the Lord;* and this is a request to him for it: and, as in Psal. xiv. 7, it may be a wish for the first coming of Christ, to work out salvation for his people; here it may be expressive of the desire of the church for his coming in a spiritual manner, in the latter day, to take to himself his great power, and reign; to destroy antichrist, and deliver his people from bondage and oppression by him; when the Gentiles shall be gathered in, the Jews will be converted, and all Israel saved; see Rom. xi. 25, 26. It is in the original text, *salvations*[g]; denoting the complete salvation of the church; when all her enemies will be destroyed, and all peace and prosperity shall be enjoyed by her. *When God bringeth back the captivity of his people:* who have been carried into it by antichrist, Rev. xiii. 10. *Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad;* for now the kingdoms of this world will become Christ's; the marriage of the Lamb will be come, and the bride made ready, through the calling of the Gentiles, and the conversion of the Jews; which will occasion the four-and-twenty elders, the representatives of the Christian church, to give thanks to the Lord God Almighty, and cause many voices to be heard in heaven, expressing great joy on this occasion, Rev. xi. 15, 16, 17, 18. and xix. 1—7.

PSALM LIV.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm *of David, when the Ziphim came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?*

OF the word *neginoth*, see the note on the title of Psal. iv. and of *maschil*, the note on the title of Psal. xxxii. The occasion of writing this psalm were the discoveries the Ziphim or Ziphites made to Saul of David being in their neighbourhood; which they did twice, as appears from 1 Sam. xxiii. 14, 19. and xxvi. 1. Which of these gave occasion to the psalm is not certain; it is very likely that it was composed after both had been made. These Ziphim were the inhabitants of a city called Ziph, which was in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 55. near to which was a wilderness, which had its name from the city in which David was when they came to Saul with this news of him.

Ver. 1. *Save me, O God, by thy name,* &c.] That is, by himself, by his power, and of his grace and goodness; the Lord's name is often used for himself. David in his distress applies to his God for salvation and deliverance, who only could give it; which was right; and his prayer was remarkably heard and answered: for when Saul came down upon the first discovery, and beset David and his men all around, just as he was about to seize the prey, tidings came to him of the invasion of the Philistines; which obliged him directly to quit his pursuit of David, and return in haste for the defence of his country, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26, 27, 28. and upon the second discovery, when Saul came again to take him, Saul was delivered into the hands of David, who could have took away his life if he would; but he only took his spear and cruse of water by his bolster, as a proof of his being in his power, 1 Sam. xxvi. 12. Of such avail is the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man. This prayer is suitable enough to David's antitype and son, the Messiah; see Psal. lxix. 1. Heb. v. 7. and especially to sensible sinners; who, being made acquainted with their lost and perishing condition, inquire the way of salvation; and finding it is not by works, but by Christ alone, apply in that way for it, and desire that God would save them by his Son; who is his name, in whom his name is, and whose name Jesus, a Saviour, is of God's giving; and this name is a strong tower, whither such souls, sensible of danger, flee and are safe; nor is there any other name in which salvation is, and which is therefore exceeding precious, and like ointment poured forth; see Exod. xxiii. 21. Matt. i. 21. Prov. xviii. 10. Acts iv. 12. Cant. i. 3. Or, *for thy name's sake*[h]; for the sake of the glory of his divine perfections; which was displayed in the deliverance of David, and more abundantly in the salvation of lost sinners; such as the wisdom, power, faithfulness, justice, grace and mercy of God. Such a petition shews that man cannot save himself; that no creature, none but God can save him; and that a sensible sinner desires to be saved in such a way that God may be glorified. *And judge me by thy strength:* David, though innocent, had many charges laid against him; his enemies were lively and strong; he puts his cause into the hands of the Lord, his strong Redeemer, who was able to plead it thoroughly against those that strove with him; so Christ, his antitype, committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously, 1 Pet. ii. 23. and so should every believer.

Ver. 2. *Hear my prayer, O God,* &c.] The psalmist first puts up his petitions, and then desires to be heard; his distress, and the fervency of his spirit, not suffering him to observe order. *Give ear to the words of my mouth:* for the prayer which was conceived in his mind, and inwrought there by the spirit of God, was expressed vocally.

Ver. 3. *For strangers are risen up against me,* &c.] Meaning such as Doeg the Edomite, or Heathen soldiers, that Saul had hired and took into his army, who

[f] מי יתן quis dabit, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
[g] ישעות salutes, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius; so Ainsworth.

[h] בשמך propter nomen tuum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus, Amama, Michaelis.

were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; and such as these rose up against David's antitype, the Messiah, Psal. ii. 1, 2. Acts iv. 27. Or rather the Ziphim, who were of his own nation, yea, of his own tribe, yet used him as barbarously as the very Heathens would have done, or worse; and who, though notwithstanding they were of Israel, might not be Israelites indeed, but strangers to an inward experience of divine and spiritual things: for men may be professors of religion, and yet be strangers to God in Christ, to Christ himself, and the way of salvation by him, and communion with him; to the Spirit of God, and the operations of his grace on the heart; to themselves, their own hearts, and their state and condition by nature; to the Gospel of Christ, and to the people of God; and these are sometimes the most violent persecutors of good and spiritual men. *And oppressors seek after my soul:* or *life*[i], to take it away; as did Saul and his army; who are *the mighty* or *strong ones*[k], as the word here used signifies; see 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. and as the Jewish sanhedrim, Scribes and Pharisees, sought after the soul or life of Christ, to take that away, as they did. *They have not set God before them. Selah.* They did not consider themselves as under the omniscient eye of God; they did not set his word before them, as the rule of their conduct, but cast it behind their backs; nor did they regard his providential mercies and favours as a motive to engage them to obedience to him, but despised them: they had not the fear of God before their eyes, nor in their hearts, nor any concern for his glory; and therefore did the wicked things they did against his servant.

Ver. 4. *Behold, God is mine helper, &c.*] This being a matter of wonder to be helped in so extraordinary a manner, and a sure and certain case, and what was deserving the attention of others; for the encouragement of their faith and hope in like cases, a *behold* is prefixed unto it: and what is here said is true of David's son, the Messiah, and is expressed by him in much the same language, Isa. l. 9. and of all the saints whom the Lord helps, as at first conversion, out of the pit wherein is no water, out of the horrible pit, the mire and clay of nature's darkness, ignorance, and unbelief; so out of all their afflictions and temptations, and out of the hands of all their enemies; he helps in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty; and he helps to all mercies, temporal and spiritual, needful for them; which help is quick and present, seasonable and suitable, always sufficient; and is what they have reason to expect both from what he has said to them in promise, and from what he has done for them. *The Lord is with them that uphold my soul:* that ministered to his sustenance, as Abigail did, and that gathered to him and joined him, and exposed their lives in the defence of him; these the Lord was with, blessed, protected, and afforded them his gracious presence. Such there were with Christ; who followed him in the regeneration; who ministered to him of their substance, whom God rewarded in a way of grace; and he blesses them that bless his, and do good to them; they being the excellent in the earth, in whom is his delight, the apple of his eye, and his jewels. Or the sense is, that the Lord is he that upheld his soul; not only the chief of his upholders, but the only one: so R. Moses[l] interprets it, that he is the alone upholder, and is instead of all upholders, and answers to them all; who upheld his soul in life, and followed him with his goodness: as when God is said to be the first, and *with the last*, the meaning is, that he is the first and the last, Isa. xli. 4. see Psal. cxviii. 7. so he upheld the soul of Christ in the wilderness, and in the garden, and on the cross; see Isa. xlii. 1. And he upholds all his people in a providential way in their beings, and supplies them with all the necessaries of life; and, in a spiritual way, maintaining their spiritual life, supplying them with all grace, bearing them up under all trials, holding up their goings in his ways, and preserving them to the end.

Ver. 5. *He shall reward evil unto mine enemies, &c.*] That eyed him as Saul did; that observed his haunts, where he resorted, and who were with him, as the Ziphites did under Saul's direction; as the word[m] here used for *enemies* signifies: the mischief they had devised for him, he believed, would be returned upon their own heads; the pit they digged they would fall into themselves; and the net they had spread for others their own feet would be taken in. This was true as of David's enemies, so of Christ's, the wicked Jews, who narrowly watched him to take every advantage against him. *Cut them off in thy truth:* root and branch, as Saul, and his family, and his courtiers, quickly were, according to the truth of promises made to David, and of threatenings unto them.

Ver. 6. *I will freely sacrifice unto thee, &c.*] Not legal sacrifices; no, nor free-will offerings the law gives directions about, though the allusion is to them; but the free-will offerings of his mouth, Psal. cxix. 108. the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, on account of help, salvation, and deliverance, as appears from the following clause; which he determines to offer, not by constraint, but willingly; not by force, but of a ready mind; freely, and with all his heart. The sacrifice of his antitype is himself, his soul and body, as in union with his divine Person; and this was offered up to God, against whom man has sinned, and whose justice must be satisfied; and this was done freely and voluntarily; he gave himself an offering; he laid down his life of himself, and that for sinners. The sacrifices of his people are their prayers and praises, their acts of beneficence, and the presentation of their souls and bodies in divine service; all which they do freely, under the influence of divine grace. *I will praise thy name, O Lord;* which explains what is meant by sacrificing: this is what is due to the Lord, and comely in his people. *For it is good;* either the name of God; and therefore to be praised. He himself is good, as he is, both in a way of providence and of grace; and it is good, both pleasantly and profitably good, to sing praises to him, Psal. cxlvii. 1.

Ver. 7. *For he hath delivered me out of all trouble,*

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[i] נפשי vitam meam, Junius & Tremellius, Michaelis.
[k] עריצים fortes, V. L. Pagninus, Musculus, Gejerus; prepotentes, Vatablus.

[l] Apud Aben Ezram in loc.
[m] לשררי observatoribus meis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Michaelis.

&c.] As he desired, 1 Sam. xxvi. 24. that is, out of all his present trouble; not that he had no more afterwards; for as soon as one trouble is gone, generally speaking, another comes; but as God delivered him out of his present distress, so he believed he would deliver him out of all his afflictions in future times. *And mine eye hath seen* his desire *upon mine enemies*; or *revenge*, as the Targum supplies it; not that he delighted in the destruction of his enemies, but in the justice of God glorified thereby, and in the goodness of God to him, in delivering him from them; see Rev. xviii. 20.

PSALM LV.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, A Psalm of David.

THE occasion of this psalm was either the persecution of Saul, or the conspiracy of Absalom. Some think it was written when David understood that the inhabitants of Keilah would deliver him into the hands of Saul, 1 Sam. xxiii. 12, 13. and others when the Ziphites attempted a second time to do the same, 1 Sam. xxvi. 1. but since a single person is spoken of that magnified himself against him, ver. 12, 13. and Ahithophel seems to be designed; it may be thought rather to be written on account of Absalom's rebellion, and Ahithophel's counsel against him; who is considered by many Christian interpreters as a type of Judas, the betrayer of our Lord; and, indeed, there are many things in this psalm, if not the whole, which may be truly applied to Christ, as will be seen in the following exposition of it.

Ver. 1. *Give ear to my prayer, O God*, &c.] Which was for that which is just and right, and equitable to be given, as the word [t] used signifies; being promised in the covenant of grace, ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ. Not only David was a man much given to prayer, as well as was the sweet psalmist of Israel; but the Messiah, as man, was much and often engaged in this work, in the days of his flesh, Luke vi. 12. Heb. v. 7. *And hide not thyself from my supplication*; made for mercies and blessings, which spring from the free grace and goodness of God, which is the sense of the word [u] here used; and such are all mercies, whether temporal or spiritual; for none are merited by men: and from his supplication for such things the psalmist desires, that as he would not be as one deaf to him, so that he would not hide his eyes, or refuse to look upon him, and deny his requests; see Isa. i. 15.

Ver. 2. *Attend unto me, and hear me*, &c.] So as to answer, and that immediately and directly, his case requiring present help. *I mourn in my complaint*; or *in my meditation* [w]; solitary thoughts, and melancholy views of things. Saints have their complaints, on account of their sins and corruptions, their barrenness and unfruitfulness, and the decay of vital religion in them; and because of the low estate of Zion, the declining state of the interest of Christ, and the little success of his Gospel; and they mourn, in these complaints, over their own sins, and the sins of others, professors and profane, and under afflictions temporal and spiritual, both their own and the church's. Christ also, in the days of his flesh, had his complaints of the perverseness and faithlessness of the generation of men among whom he lived; of the frowardness, pride, and contentions of his disciples; of the reproaches, insult, and injuries of his enemies; and of the dereliction of his God and Father; and he often mourned on account of one or other of these things, being a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs. *And make a noise*; not only with sighs and groans, but in so loud a manner as to be called roaring; see Psal. xxii. 1. and xxxviii. 8.

Ver. 3. *Because of the voice of the enemy*, &c.] Of Absalom, as Arama; or of Ahithophel, who gave out he would smite the king only, 2 Sam. xvii. 2. and so of any spiritual enemy, as sin, Satan, and the world, when they threaten dominion and tyranny; and of the Scribes and Pharisees reproaching Christ, as being a Samaritan, and having a devil, and doing his miracles by his assistance; menacing, insulting, and triumphing over him, when on the cross. *Because of the oppression of the wicked*; of Absalom or Ahithophel, as Arama; who conspired against David, and obliged him to quit his palace, and the city of Jerusalem; and is applicable to the troubles which surround the people of God, from every quarter, by wicked men, and to our Lord's being enclosed by them at the time of his crucifixion, Psal. xxii. 12, 13, 16. *For they cast iniquity upon me*; laid things to his charge he knew not: so wicked men falsely accuse the good conversation of the saints; and so the Jews imputed crimes to Christ he was innocent of; as immorality, sedition, blasphemy, *&c.* *And in wrath they hate me*; as they do all the people of God, because chosen and called, and separated from them: and so they did Christ, and with a mortal hatred, though without a cause.

Ver. 4. *My heart is sore pained within me*, &c.] At the civil war in his kingdom; at the battle likely to ensue between his forces and Absalom's, and at the issue of it; see Jer. iv. 19. this was true of Christ in the garden, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death, and he was in pain, as a woman in travail, as the word [y] here used signifies; and on the cross, when his heart, like wax, melted in the midst of his bowels. *And the terrors of death are fallen upon me*; see 2 Sam. xv. 14. thus it was with the human nature of Christ, when he desired, if possible, the cup might pass from him.

Ver. 5. *Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me*, &c.] Fear and dread of mind, and trembling of body.

[t] תפלתי orationem meam, i. e. secundum judicium; so Arama.
[u] תחנתי my supplication for grace, Ainsworth.
[w] בשיחי in meditatione mea, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.
[y] תכסני operuit me, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis; operit, Cocceius; obtegit, Junius & Tremellius; obtexit, Piscator; so Ainsworth.

And horror hath overwhelmed me; or covered me; he was in the utmost consternation and surprise at what he apprehended would be the issue of things; so Christ in the garden is said to be *sore amazed*, Mark xiv. 33. all which terror, fearfulness, trembling, and horror, arose from a sense of sin imputed to him, even of all the sins of his people, the filth of which must be nauseous to him, and the guilt thereof pressing upon him; and from a feeling of the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, which he endured in the room and stead of his people; and this shews the truth of his human nature, and the weakness and insufficiency of that, without his divine nature, to have performed the great work of redemption; also the evil of sin, the exceeding sinfulness of it, and the strictness of divine justice; and likewise the wonderful love of Christ in becoming a surety for his people, and what ease and pleasure they may take; all the pain, the trembling, and horror, were his, and all the joy is theirs.

Ver. 6. *And I said, oh that I had wings like a dove, &c.*] The psalmist pitches upon this creature, partly to suggest that his enemies pursuing him were like the ravenous hawk, and he like the harmless, innocent, and trembling dove; and partly because of its swiftness in flying. Aben Ezra thinks the dove is mentioned, because it is sociable with men, and who send letters by them for quick dispatch, of which instances may be given[r]. This wish is expressed suitably to his character and case. The church is sometimes compared to a dove for its innocence, modesty, chastity, purity, affection, inconsolableness for the loss of its mate, and for its fearfulness, Cant. ii. 14. and iv. 1. and vi. 9. and so is Christ, Cant. v. 12. who was typified by Jonah, whose name signifies a dove; and on whom the Spirit of God descended as a dove, at his baptism, and by whom he was filled with his dove-like graces. For then *would I fly away;* so David desired to flee, and did flee with good speed and haste from Absalom his son, 2 Sam. xv. 14. Psal. iii. title. Arama observes of the dove, that, when weary with flying with one wing, it rests that, and flies with the other, and so has strength to fly continually without stopping, which he supposes to be the reason why the wing of a dove is desired. So every sensible sinner desires to flee from sin and sinners, and from wrath to come; from avenging justice, to Christ the city of refuge; so Christ, under the terrors of death, in his human nature, in a view of the law's curse and wrath, desired the cup might pass from him, and he might flee and escape death, though with submission to the divine will. *And be at rest;* safe and secure from the conspirators, as David was; and as a sinner is that has fled to Christ; in whom is rest from the burden and guilt of sin, from the wrath, curse, and condemnation of the law, and under all afflictions, whether of body or mind; and not in the world, and worldly enjoyments; nor in the law, and the works of it: and as Christ is; not by escaping death, but through dying, and having done his work has ceased from it, and is entered into his rest; which was the joy set before him, that animated him as man to endure the cross, and despise the shame; here also true believers, weary of the world, desire to be, enjoying that rest which remains for the people of God.

Ver. 7. *Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.*] So David did when he fled from Absalom, 2 Sam. xv. 23, 27, 28. and xvi. 1, 2. so gracious souls desire to be; not in the wilderness of the people; but to be solitary as in a wilderness, clear of the company of wicked men, as Jeremy wished for, Jer. ix. 2. and that they might be more at leisure for and given up unto spiritual devotion, and be secure from their enemies: and as this may be applied to Christ, it shews the wickedness, cruelty, and barbarity of the men of that generation among whom he lived; that he chose rather to be in the wilderness, among wild beasts, than to dwell among them, Matt. xvii. 17. Isa. liii. 8. some apply this to the state of the primitive church under Jewish persecution, when it fled from Judea, and settled in the wilderness of the Gentiles; the preachers of the word being scattered abroad by the windy storm and tempest of persecution, and the Gospel taken from the Jews, and carried to a nation bringing forth the fruit of it, where it has remained ever since. With this may be compared the state of the church under Rome Pagan, in Rev. xii. 6, 13, 14.

Ver. 8. *I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.*] Of an army of rebellious subjects, bearing down all before them, and threatening with utter ruin and destruction; so a powerful army of enemies invading a country is signified by a storm and tempest, Isa. xxviii. 2. and xxxii. 2. and may be expressive of the storm and tempest of divine wrath and vengeance the sensible sinner hastens his escape from by fleeing to Christ; and of the blowing and furious winds of persecution, which the church, Christ's dove, flees from, by getting into the clefts of the rock, and the secret places of the stairs, Cant. ii. 14. and of the storms of divine wrath and justice that fell upon Christ as the surety of his people; from which the human nature, seized with fearfulness, trembling, and horror, desired an hasty escape.

Ver. 9. *Destroy, O Lord, &c.*] Or *swallow up*[s], as Pharaoh and his host were swallowed up in the Red sea; or as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were swallowed up in the earth; so all the enemies of Christ and his church will be destroyed; and death, the last of them, will be swallowed up in victory, Isa. xxv. 8. The Targum interprets it, *destroy*, or *scatter their counsel;* but this seems to be intended in the next clause. *And divide their tongues;* as at the confusion of languages at Babel, to which the allusion is: this had its accomplishment in Absalom's counsellors, according to David's wish, 2 Sam. xv. 31. and xvii. 14. and in the Jewish sanhedrim in Christ's time, and in the witnesses they produced against him, Luke xxiii. 51. Mark xiv. 59. and of which there is an instance in the council of the Jews, held on account of the Apostle Paul, Acts xxiii. 7. *For I have seen violence and strife in the city:* in the city of Jerusalem, now left by David, and possessed by Absalom, by whom *violence* was

[r] Vid. Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 9. c. 2.

[s] בלע degluti, Montanus, Tigurine version; absorbe, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

done to David's wives, through the advice of Ahithophel; and *strife*, contention, and rebellion, were fomented among the people; this David saw, understood, and perceived, by the intelligence brought him from time to time: and in the times of Christ the kingdom of heaven suffered *violence* in this place, and he endured the *contradiction* of sinners against himself.

Ver. 10. *Day and night they go about it, upon the walls thereof*, &c.] That is, *violence* and *strife* go about the walls of it continually; men of violence and contention are the only watchmen of it: a city must be sadly guarded that has no better watch than this. *Mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it*: it was full of wickedness within and without; the city, as Aben Ezra observes, was like a circle; violence and strife were as a line round about it, and mischief and sorrow the centre of it: and these two commonly go together; where mischief is, sorrow follows.

Ver. 11. *Wickedness is in the midst thereof*, &c.] All manner of wickedness; abominable wickedness; wickedness as arrived to its highest pitch, and as having filled up its measure; see Ezek. ix. 4. Zech. v. 7, 8. *Deceit and guile depart not from her streets*: where truth was fallen, and equity could not enter, Isa. lix. 14. for these are contrary the one to the other, and are incompatible; where the one prevails, the other must give way. This whole account shews the aboundings of sin in Jerusalem at this time, and that it was openly and publicly committed, and contains so many reasons of the imprecations in ver. 9.

Ver. 12. *For it was not an enemy that reproached me*, &c.] An open and avowed one; a Moabite or a Philistine; such an one as Goliath, who cursed him by his gods; but one of his own country, city, court, and family, who pretended to be a friend; his son Absalom, according to Arama: so it was not one of the Scribes and Pharisees, the sworn enemies of Christ, who rejected him as the Messiah, and would not have him to reign over them, that reproached him, but one of his own apostles. *Then I could have borne it*: reproach from an enemy is to be expected, and may be patiently endured; and, when it is for righteousness-sake, should be accounted an happiness, and rejoiced at; but the reproaches of one that has been thought to be a friend are very cutting, wounding, heart-breaking, and intolerable, Psal. lxix. 7, 8, 20. the calumnies and reproaches of the Scribes and Pharisees were borne by Christ with great patience, and were answered with great calmness and mildness, Matt. xi. 19. and xii. 24, 25. John viii. 48, 49. Or, *I would have lifted up*[t]; that is, my hand, and defended myself; I should have been upon my guard, ready to receive the blow, or to have put it off, or repelled it. *Neither was it he that hated me*: openly, but secretly in his heart. That *did magnify* himself *against me*; made himself a great man, and set himself at the head of the conspiracy and opposition against him, and spoke great swelling words, in way of raillery and reproach. *Then I would have hid myself from him*: as David did from Saul, when he became his enemy, 1 Sam. xx. 24. and xxiii. 19. and xxiv. 1. and as Christ from the Jews, John viii. 59. but as for Judas, he knew the place he resorted to; and therefore easily found him, John xviii. 2. the sense may be, that he would have shunned his company, refused conversation with him; much less would he have admitted him to his privy councils, by which means he knew all his affairs, and there was no hiding and concealing things from him.

Ver. 13. *But* it was *thou*, &c.] The Targum is, *but thou Ahithophel*; of whom the words are literally to be understood, and so they are in the Talmud[u]; and mystically and typically of Judas. *A man mine equal*; a *man*, and not a beast, nor a devil: but a man, from whom humanity, kindness, and tenderness might have been expected; though both Ahithophel and Judas acted the part of a devil; and the latter is expressly called one, John vi. 70. *Mine equal*; or like unto me; as the Targum. Ahithophel was not equal to David in dignity, as the king of Israel; nor in gifts, as the sweet psalmist of Israel; nor in grace as he; but as a man, a mortal dying man: kings and subjects are of the same blood, equally liable to death, and in the grave will be manifestly on a level: or rather the sense is, that he was in his esteem and affection as himself; he was his friend that he loved as his own soul: so Judas could not be in every sense equal to Christ, who is Jehovah's fellow, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God. Indeed as a man he was like unto him; a frail, mortal man, though not sinless as Christ. The word כערכי may be rendered *according to my appointment*[w], ordination, or constitution; Judas being a man appointed and ordained to be an apostle of Christ with the rest: or, *according to my esteem*[x]; being had in great esteem and familiarity with Christ: or, *according to my order*[y], rank and class; being taken into his family, admitted to his table, where he sat down and ate with him, as if he was his equal. *My guide*; or *governor*[z]. Ahithophel was not governor over David; but was made a governor by him: he was one of his dukes or nobles, as the word is rendered in Gen. xxxvi. 15. was raised to great dignity by him; perhaps was chief minister of state: it is certain he was his counsellor, and his counsel was with him as the oracle of God, 1 Chron. xxvii. 33. 2 Sam. xvi. 23. he was his guide in civil affairs; he was directed by his advice, and it may be was president of his privy council. Judas was not only the guide of them to Christ who took him, Acts i. 16. but when the apostles were sent out two by two before the face of Christ, to preach where he himself should come, Judas was sent also, Mark vi. 7. Luke x. 1. *And mine acquaintance*; one well known to him, as Ahithophel was to David, and Judas to Christ, his friend and companion, in whom he confided, and who ate of his bread; and all these characters are so many aggravations of his treachery and wickedness.

Ver. 14. *We took sweet counsel together*, &c.] Not

[t] ואשא
[u] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 2. Pirke Abot, c. 6. s. 3.
[w] Secundum dispositionem, sc. ordinationem & constitutionem meam, Calvinus in Michaelis.
[x] Juxta estimationem meam, Vatablus, Gejerus, Michaelis; qui par mihi estimatus est, Piscator.
[y] Secundum ordinem meum, Mollerus.
[z] אלופי dux meus, Pagninus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; princeps meus, Cocceius.

in religious matters; for in these the testimonies of the Lord were David's counsellors, Psal. cxix. 24. but in civil things: hearty counsel is one branch of friendship, and which greatly sweetens it, Prov. xxvii. 9. as this may be applied to Christ and Judas, it may denote the mutual delight and pleasure they had, the one in communicating, the other in receiving a notional knowledge of the Gospel, and the mysteries of it, which are the counsel of God, Acts xx. 27. for if hearers may hear the word gladly, as Herod did, and receive it with joy, as did the stony-ground hearers, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; why may not Judas, and other preachers devoid of true grace, be thought to receive and preach the doctrines of the Gospel in a speculative way, with some kind of delight and pleasure? so professors of religion take sweet counsel together, when they communicate to each other what light and knowledge they have in the mysteries of the Gospel, and converse about experience, and the mysteries and secrets of internal godliness, and give and take advice in spiritual things; and sad it is when any one of these drop their profession, and turn reproachers, scoffers, or persecutors. And *walked unto the house of God in company*: David with his royal family and courtiers, and Ahithophel among the rest; where he delighted to go, and that with a multitude. So Christ and Judas often went to the temple together, with the rest of the disciples, who heard many an excellent sermon from his mouth: all which are further aggravations of sin and guilt. And so such persons, who have walked together to the house of God and in it, have attended together on public worship, and walked together in holy fellowship; when any of these forsake the assembling of themselves together, scoff at religion, speak evil of ordinances, reproach the saints, or persecute them, it is very shocking, cutting, and grieving indeed.

Ver. 15. *Let death seize upon them*, &c.] Ahithophel and his accomplices, Judas and the men with him; as a mighty man, as the king of terrors, and shake them to pieces. Or, *let him exact upon them*[a]; as a creditor upon the debtor, and demand the debt of punishment for sin: or let him come upon them at an unawares; let them not die a natural, but a violent death. The Targum mentions Doeg and Ahithophel. And *let them go down quick into hell*: as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, went down quick or alive into the earth; so let these men die, and descend into the grave, in their full strength: and accordingly Absalom and Ahithophel died sudden and violent deaths, 2 Sam. xvii. 23. and xviii. 9. and so did Judas, Matt. xxvii. 5. and the beast and false prophet, another part of the antitype, will be taken and cast alive into the lake of fire, Rev. xix. 20. *For wickedness is in their dwellings*; and dwells in them; wherever they go or sojourn, this goes and abides with them, being the reigning principle in their hearts and lives. And *among them*; in the midst of them; their inward part is very wickedness. The Targum is, *in their bodies*. But rather the sense is, in their hearts; wickedness was both in their houses and in their hearts, and is the reason of the imprecation on them; which arises not from a revengeful spirit, but from a zeal for the glory of God; and is to be considered as a prophecy of what would be, and not to be drawn into an example for private Christians to act by.

Ver. 16. *As for me, I will call upon God*, &c.] Not upon a creature, on idols and images, on angels or saints departed; but upon God, in his time of trouble, for salvation and deliverance from enemies; who is able to save. This is to be understood of calling upon God in prayer; as the next verse explains it, and the Targum here renders it; though sometimes invocation of the name of God takes in the whole of divine worship. *And the Lord shall save me*; which confidence was founded partly upon his promise to deliver such that call upon him in the day of trouble, Psal. l. 15. and partly upon his power, whose hand is not shortened that it cannot save. The Targum is, "the Word "of the Lord shall redeem me."

Ver. 17. *Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray*, &c.] These being the stated times of prayer with the Jews, and which continued to after-ages, Dan. vi. 10. These times, they say[b], were fixed by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: the morning prayer by Abraham, according to Gen. xxii. 3. the prayer of the *minchah* by Isaac, according to Gen. xxiv. 63. and the evening prayer by Jacob, according to Gen. xxviii. 11. The prayer of the evening was at the time of the evening sacrifice, to which it is compared, Psal. cxli. 2. This was at the ninth hour, at which time Peter and John went up to the temple to pray; and Cornelius prayed in his own house, Acts iii. 1. and x. 30. The prayer of the morning was at the time of the morning daily sacrifice, and was about the third hour of the day; at which time the apostles met together for prayer on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 1, 15. and that at noon was at the sixth hour of the day; at which time Peter went up to the house-top to pray, Acts x. 9. And now, though we are not tied down to these exact and precise times of prayer, yet this teaches us that we ought to pray frequently and constantly, and that a day should not pass without it; and the morning and evening seem to be very proper seasons for it, seeing the mercies of the Lord are new every morning; and we should be thankful for them and the mercies of the night past, and implore divine protection and grace for the day following; and at evening we should express our thankfulness for the mercies of the day, and commit ourselves and families into the hands of God, who is Israel's Keeper, that neither slumbers nor sleeps. *And cry aloud*; denoting the distress he was in, the fervency of his prayer, and the importunity of it. *And he shall hear my voice*; this he might be assured of, from the general character of God, as a God hearing prayer, and from his own special and particular experience of the truth of it, and from the promises made unto him.

Ver. 18. *He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle* that was *against me*, &c.] That is, God had preserved his life, and delivered him safe and sound from many a battle which was fought against him, and might seem at first to go against him; and had given him

[a] ישי exigat debitum, Pagninus; aget vel agat exactorem, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus, Amama.

[b] Yalkut Simeoni in loc.

peace and rest from all his enemies before the present trouble came upon him, 2 Sam. vii. 1. wherefore he believed, that he who had delivered him in time past would deliver him again; this is the reasoning of faith, 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, render the last clause, *from them that draw nigh unto thee*; and the Syriac version renders it, by way of petition, *deliver my soul from them that know me*: and the Targum, "lest evil should come unto me." *For there were many with me*; either enemies fighting with him; and so this is mentioned to set forth the more the power of God in his deliverance: or friends, who were on his side; all Israel and Judah, who loved David and prayed for him, as Jarchi interprets it: or the angels of God, as Aben Ezra; who being for the Lord's people, are more than they that are against them, 2 Kings vi. 16. or God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and if he is for us, who shall be against us? Rom. viii. 31. The Targum is, "for in many afflictions his Word was for my help."

Ver. 19. *God shall hear and afflict them*, &c.] That is, either he shall hear the prayers of his servant, imprecating evils upon his enemies, ver. 9, 15. and shall bring them down upon them, in answer to his requests; or it may be rendered, *God shall hear and answer them*[c]; he shall hear their blasphemies, and take notice of their wickedness, and answer them by terrible things in righteousness. *Even he that abideth of old. Selah.* Or is *the inhabitant of eternity*[d], Isa. lvii. 15. the eternal God, from everlasting to everlasting, who was before all creatures and before all time, and will ever remain the same, out of whose hands there is no escaping. The Targum is, "and he inhabiteth the heavens from of old to everlasting." Of the word *Selah*, see the note on Psal. iii. 2. *Because they have no changes*: Kimchi renders it, *who hath no changes*; taking למו to be the same with לו, and interprets it of God; connecting it with the former clause, that he that abideth of old hath no changes. There is no variableness nor shadow of turning with him; he never changes his mind, nor alters his counsel, whether it be for good or evil; and yet wicked men fear him not. But rather this is to be understood of sinners, as the Targum paraphrases it, "who are not of old, and "who do not change their evil way;" who have no changes in their hearts, nor in their lives, but continue in their natural and sinful estate, without any impression of the power and grace of God upon them. Or they have no changes in their worldly circumstances, from good to bad, as Aben Ezra explains it; things go well with them, and they are not in trouble as other men; they are at ease and quiet, and are settled on their lees; see Job x. 17. Psal. lxxiii. 4, 5. Jer. xlviii. 11. Or they have no regard to their last change by death; and are not afraid of that, as Jarchi interprets it; they put away this evil day far from them; think nothing about it, as if it would never be, and as if they had made an agreement with it that this change should never come upon them, Job xiv. 14, 20. *Therefore they fear not God*; do not serve and worship him now, and are not afraid of his judgments here or hereafter; no change being made in their hearts, nor any alteration in their secular affairs for the worse; but having much goods laid up for many years, and sentence against their evil works not being speedily executed, their hearts are hardened, and they live secure in sin.

Ver. 20. *He hath put forth his hands*, &c.] The psalmist returns and describes, in this and the following verse, the cruelty, perfidy, and hypocrisy of his false friend; who had stretched forth his hands *against such as be at peace with him*, or he pretended to be at peace with. So Ahithophel put forth his hands against David, by whom he had been admitted into his privy council, and there had taken sweet counsel together, by entering into a conspiracy and rebellion against him, and by forming a scheme to smite the king only, 2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2. and Judas, though he did not lay hands on Christ himself, yet he gave his enemies a sign by which they might know him, and seize him, and hold him fast, as they did; and him Christ calls the man of his peace, Psal. xli. 9. they being at peace when he lifted up his heel against him. *He hath broken his covenant*: of friendship that was made between them; he proved false and treacherous, broke through his engagements, and violated his faith.

Ver. 21. The words *of his mouth were smoother than butter*, &c.] Such were the words of Ahithophel, when in counsel with David; and such the words of Judas, when he said to Christ, *hail, master*, and kissed him. *But war was in his heart*; even a civil war, rebellion against his prince; that was what Ahithophel meditated in his heart; and nothing less than to take away the life of Christ was designed by Judas. The words may be rendered, *they were divided*[e]; that is, his mouth and his heart: *his mouth was butter, and his heart war*: the one declared for peace, when the other intended war; see Jer. ix. 8. *His words were softer than oil*; at one time full of soothing and flattery: *yet were they drawn swords*; at another time sharp and cutting, breathing out threatening and slaughter, destruction and death.

Ver. 22. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord*, &c.] These are either the words of the Holy Ghost to David, according to Jarchi; or of David to his own soul in distress, and may be directed to any good man in like circumstances. The word rendered *burden* signifies a *gift*, and so the words are translated by many, *cast thy gift upon the Lord*[f]; what he has given in a way of providence and of grace, acknowledge him to be the author of it; pray for a continuance of mercies, and for fresh supplies, and expect them; and also what he gives in a way of trial, the cross, with all afflictions and troubles: which sense seems most agreeable to the context; and these may be said to be *the gift* of God, as the cup of sorrow Christ drank of is said to be *given* him by his Father, John xviii. 11. These are given by the Lord to bring his people to a sense of sin, and acknowledgment of it; to humble them for it, and cause them to return from it; and to try their graces: and then do they cast them upon him, when they acknow-

[c] ויענם & respondeat illis, Cocceius.
[d] וישב קדם & incola antiquitatis, vel æternitatis, Gejerus.
[e] חלקו διεμερίσθησαν, Sept. divisi sunt, V. L. Hammond.

[f] יהבך donum tuum, Montanus; quicquid dat tibi, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

ledge them as coming from him; wait the removal of them in his time; desire a sanctified use of them, and expect deliverance from them by him. *Or the sense is*, whatever thou desirest should be given thee by the Lord, cast it on him; that is, leave it with him to do as he pleases, who works all things after the counsel of his own will. The Targum renders it, "cast thy "hope upon the Lord;" as an anchor on a good bottom, to which hope is compared, Heb. vi. 19. This is done when persons make the Lord the object of their hope, and expect all from him they hope to enjoy here and hereafter. The Septuagint version is, *cast thy care upon the Lord*; of thy body, and all the temporal concerns of thy family, and every thing relating thereunto; and of thy soul, and its everlasting welfare and salvation; see 1 Pet. v. 7. But Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi, interpret the word by משאך, *thy burden*, which is learnt from the use of it in the Arabic language. The Rabbins did not know the meaning of the word, till one of them heard an Arabian merchant say [s], "take up יהבך, *thy burden*, and cast it upon the "camels." The burden here meant is either the burden of afflictions, which is sometimes very heavy; see Job vi. 2, 3. and xxiii. 2. no affliction is joyous, but grievous; but some are heavier in their own kind and nature than others, and become so through the multiplicity of them, as in the case of Job; or through the long continuance of them, and especially when attended with the hidings of God's face, or with the temptations of Satan: or else the burden of sin and corruption, which is an heavy burden, and a very disagreeable one; under which the saints groan, and by which they are hindered in running their Christian race, and which they are like to carry with them to their graves; their only relief under it is to look to Christ, who has bore it and took it away; which may be meant by casting it on the Lord: *and he shall sustain thee*; in being, both natural and spiritual; and supply with all things necessary both to the temporal and spiritual life, and support under all trials and difficulties. *He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved*; to be shaken and stagger so as to fall, especially totally and finally; for the words may be rendered, *he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved for ever* [t]; or so to be moved by their afflictions as to desert the cause in which they are engaged; nor shall they ever be moved by men or devils, or any thing whatever, from their spiritual estate, in which they are by grace; nor from the love of God and covenant of grace; nor out of the hands of Christ; nor from their state of justification, adoption, and sanctification.

Ver. 23. *But thou, O God, shall bring them down*, &c.] Ahithophel and his accomplices in the conspiracy against David, Judas and the wicked Jews concerned in Christ's death; and did not believe in him. *Into the pit of destruction*, or *corruption* [u]; either the grave, where bodies being put corrupt and putrefy; or hell, where the wicked are punished with everlasting destruction; see ver. 15. *Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days*; such as Ahithophel and Absalom, Judas, and the murderers of our Lord: or, *do not halve their days* [w]; do not come up to the half of the ordinary term of man's life, which is threescore years and ten. The Jews say [x], that all the years of Doeg were but thirty-four, and of Ahithophel thirty-three; and probably Judas might be about the same age. Or the sense is, that, generally speaking, such sort of men die in the prime of their days, and do not live half the time that, according to the course of nature, they might live; and which they promise themselves they should, and their friends hoped and expected they would: *but I will trust in thee*; the Lord, that he would hear and save him, support him under his burden, supply him with his grace, and every thing needful, and not suffer him to be moved; and that he should live to fill up the measure of his days, do the will and work of God, and then be received to glory.

PSALM LVI.

To the chief Musician upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, Michtam of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath.

THE words *jonath-elem-rechokim* are by our translators left untranslated. Aben Ezra takes them to be the beginning of a song; and others think they are the name of a musical instrument: but they seem rather to design the subject-matter of the psalm, and may be rendered, *concerning the mute dove among them that are afar off* [y], or *in far places* [z]; and refer to David, who, when he wrote this psalm, was among the Philistines, who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, afar off from God and his law, and from righteousness; and when David was there, he was at a distance from his native country, his father's house, the king's court, and, what gave him most concern, from the house and worship of God; and here he was as a mute dove. He may be compared to a dove for his innocence in the case of Saul; and to a silly dove, for his acting the part of a fool or madman before Achish king of Gath; and was mute to what the servants of Achish said, and was dumb before the Lord, who had suffered him to fall into their hands, and into this distress he was now in. They are also applicable to Christ, who is comparable to a dove for his harmlessness, innocence, meekness and humility; and was as a mute one before Pontius Pilate the Roman governor, when his enemies

[s] T. Bab. Roshhashanah, fol. 26. 2. Megillah, fol. 18. 1. Bereshit Rabba, s. 79. fol. 69. 4.
[t] לעולם in æternum, Musculus, Gussetius, p. 460. perpetuo, Tigurine version, Lutherus, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.
[u] שחת corruptionis, Vatablus, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth; approved by Gussetius, p. 850.
[w] יחצו dividiabunt, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
[x] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 69. 2. & 106. 2. & Gloss. in Pirke Abot, c. 5. s. 19.
[y] De columba muta procul inter alienos constituta, Musculus; inter longinquos, Piscator, Pfeiffer.
[z] Remotis, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Vatablus; so Ainsworth.

accused him, and he answered not a word; and when among the Roman soldiers, who mocked at him and reviled him, and he reviled not again; and when he was led to be crucified, he opened not his mouth either against God or man. They may be also applied to the church of God, which is often called a dove in Cant. iv. 1. and v. 2. and vi. 9. and is in the wilderness, and among wicked men, that are afar off from God, and is silent under all afflictions and persecutions; see Cant. ii. 14. The Targum paraphrases the words thus; "concerning the congregation of Israel, which is like to a "silent dove, at the time they are removed afar off "from their cities." Moreover, the words may be applied to any truly gracious soul, that is sensible of sin, and mourns as a dove for it; has fled to Christ, as doves to their windows; and is harmless and humble; and living among men, aliens from God, is vexed and afflicted by them, yet patiently bears all that is said and done unto it. The fact which occasioned the writing of this psalm is related in 1 Sam. xxi. 10—15. Of the word *michtam*, see the note on the title of Psal. xvi. and Gussetius[*] is of opinion, that every psalm that has this title belongs to Christ.

Ver. 1. *Be merciful unto me, O God*, &c.] For David could expect no mercy at the hands of men, among whom he was, whose tender mercies were cruel; he being at Gath, the city of Goliath, whom he had slain, and whose sword he had now with him; and among his brethren and friends, who he might justly fear would revenge his death upon him: wherefore he betakes himself to God, and pleads not any merit or righteousness of his own, but implores the grace and mercy of God; and he might expect to find grace and mercy in this his time of need, since there is mercy with the Lord; he is plenteous in it, distributes it freely, delights in so doing, and does it constantly; his mercy endures for ever, it is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear him. *For man would swallow me up*; the Targum renders it *isbi*, a wicked man: it may be understood of some one man, some great man, as Achish king of Gath; or rather Saul king of Israel, who breathed and panted after his ruin and destruction, as the word[y] signifies; who sought to eat up his flesh, to take away his life, and utterly ruin him: or collectively of many, since it appears, by the following verse, that he had many enemies who were desirous to swallow him up. This he mentions as an aggravation of his distress, and as a reason why he hoped the Lord would be merciful to him; and that he, being God, would not suffer man to prevail; see 2 Chron. xiv. 12. *He fighting daily oppresseth me*; this shews that Saul is more especially intended, who was continually with his army pursuing him, and sometimes surrounded him and his men, and reduced him to great distress. This may be applied to the old man, the corruptions of nature, and the lusts of the flesh, which are continually warring against the soul, oppress it, bring it into captivity, and threaten to swallow it up.

Ver. 2. *Mine enemies would daily swallow me up*, &c.] For not one man only, but many, were his enemies; who observed and watched him, and were eagerly desirous of his ruin. The believer has many enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, seeking to devour and destroy him, though they cannot. *For they be many that fight against me, O thou most High*; he appeals to God, who dwells on high, and sees all things, for the truth of this, that he had many enemies both at Gath and in Israel; as well as applies to him for help, he being higher than they. Some render the words, *for they be many that fight against me from on high*[z], or *highly*[t], proudly and haughtily. Aben Ezra gives a very different sense, "I have many angels on high that fight "for me." But מרום, *morom*, is an epithet of God, as in Psal. xcii. 8. Mic. vi. 6. and so it is interpreted by Jarchi and Kimchi; and also by the Targum, which renders it, O God most High; and adds, "whose "throne is on high;" which is approved by Gussetius[*].

Ver. 3. *What time I am afraid*, &c.] It was a time of fear with him now; he was afraid of Achish king of Gath, 1 Sam. xxi. 12. so believers have their times of fear; about their interest in the love, and grace, and covenant of God; about their sins and corruptions, and the prevalence of them, fearing they shall perish by them; and about their enemies, who are many, lively, and strong. *I will trust in thee*; trust and confidence in the Lord is the best antidote against fears; who is unchangeable in his love, in whom is everlasting strength, and who is faithful and true to every word of promise; and therefore there is great reason to trust in him, and not be afraid.

Ver. 4. *In God I will praise his word*, &c.] Or praise him for his word; for the whole Scripture that was then in being; for those testimonies which were David's counsellors in times of difficulty and distress; and particularly for some word of promise made unto him, which he was persuaded would be fulfilled, and in which he gloried and made his boast of, and on which his faith and hope were built; and this he did, and determined to do, in the strength of the Lord, and by the assistance of his grace. *In God I have put my trust*; either in times past, and was not ashamed or confounded; or now, as he determined he would in the preceding verse. *I will not fear what flesh can do unto me*; or continue to fear any or all of my enemies; though I have been afraid of them, I will shake off these fears, trusting in the Lord, and depending on his word. Or, *what can flesh do unto me*[t]? which is as grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field. Poor, frail, mortal man! what can he do against me, if God be for me? And therefore why should I fear? Men may contrive schemes, form weapons, and attempt many things against the saints, but can execute nothing, except permitted by the Lord; and the utmost they can do, when suffered, is to kill the body.

Ver. 5. *Every day they wrest my words*, &c.] Form, fashion, and shape them at their pleasure; construe them, and put what sense upon them they think fit. The word[*] is used of the formation of the human body, in Job x. 8. They put his words upon the rack, and made them speak what he never intended; as some

[*] Ebr. Comment. p. 410.

[y] שאפני anhelans persequitur me, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; anhelat in me, Cocceius; contra me, Gejerus.

[z] מרום a sublimi, Junius & Tremellius; ex alto, Cocceius; so Arab. vers. and Michaelis.

[t] Elato animo, Musculus; so same in Vatablus; superbe, Gejerus.

[*] Ebr. Comment. p. 782.

[t] So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[*] יעצבו fingunt mea verba, Cocceius, Gusset. p. 688. They painfully form and frame my words, Ainsworth.

men wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction, 2 Pet. iii. 16. and as the Jews wrested the words of Christ, John ii. 19. Matt. xxvi. 60, 61. The word has also the sense of causing vexation and grief, Isa. lxiii. 10. and so it may be rendered here, *my words cause grief*[w]; to his enemies; because he had said, in the preceding verses, that he would trust in the Lord, and praise his word, and not be afraid of men; just as the Sadducees were grieved at the apostles preaching, through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead, Acts iv. 1, 2. Or they caused grief to himself; for because of these his enemies reproached him, cursed him, and distressed him. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin render it, *they cursed my words*, or *despised them*, as the Ethiopic and Arabic versions: *all their thoughts are against me for evil*: their counsels, schemes, and contrivances, were all formed to do him all the hurt and mischief they could.

Ver. 6. *They gather themselves together*, &c.] And meet in some one place, to contrive ways and means to do hurt, and then assemble together again to put them in execution; as did the Jews with respect to Christ, Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. Acts iv. 27, 28. Aben Ezra supposes a various reading without any reason; and that, instead of יגורו which Jarchi renders *they lodge*, and the Septuagint, and the versions following that, *they sojourn*, it should be read יגודו, *they assemble in troops*; because they were many: but the sense is, *they stay*[x], or continue in some certain place: *they hide themselves*; the Targum adds, *in ambush*; they lay in wait, and caused others to lie in wait for him, in order to take him; as did Saul and his men, and the servants of the king of Gath. *They mark my steps*; they observed where he went, that they might seize him; or they observed his heels, as the old serpent did the Messiah's, that he might bruise them; or they watched for his halting, as Jeremiah's familiars did for his. *When they wait for my soul*; to take away his life, to destroy him; see Psal. cxix. 95. they wanted not a will to do it, they only waited for an opportunity. The Targum is, "as they "waited, they did to my soul;" or rather, *after they had hoped for my soul*[y]: when they had entertained hopes of taking him, this animated them to do the above things.

Ver. 7. *Shall they escape by iniquity?* &c.] Shall such iniquity as this, or persons guilty of it, go unpunished, or escape righteous judgment, and the vengeance of God? No; and much less shall they escape by means of their iniquity; by their wicked subtlety, or by any evil arts and methods made use of, by making a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell; or escape because of their iniquity; or be delivered because of the abominations done by them, as they flatter themselves, Jer. vii. 10. Some understand these words, not as referring to the escape of David's enemies, but of himself; and render them, either by way of petition, *because of iniquity*, the iniquity of his enemies before described, *deliver me from them*; or *deliver them*[z], meaning his heels they marked, and his soul they waited for: or by way of assertion or interrogation, *because of iniquity* there shall be; or shall there be *a deliverance to them*[a]? his heels and his soul; or *from them*, his enemies. Though others choose to render the words thus; *because of* their *iniquity*, there shall be *a casting of them away*[b] by the Lord, and from his presence, with loathing and contempt, as sons of Belial; reprobate silver, rejected of the Lord; which agrees with what follows: *in* thine *anger, cast down the people, O God*; Saul's courtiers, or the servants of Achish king of Gath, or both, who were in high places, but slippery ones; and such are sometimes brought down to destruction in a moment, by that God from whom promotion comes; who putteth down one, and sets up another, and which he does in wrath and anger.

Ver. 8. *Thou tellest my wanderings*, &c.] Not his sins; though these are aberrations or wanderings from the ways of God's commandments; yet these are not told by the Lord: he takes no account of them; the number of them is not kept by him; they are blotted out, cast behind his back, and into the depths of the sea; though sometimes his people think they are told and numbered by him, Job xiv. 16. and xxxi. 4. but David's removes and flights from place to place are meant, through Saul's pursuit of him, as a partridge on the mountains. Some writers reckon twelve of these removes. The Targum renders it, "thou numberest "the days of my wandering;" that is, the days of his pilgrimage and sojourning in this world: the number of our days, and months and years, in which we wander about in this uncertain state of things, is with the Lord, Job xiv. 5. *Put thou my tears into thy bottle*; the allusion is to *lachrymatories*, or tear-bottles, in which surviving relatives dropped their tears for their deceased friends, and buried them with their ashes, or in their urns; some of which tear-bottles are still to be seen in the cabinets of the curious. A description of which is given by Gejerus[c], from Olaus Wormius; and who also from Cotovicus relates, that the grave of M. Tullius Cicero was dug up in the island of Zacynthus, A. D. 1544, in which were found two glass urns; the larger had ashes in it, the lesser water: the one was supposed to contain his ashes, the other the tears of his friends: and as this was a custom with the Romans, something like this might obtain among the Jews; and it is a saying with them[d], "whoever sheds tears for a "good man (deceased) the holy blessed God numbers "them, and puts them into his treasures, according "to Psal. lvi. 8." which shews, that they thought that reference is here had to funeral tears. The meaning of the text is, that God would take notice of David's afflictions and troubles, which had caused so many tears, and remember them, and deliver him out of them: these being desired to be put into a bottle was, that they might be kept and reserved; not to make atonement for sin; for as a thousand rivers of oil cannot expiate one sin, could they be come at; so neither as many rivers of brinish tears, could they possibly be shed: nor to obtain heaven and happiness;

[w] Dolore afficient, Montanus, Gejerus, Vatablus.
[x] Commorabuntur, Montanus; simul ipsi morantur, Vatablus; so Gussetius, p. 166.
[y] Vid. Gusset. Ebr. Comment. p. 361.
[z] על און פלט למו ob iniquitatem eorum eripe me, Schmidt; illos, Gejerus; ipsis, De Dieu.

[a] Ipsis est liberatio, Cocceius; evasio erit eis? Paguinus, Vatablus; ereptio erit eis? Piscator.
[b] Abjectio erit iis, Hammond.
[c] De Ebr. Luctu, c. 12. s. 5.
[d] T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 105. 2.

for there is no comparison nor proportion between the sufferings of the saints and the glory that shall be revealed in them; though there is a connexion of grace through the promise of God between them: but rather, that they might be brought forth another day and shewn, to the aggravation of the condemnation of wicked men, who by their hard speeches, and ungodly actions, have caused them. Are they *not in thy book?* verily they are; that is, the tears and afflictions of his people. They are in his book of purposes; they are all appointed by him, their kind and nature, their measure and duration, their quality and quantity; what they shall be, and how long they shall last; and their end and use: and they are in his book of providence, and are all overruled and caused to work for their good; and they are in the book of his remembrance; they are taken notice of and numbered by him, and shall be finished; they shall not exceed their bounds. These tears will be turned into joy, and God will wipe them all away from the eyes of his people.

Ver. 9. *When I cry* unto thee, *&c.*] In prayer. *Then shall mine enemies turn back;* great is the strength of prayer; the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous avails much against their enemies: when Moses lifted up his hands, Israel prevailed: the cases of Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah, prove it; this David was assured of, and knew it to be true by experience, his prayer being often the prayer of faith in this respect. *This I know; for God is for me;* he knew that when he prayed his enemies would flee; because God was on his side, who is greater than they; or by this he knew that God was for him, and was his God, by hearing his prayers, and causing his enemies to turn back: or, however, let things go how they will, this he was assured of, that he had a covenant-interest in God, and who would be his God and guide even unto death.

Ver. 10. *In God will I praise* his *word,* &c.] These words are repeated from ver. 4. and for the greater certainty of the thing, and to shew his fixed resolution to do it, and his strong affection for the Lord and his word, they are doubled. *In the Lord will I praise his word;* in the former clause the word *Elohim* is made use of, which, the Jews say, denotes the property of justice, and in the latter Jehovah, which with them is the property of mercy; and accordingly the Targum paraphrases the words, "in the attribute of the justice "of God will I praise his word; in the attribute of "the mercies of Jehovah will I praise his word;" and to the same sense Jarchi: that is, whether I am in adversity or prosperity, receive evil or good things from the hand of the Lord; yet will I praise him: I will sing of mercy and of judgment, Psal. ci. 1. or rather the one may denote the grace and goodness of a covenant-God in making promises, and the other his truth and faithfulness in keeping them; on account of both which he is worthy of praise. The word *his* is not in either clause in the original text, and they may be rendered, *in God will I praise the word; in the Lord will I praise the word;* in and by the help, assistance, and grace of Jehovah the Father, will I praise the eternal and essential Word, his Son. The Targum renders it his *Memra;* a word often used in it for a divine Person, the eternal Logos; the loveliness of his person, the love of his heart to his people, the fulness of grace that is in him, the offices he sustains on their account, and the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; render him praiseworthy in their esteem.

Ver. 11. *In God have I put my trust,* &c.] See the note on ver. 4. *I will not be afraid what man can do unto me;* the same with flesh in ver. 4, and is opposed to God, in whom he trusted; and it suggests that he was not, and would not, be afraid of the greatest of men, as well as of the meanest; see the note on ver. 4. Arama distinguishes between *flesh* and *man;* the former, he says, means the Philistines, and the latter Saul and his army.

Ver. 12. *Thy vows* are *upon me, O God,* &c.] Which he had made to him in the time of his distress and trouble, and which he looked upon himself under obligation to perform; they were debts upon him he ought to pay off; they were with him; they were fresh in his mind and memory; he had not forgot them, which is often the case when trouble is over; and he found his heart inclined to make them good. *I will render praises unto thee;* which explains what he meant by his vows; namely, sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord: when he was in distress, he had vowed and promised, that, if the Lord would deliver him, he would praise his name, and give him all the glory; and now he resolves to fulfil what he had promised.

Ver. 13. *For thou hast delivered my soul from death,* &c.] From imminent danger of death, when in the hands of the Philistines; not that the soul can die; that is immortal; but he means his person, on which account he determines to render praise to God: moreover, this may include the deliverance of his soul from a moral or spiritual death, in which he was by nature, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; from which he was delivered by regenerating grace, when he was quickened, who before was dead in trespasses and sins; and so delivered, as that this death should no more come upon him; the grace of God in him being a well of living water, springing up unto eternal life: and it may also be understood of deliverance from eternal death, by Christ, who has redeemed his people from the curse of the law, and delivered them from wrath to come; so that they shall never be hurt of the second death; that shall have no power over them; but they shall have eternal life; all which is matter of praise and thanksgiving. Wilt *not* thou deliver *my feet from falling?* that is, *thou wilt deliver* them; for this way of speaking strongly affirms; or *hast thou not delivered* them*? thou hast, and wilt still deliver, or keep from falling. The people of God are subject to falling; God is the only keeper of them; and they have reason to believe that he will keep them from a final and total falling away; because of the great love which he has for them, the gracious promises of preservation he has made unto them, and his power, which is engaged in keeping of them; and because they are put into the hands of Christ, who is able to keep them, and who has an interest in them, and

* An non eripuisti? Piscator, Gejerus; nonne liberasti? Michaelis.

an affection for them; and because of the glory of all the three divine Persons concerned in the saints' preservation; and this is another reason for rendering praises unto the Lord; the end of which follows. *That I may walk before God in the light of the living*: to *walk before God* is to walk as in his sight, who sees and knows all hearts, thoughts, words, and actions; with great circumspection, and caution, and watchfulness; to walk according to the word and will of God, in all his ways, commands, and ordinances; and so the Arabic version, *that I may do the will of the Lord*: and so as to please him, as Enoch did, who walked with him, and whose walking with him is interpreted by pleasing him, Heb. xi. 5. 6. agreeably to which the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, render the words, *that I may please before the Lord*; or do what is acceptable in his sight. Moreover, to walk before the Lord is to walk in the light of his countenance, to have his presence, enjoy his favour, and be blessed with communion with him. *In the light of the living?* that is, to walk as an enlightened and quickened person, as the children of the light; and to walk in the light of the Gospel, and as becomes that; and to walk in Christ the light, and by faith on him; and such shall have *the light of life*, John viii. 12. a phrase the same with this here; and designs the light of the heavenly glory, and of the New-Jerusalem church-state, in which the nations of them that are saved shall walk, Rev. 21, 23, 24. Some Jewish[f] writers interpret this of paradise.

PSALM LVII.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave.

SOME think the words *Al-taschith* are the beginning of a song, to the tune of which this was set, as Aben Ezra; others, that they are taken from Deut. ix. 26. they signifying *destroy not*[g]; others, that they refer to what David said to Abishai, when he would have slain Saul, *destroy him not*, 1 Sam. xxvi. 9. but that was an affair that happened after this psalm was penned: they seem rather to be words which were frequently used by David in the time of his distress; who often said unto the Lord, either in an ejaculatory way, or vocally, or both, *do not destroy* me, or *suffer me to be destroyed*; of which he was in great danger, as appears from ver. 4, 6. and therefore prefixed these words in the title of the psalm, in memorial of the inward anguish of his mind, and of what his mouth then uttered; and to this agrees the Chaldee paraphrase, "concerning the trouble at the time when "David said, do not destroy." Of the word *michtam*, see the note on Psal. xvi. The occasion and time of writing this psalm were David's fleeing from Saul in the cave; or rather *into*[h] the cave, as it should be rendered; for it was after that Saul was gone that David and his men came out of the cave; but he fled hither for fear of Saul; and whilst he was here, Saul, with three thousand men, came to the mouth of the cave, and he himself went into it; which must have put David and his men into a very great panic, there being no retreat, nor any human possibility of an escape, but must expect to fall into the hands of the enemy, and be cut to pieces at once. This cave was in En-gedi, 1 Sam. xxiv. 1—3. of which Le Bruyn[i] says, it is on the top of a very high hill, and is extremely dark; which agrees with the account in the above place, since it was on the rocks of the wild goats Saul sought David, and coming to the sheep-cotes there, went into the cave where David was.

Ver. 1. *Be merciful unto me, O God, &c.*] Or *be gracious to me*[k]; which words are repeated by him. *Be merciful*, or *gracious, unto me*; to shew the greatness of his distress, the eagerness, vehemency, and importunity he used in prayer; his case requiring a speedy answer, and immediate relief; and that he expected only from the mercy and grace of God; see the note on Psal. lvi. 1. *For my soul trusteth in thee*; or *in thy word*; as the Targum; and in thee only, both as the God of providence and the God of grace; and a great act of faith this was to trust in the Lord in such circumstances; and it was not a bare profession of trust, but it was hearty and sincere; his *soul* trusted in the Lord; he trusted in him with all his heart and soul, and trusted him with his soul or life: and this he makes a reason or argument for mercy; seeing, as the mercy of the Lord is an encouragement to faith and hope; so the Lord has declared, that he takes pleasure in those that hope and trust in it; wherefore mercy may be expected by such. *Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge*: or *I will hope*[l]; the meaning is, that he would betake himself to the power and protection of God, and make him his refuge from the enemy: the allusion is either to the hen, or any other bird covering its young with its wings, when a bird of prey is near, till that is gone; or to the cherubim, whose wings overshadowed the mercy-seat, between which the glory of God dwelt; and so the Targum, " in the shadow of thy Shechinah, or glorious " Majesty, will I trust;" which agrees with his applying to the mercy-seat, or to God on a throne of grace and mercy: and here he determines to abide, *until* these *calamities be overpast*; the storm of them was over, which was very black and threatening. The Targum is, " until the tumult is over;" and so the Syriac version; until Saul and his men were gone, of whom he was afraid. The Septuagint version, and those that follow it, render the words *until sin passeth away*; the

[f] Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 108. 3. Targum in Psal. lvii. 2.

[g] אל־תשחת ne disperdas, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; ne perdas, Tigurine version, Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[h] במערה in speluncam, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c. in specum, Tigurine version.

[i] Voyage to the Levant, ch. 51. p. 199.

[k] חנני gratiam fac mihi, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius; so Piscator, Ainsworth.

[l] אחסה sperabo, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus; spero, Tigurine version, Musculus, Michaelis.

cause of these troubles; unless sin is put for sinful men; and so the sense is as before; see Isa. xxvi. 20.

Ver. 2. *I will cry unto God most high*, &c.] To remember him in his low estate, and who is higher than the highest, than Saul and his mighty men with him. This epithet David no doubt made use of, to encourage his faith in the Lord, who is above all, and can do all things; as follows. *Unto God that performeth all things for me*; in a providential way, having made him, upheld him in being, fed and clothed him, preserved him, and followed him with his goodness all his days; and in a way of grace he performed all his purposes concerning him, all his promises unto him, and was performing and would perfect the work of grace in him; see Psal. cxxxviii. 8. Phil. i. 6. The Targum adds a fable by way of paraphrase on the text, "who "commanded, or prepared a spider, to perfect in the "mouth of the cave a web for me;" so it is in the king's Bible; as if, when he was in the cave, God so ordered it in his providence, that a spider should spin a web over the mouth of it, which prevented his persecutors from searching for him in it; but the Scripture is silent in this matter. Such a story is reported of Felix, bishop of Nola, in ecclesiastical history [m].

Ver. 3. *He shall send from heaven, and save me*, &c.] His angel, as the Targum adds; or his angels, as Kimchi; who are ministering spirits, sent forth by him, to encamp about his people, and guard them, as they did Jacob when in fear of Esau, Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. or to deliver them out of trouble, as Peter when in prison, Acts xii. 7. or rather the sense may be, that David did not expect any help and deliverance in an human way, by means of men on earth; but he expected it from above, from heaven, from God above, and which he believed he should have; and he might have a further view to the mission of Christ from heaven to save him, and all the Lord's people; and which he may mention, both for his own comfort, and for the strengthening of the faith of others in that important article. From *the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah.* Meaning Saul; see Psal. lvi. 1, 2. The Targum renders it, "he hath reproached him that "would swallow me up for ever;" and to the same sense the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Syriac versions; disappointed them, and filled them with reproach, shame, and confusion. *God shall send forth his mercy and his truth*: shall manifest and display the glory of these his perfections, his mercy and grace, his truth and faithfulness, in his deliverance and salvation; and which are remarkably glorified in salvation by Christ Jesus; and who himself may be called *his grace and his truth* [n], as the words may be rendered; he being the Word of his grace, and truth itself, and full of both; and by whom, when sent forth, grace and truth came, John i. 14, 17. it may also intend a constant supply of grace, whereby God would shew forth the truth of his promises to him.

Ver. 4. *My soul is among lions*, &c.] Not literally understood; though such there might be in the wildernesses where he sometimes was; but figuratively, men comparable to lions, for their stoutness, courage, strength, fierceness, and cruelty; meaning not his own men, as some think, who were fierce, and of keen resentment against Saul, and would fain have killed him when he was in the cave, had they not been restrained by David, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4, 7. but Saul, and those with him, who were three thousand chosen men, stout, courageous, fierce, and furious. It is usual in scripture to describe powerful princes, and especially persecuting ones, by the name of lions, Prov. xxviii. 15. Jer. l. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 17. Achilles, in Homer [o], is compared to a lion for his cruelty. The soul of Christ was among such, when he was apprehended by the band of men that came with Judas to take him; when he was in the high-priest's hall buffeted and spit upon; and when he was in the common hall of Pilate, surrounded by the Roman soldiers; and when he was encircled on the cross with the crowd of the common people, priests and elders, Matt. xxvi. 55, 67. and xxvii. 27, 39, 41. Psal. xxii. 12, 13, 21. and so the souls of his people are often among lions, persecuting men, and Satan and his principalities, who is compared to a roaring lion, 1 Pet. v. 8. and among whom they are as wonderfully preserved as Daniel in the lion's den. *And I lie even among them that are set on fire*: of hell, as the tongue is said to be in James iii. 6. by the devil, who stirred up Saul against David, filled him with wrath and fury, so that he breathed out nothing but flaming vengeance, threatening and slaughter, against him; and by wicked men his courtiers, who kindled and stirred up the fire of contention between them; among these incendiaries, as Junius renders the word [p], David was, who inflamed the mind of Saul against him, which he suggests in 1 Sam. xxiv. 10. *Even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows*; whose words, formed by means of their teeth, were very devouring ones, Psal. lii. 4. were very piercing and wounding; calumnies, detractions, and backbitings, speaking against him when absent and at a distance, may be meant; see Prov. xxx. 14. *And their tongue a sharp sword*; see the note on Psal. lii. 2. and there was a sort of swords called *lingulæ*, because in the shape of a tongue [q].

Ver. 5. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens*, &c.] That is, shew thyself to be God, that sittest in the heavens, and art higher than they, by saving me, and disappointing mine enemies; that I, and those that are with me, may magnify the Lord and exalt his name together. The Targum is, "be thou exalted above "the angels of heaven, O God." Let *thy glory be above all the earth*: that is, above all the inhabitants of the earth, as the Chaldee paraphrase: let the glory of God in my deliverance be seen by all that dwell upon the earth; for by how much the lower and more distressed his case and condition were, by so much the more would the glory of God be displayed in bringing him out of it. Nothing lies nearer the hearts of the people of God than his glory; this is more desirable than their own salvation: David breathes after the one, when he says nothing of the other, that being up-

[m] Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 4. c. 23. col. 611.
[n] חסדו ואמתו gratiam & veritatem suam, Cocceius, Grjerus, Michaelis.
[o] Iliad. 24. v. 40, 41.

[p] להטים incendiarios, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; flammantes, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth, Cocceius, Vatablus, Musculus.
[q] A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 10. c. 25.

permost; though his meaning is, that the one might be brought about by the other.

Ver. 6. *They have prepared a net for my steps*, &c.] They laid snares for him, as the fowler does for the bird, in order to take him. It denotes the insidious ways used by Saul and his men to get David into their hands; so the Pharisees consulted together how they might entangle Christ in his talk, Matt. xxii. 15. *My soul is bowed down;* dejected by reason of his numerous enemies, and the crafty methods they took to insnare and ruin him; so the soul of Christ was bowed down with the sins of his people, and with a sense of divine wrath because of them; and so their souls are often bowed down: or they are dejected in their spirits, on account of sin, Satan's temptations, various afflictions, and divine desertions. The Targum renders it, " he " bowed down my soul;" that is, the enemy; Saul in particular. The Septuagint, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, *they bowed down my soul;* the same that prepared a net for his steps; every one of his enemies; they all were the cause of the dejection of his soul: the Syriac version leaves out the clause. *They have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen* themselves. *Selah.* Contriving and seeking to find out the places where David's haunt was, Saul got into the very cave where he and his men were; and had his skirt cut off, when his life might as easily have been taken away, 1 Sam. xxiii. 22, 23. and xxiv. 3, 4. See Psal. vii. 15, 16. and ix. 15.

Ver. 7. *My heart is fixed, O God*, &c.] Firm and sure, trusting in the Lord, believing that he should be saved by him out of his troubles; see Psal. ci. 1. and cxii. 7, 8. So, in a spiritual sense, a heart fixed and established, or that is firm and sure, is one that is assured of its salvation by Christ, rooted and grounded in the love of God, firmly built on the foundation, Christ, and has its affections set on him; and is unmoved, from the hope of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, by whatsoever it meets with in the world. It may be rendered, *my heart is prepared*, or *ready*[r]; that is, according to some, to receive good or evil, prosperity or adversity, at the hand of God; to which sense is Jarchi's note, " my heart is faithful with thee in the measure of judg- " ment, and it is faithful with thee in the measure of " mercy." That is, whether I am chastised with judgments, or followed with mercies, my heart is firm and true to God. The Targum is, " my heart is pre- " pared for thy law, O Lord; my heart is prepared for " thy fear;" that is, it is prepared for the worship and service of God; it is ready to every good work; it is prepared to pray unto him, and to wait for an answer, which are both from the Lord, Prov. xvi. 1. Psal. x. 17. and particularly to sing praise unto him, as follows. *My heart is fixed;* this is repeated, to shew the vehemency of his spirit, and the certainty of the thing. *I will sing and give praise;* for the salvation wrought for him, and which he was sure of; and before he had finished this psalm, or while he had composed it, did enjoy it.

Ver. 8. *Awake up, my glory*, &c.] Meaning his soul, whom Jacob calls his honour, Gen. xlix. 6. it being the most honourable, glorious, and excellent part of man; is the breath of God, of his immediate production; is a spirit incorporeal and immortal; is possessed of glorious powers and faculties; had the image of God instamped upon it, which made man the glory of God, 1 Cor. xi. 7. and has the image of Christ on it in regenerated persons; and is that with which God and Christ are glorified; and is, upon all accounts, of great worth and value, even of more worth than the whole world: and this sometimes in the saints is as it were asleep, and needs awaking; not in a literal sense; for it is incapable of natural sleep, being incorporeal; but in a figurative and spiritual sense, as when grace is dormant, and not in exercise; when the soul is backward to and slothful in duty, unconcerned about divine things, and lukewarm and indifferent to them; which is occasioned by prevailing corruptions and worldly cares; and sometimes it becomes dull, and heavy, and inactive, through an over-pressure by sorrows and troubles, as the disciples of Christ were found sleeping for sorrow, Luke xxii. 45. which seems to have been the case of the psalmist here; he had been in great distress, his soul was bowed down, ver. 6. he had hung his harp upon the willow, and could not sing one of the Lord's songs in the place and circumstances he was in; but now he calls upon his soul, and arouses all the powers and faculties of it, and stirs up himself to the work of praise, just as Deborah did, Judg. v. 12. some by his glory understand his tongue, as in Psal. xvi. 9. compared with Acts ii. 26. and Psal. xxx. 12. and so may design vocal singing here, as instrumental music in the next clause: *awake, psaltery and harp;* which, by a prosopopœia, are represented as persons; as if they were animate, sensible, and living: these had been laid aside for some time as useless; but now the psalmist determines to take them up and employ them in the service of praising God: these are fitly put together, because psalms were sung to harps; and so with the Greeks a psalm is said to be properly the sound of the harp[s]. *I myself will awake early;* in the morning, when salvation and joy come; and so soon cause his voice to be heard, as in prayer, so in praise; or *I will awaken the morning;* so Jarchi; be up before the sun rises, the morning appears, or day dawns: this is taking the wings of the morning, and even preventing that. The Targum is, " I will awake to the morn- " ing prayer."

Ver. 9. *I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people*, &c.] Either among the people of Israel, as Aben Ezra, when the several tribes meet together; and so it denotes the public manner in which he would praise God for his salvation: or among the Gentiles, as the following clause shews. *I will sing unto thee among the nations;* the Apostle Paul seems to have reference to this passage in Rom. xv. 9. which he produces as a proof of the Gentiles glorifying God for his mercy in sending the Gospel among them, and calling them by his grace; by which they appeared to be his chosen and redeemed ones; and in forming them into Gospel churches, among whom his praise was sung: for this supposes something to be done among the Gentiles, which should occasion praise; and here the psalmist personates the Messiah, who in his ministers and mem-

[r] נכון paratum, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[s] Scholia in Aristoph. Aves, p. 551.

bers praise God for his wonderful mercy to the Gentile world, as follows.

Ver. 10. *For thy mercy is great unto the heavens*, &c.] Which denotes the exceeding greatness and largeness of it; as it is in the heart of God, who is plenteous in mercy; as it is expressed in the covenant of grace, where are stores of it; as it is shewn forth in the choice of persons to eternal life; in the mission of Christ into this world to die for them; in the regeneration of them, the pardon of their sins, and eternal life: and this mercy is not only extended to persons in the several parts of the earth, but is as high as the heaven above it, Psal. ciii. 11. *And thy truth unto the clouds*; the faithfulness of God in performing his purposes and his promises; or the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which contain the deep things of God; unless Christ himself should be meant, who is the truth which sprung out of the earth, Psal. lxxxv. 11. is now ascended unto heaven, and is higher than the heavens; and whose exaltation and glory may be designed in the following verse.

Ver. 11. *Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens*, &c.] As Christ now is at the Father's right hand, and who is God over all, blessed for ever. Let *thy glory be above all the earth*; as it is above all the men on earth and angels in heaven. This is repeated from ver. 5. see the note there, and shews the vehemency of his desire after these things, and how much his heart was set upon them.

PSALM LVIII.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David.

ACCORDING to the Syriac version, this psalm was written when Saul threatened the priests, because they did not shew him where David was, when they knew it. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that the title *Al-taschith* refers to David's not destroying Nabal, as he threatened; and that the venom of Nabal's tongue in reviling him, and the deafness of his ears in not attending to the messengers that told their errand wisely, are designed in this psalm; and in which the psalmist prophesies of his sudden death, before the pots for his feast could be warmed by the thorns under them, and whilst he was lively and jovial. Jarchi is of opinion that it was composed after David had been in the trench where Saul lay, and took away the spear and cruse, and went his way, and called to Abner, saying, *answerest thou not?* which is as if he should say, hast thou it not in thy power now to convince Saul, and shew him that he pursues me without cause, since, if I would, I could have slain him? Kimchi says it was written on account of Abner, and the rest of Saul's princes, who judged David as a rebel against the government, and said it was for Saul to pursue after him to slay him; for if they had restrained him, Saul would not have pursued after him: and indeed they seem to be wicked judges who are addressed in this psalm; *do not destroy*. Arama says, it declares the wickedness of Saul's judges.

Ver. 1. *Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation?* &c.] Of the mighty, as in Psal. lxxxii. 1. the judges of the land, who were many, and therefore called a congregation, as it is necessary they should; for, being many, they are not so easily bribed; and besides, one may see that in a cause which another does not. The word signifies a *sheaf*[t]; and so it is by some rendered, to which a bench or assembly of judges may be compared; because consisting of many, and a select body, who should unite together in a sentence or decree, and act uprightly, like a sheaf of wheat standing upright; see Gen. xxxvii. 7. some think the word has the signification of dumbness, or silence; so Jarchi and R. Moses[u]; as *elem* in the title of the fifty-sixth psalm, and render it, *do ye indeed speak dumb justice?* or *the dumbness of justice*[w]; or are you dumb, or your mouth silent, when ye should speak righteousness? and so the psalmist accuses them for their criminal silence, in not contradicting Saul and his courtiers when they spake against him; and for not advising him to another kind of conduct towards him. All men ought to speak that which is right and truth; but especially judges on the bench, who are to judge the people with just judgment, Deut. xvi. 18. but here this is doubted of, and called in question; at least their sincerity in giving judgment: yea, it is denied; for this interrogation carries in it a strong denial; and the meaning is, that they did not speak righteousness, or that which was just and right in the cause of David, when before them. *Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?* no, they did not; they were unjust judges. The psalmist calls them *the sons of men*, as in 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. in distinction from God the Judge of all, and to put them in mind of their frailty and mortality; for though they were gods by office, they were but men, and should die like men, and be accountable to the supreme Judge for all their proceedings in judgment here, Psal. lxxxii. 1, 6, 7.

Ver. 2. *Yea, in heart ye work wickedness*, &c.] So far were they from speaking righteousness, and judging uprightly. The heart of man is wickedness itself; it is desperately wicked, and is the shop in which all wickedness is wrought; for sinful acts are committed there as well as by the tongue and hand, as follows. This phrase also denotes their sinning; not with precipitancy, and through surprise; but with premeditation and deliberation; and their doing it heartily, with good will, and with allowance, and their continuance and constant persisting in it. *Ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth*; they were guilty of acts of violence and oppression, which, of all men, judges should not be guilty of; whose business it is to plead the cause of the injured and oppressed, to right their

[t] אלם e manipulo, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; e manipulo justitiæ, Cocceius.

[u] In Aben Ezra in loc.

[w] So Varenius, Reinbech, Michaelis.

wrongs, and to protect and defend them: these they pretended to weigh in the balance of justice and equity, and committed them under a shew of righteousness; they decreed unrighteous decrees, and framed mischief by a law; and this they did openly, and everywhere, throughout the whole land.

Ver. 3. *The wicked are estranged from the womb*, &c.] Which original corruption of nature accounts for all the wickedness done by men: they are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, and are transgressors from the womb; they are alienated from God, and from that godly life which is agreeable to him, and he requires; and from the knowledge and fear of him, and love to him; and they desire not the knowledge of him nor his ways; they are far from his law, and averse to it; and still more so to the Gospel of Christ; the doctrines of which, as well as the great things written in the law, are strange things to them; and they are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, estranged from the people of God, know nothing of them, neither of their joys, nor of their sorrows. *They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies*: they are wicked from their infancy, from their youth upward; and sin, which is meant by *going astray*, as soon as they are capable of it, and which is very early. Sin soon appears in the temper and actions of men; they go out of God's way, and turn every one to their own way, and walk in the broad road which leads to destruction: and particularly they are very early guilty of lying; as soon as they can speak, and before they can speak plain, they lisp out lies, which they learn from their father the devil, who is the father of lies; and so they continue all their days strangers to divine things, going astray from God, the God of truth, continually doing abominations and speaking lies; which continuance in these things makes the difference between reprobate men and God's elect; for though the latter are the same by nature as the former, yet their natures are restrained, before conversion, from going into all the sins they are inclined to; and if not, yet at conversion a stop is put to their progress in iniquity.

Ver. 4. *Their poison is like the poison of a serpent*, &c.] Either their *wrath* and fury, as the word[x] may be rendered, against God, his people, and even one another, is like that of a serpent when irritated and provoked; or their mischievous and devouring words are like the poison of asps under their lips, Rom. iii. 13. or the malignity of sin in them is here meant, which, like the poison of a serpent, is latent, hid, and lurking in them; is very infectious to all the powers and faculties of the soul, and members of the body; and is deadly and incurable, without the grace of God and blood of Christ. They are *like the deaf adder* that *stoppeth her ear*: the *adder* is a kind of serpent, in Hebrew called *pethen*; hence the serpent *Python*. This is not deaf naturally, otherwise it would have no need to stop its ear, but of choice; and naturalists[y] observe, that it is quicker of hearing than of sight. Jarchi indeed says, when it grows old it becomes deaf in one of its ears, and it stops its other ear with dust, that it may not hear the voice of the charmer; though others say[z], it stops one ear with its tail, and lays the other to the ground; but these seem fabulous. David speaks of it figuratively, that it acts as if it was deaf, regarding no enchantments, but bites notwithstanding; these having no influence on it, which, if they had any, could not be hindered by its deafness; and he compares wicked men to it, who are wilfully deaf to all good counsel and advice given them[a].

Ver. 5. *Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers*, &c.] Or *that use enchantments*, to enchant serpents, by muttering certain words, or by magical songs; by which means it is said that they have been drawn out of their holes, or caused to fly, or have become stupified, and have lost their poison, and even burst asunder; as Bochart[b] relates from Pliny, Ælianus, Lucan, Isidore, Virgil, Ovid, Horace, and others: but an *asp* is unmoved by enchantments, and they are of no avail against its bites and poison[c]. Nor do these words suppose that the psalmist approved of enchantments, or affirms the virtue of them to be real, but rather suggests the contrary; he only takes his similitude from the seeming deafness and disregard of serpents to enchantments, to set forth the obstinacy of wicked men: and their resolution to continue in their wicked ways; like the serpent that disregards men: *charming never so wisely*: being *wise, skilful*[d], or made wise in enchanting enchantments; one very learned and expert in the art; or in *associating associations, skilful*[e]: who makes a consort of magical words to obtain his point, as some think; or because by his enchantments he associates and gathers many serpents together, and tames them; or because he does this by society and fellowship with the devil; methods no ways approved of by the psalmist, only alluded to. It may perhaps better be rendered, *which will not hearken to the voice of the eloquent, putting things together ever so wisely*: the word is used for an eloquent orator, Isa. iii. 3. Such Gospel ministers are, who are mighty in the Scriptures. The voice of the Gospel is a charming voice; it publishes good news and glad tidings; it is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; and is wisely charmed when it gives no uncertain sound, is all of a piece, and is faithfully preached, as it was by the apostles of Christ; who, as wise men, laid him as the foundation of eternal life and salvation; and especially as it was preached by Christ himself, who spake as never man did: and yet, such were the hardness and obstinacy of the wicked Jews, that they stopped their ears to his ministry, nor would they suffer others to attend upon it; and so it is now: which shews the insufficiency of the best means of themselves, and the necessity of powerful and efficacious grace, to work upon the hearts of men.

Ver. 6. *Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth*, &c.]

[x] חמת θυμος, Sept. furor, V. L.
[y] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 23.
[z] Isidor. Hispal. Origin. l. 12. c. 4.
[a] Vid. Gataker. Adversaria, c. 3. p. 70, &c.
[b] Hierozoic. par. 2. l. 3. c. 6. col. 390.
[c] Ælian. de Animal. l. 1. c. 54.

[d] חובר חברים מחכם incantantis incantationem periti, Vatablus; vel incantationes exercitati ac peritissimi, Michaelis; of him that is made wise, Ainsworth.
[e] Jungentis conjunctiones docti, Montanus; consociantis societates serpentum, Michaelis.

From the description of the wicked, the psalmist passes to imprecations on his enemies; whom he represents as cruel and bloodthirsty, and as being stronger than he; and therefore he applies to God, who could, as he sometimes did, smite his enemies on the cheek-bone, and break the teeth of the ungodly; which is done by taking the power and instruments of hurting from them: and it may be by *their teeth in their mouth* may be meant their malicious words, calumnies, and detractions; teeth being the instrument of speech; and by *breaking* them, preventing the mischief designed by them. *Break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord:* Saul was the old lion; his princes, nobles, and courtiers, the young ones; whose jaw-teeth were as knives to devour David and his men, unless plucked out; or God in his providence should interpose, and hinder the performance of their mischievous and cruel designs; and who could easily destroy them by his blast, and by the breath of his nostrils, Job iv. 9, 10.

Ver. 7. *Let them melt away as waters which run continually*, &c.] Let them be disheartened, and their courage fail them, and let there be no spirit left in them, Josh. vii. 5. or let them be unstable as water that is continually running, ever upon the flux and motion; let them never be settled, but always changing in their state and circumstances, Gen. xlix. 4. or let them *come to nought*, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; which is the case of water that runs over or runs away: or *let them be despised*, as Jarchi, and the Arabic, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; being useless and unprofitable, as water is when passed and gone: or let their ruin and destruction be as swift as the gliding water; let them be brought to desolation in a moment; Job xxiv. 18. and let it be irrecoverable, as water running over the cup, and scattering itself, is spilled upon the ground, and cannot be gathered up, 2 Sam. xiv. 14. The Targum is, "let them melt in their "sins as water." When *he bendeth* his bow to shoot *his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces;* either when the wicked man bends his bow to shoot his arrows against the righteous; when he devises mischief against him, shoots out bitter words, and attempts to do hurt unto him; let it be as if the string of his bow and his arrows were all cut to pieces; let all his designs, words, and actions, be without effect, and let not his hand perform his enterprise: or when God bends his bow against the wicked, so Jarchi; and prepares the instruments of death for them, and ordains his arrows against the persecutors, Psal. vii. 12, 13. let then his and his people's enemies be cut off, as the tops of the ears of corn; as the word used signifies, Job xxiv. 24. The words may be rendered, *let him* (God) *direct his arrows; as the tops of the ears of corn are cut off*[f]; so let them be.

Ver. 8. *As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away*, &c.] As a snail when it comes out of its shell liquefies, drops its moisture, and with it makes a *path*, from whence it has its name שבלול, in the Hebrew language; and so the Targum here, "as "the snail moistens its way;" which moistness it gradually exhausts, and melts away, and dies: so the psalmist prays that every one of his enemies might die in like manner. Some think reference is had to the snail's putting out its horns to no purpose when in danger, and apply it to the vain threatenings of the wicked; a strange difference this, between a roaring young lion, ver. 6, and a melting snail. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, render it, *as wax* which *melteth;* see Psal. lxviii. 2. *Like the untimely birth of a woman*, that *they may not see the sun;* see Job iii. 16. The Targum is, "as an "abortive and a mole, which are blind and see not "the sun." So Jarchi renders it a *mole*, agreeably to the Talmud[g]. Or, *let them not see the sun*[h]; let them die, and never see the sun in the firmament any more; nor Christ, the sun of righteousness; nor enjoy the favour of God, and the light of his countenance; nor have the light of life, or eternal glory and happiness; see Psal. xlix. 19.

Ver. 9. *Before your pots can feel the thorns*, &c.] Which is soon done; for as dry thorns make a great blaze, so they give a quick heat; the pots soon feel them, or the water in them soon receives heat from them. From imprecations the psalmist proceeds to prophesy, and foretels the sudden destruction of wicked men, which would be before a pot could be heated with a blaze of thorns. The Targum is, "before the wicked become "tender, they harden as the thorn:" that is, they never become tender, or have any tender consciences, but are hardened in sin from their infancy. Some render the words, *before your thorns grow up to a brier* or *bramble*[i]; little thorns become great ones, tender thorns hard ones, as Jarchi; that is, as he interprets it, before the children of the wicked are grown up, they are destroyed; those sons of Belial, who are like to thorns thrust away, 2 Sam. xxiii. 6. Others, as Aben Ezra, *before they understand;* that is, wise and knowing men; *that your thorns are a bramble:* or from lesser ones are become greater; and so denotes, as before, the suddenness and quickness of their destruction, as follows: *he*, that is, God, *shall take them away as with a whirlwind;* not to himself, as Enoch; nor to heaven, whither Elijah went up by a whirlwind; but out of the land of the living, and as with a tempest, to hell, where snares, fire, and brimstone, are rained upon them; see Job xxvii. 20, 21. Psal. xi. 6. *Both living, and in* his *wrath:* when in health and full strength, and so go quick to hell; as Korah and his company alive into the earth; and all in wrath and sore displeasure: for the righteous are also taken away; but then it is from evil to come, and to everlasting happiness; and through many tempestuous providences, which are in love, and for their good, do they enter the kingdom: and those that are alive at Christ's coming will be caught up to meet him in the air; but the wicked are taken away as in a whirlwind, alive, and in wrath.

Ver. 10. *The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance*, &c.] Before imprecated and foretold; the punishment inflicted by the Lord, to whom vengeance belongs, in a way of vindictive wrath; for what befalls the wicked in an afflictive way is in wrath, and as a vengeance upon them: and as the

[f] כמו יתמללו concidantur, succidantur instar spicarum, Michaelis.
[g] T. Bab. Moed Katon, fol. 6. 2.

[h] בל חזו שמש ne videant solem, Pagninus, Montanus.
[i] Tigurine version.

judgments of God are sometimes manifest, are to be seen, they are observed by the righteous, who rejoice at them; not as evils and miseries simply considered, nor from a private affection; but as the glory of divine justice is displayed therein, and the goodness of God is shewn to them, by delivering them out of their hands; see Rev. xviii. 20. and xix. 1, 2, 3. *He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked;* which denotes the great destruction of the wicked, and the abundance of blood that shall be shed; see Rev. xiv. 20. and the entire victory the saints shall have over them, and their security from them, Psal. lxviii. 21—23. as well as the satisfaction, and pleasure and refreshment, as it were, they shall have in their destruction; signified by their feet being washed in their blood, instead of being washed in water, usual in the eastern countries; because of the glory of the divine perfections appearing therein. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, *his hands.*

Ver. 11. *So that a man shall say,* &c.] Any man, and every man, especially, that is observing, wise, and knowing; he shall conclude, from such a dispensation of things, from God's dealing with the wicked after this manner: *verily,* there is *a reward for the righteous;* or *fruit*[k] for them: they have the fruits of divine love, the blessings of an everlasting covenant; and the fruit of Christ, the tree of life, which is sweet unto their taste, as are the benefits of his death, his word and ordinances; and the fruits of the spirit, his several graces wrought in their souls; and the fruits of righteousness, the effect of which is peace; and is a reward they receive in, though not for keeping the commands of God; and they gather fruit unto eternal life, which is the recompense of reward, the reward of the inheritance, the great reward in heaven, which remains for them; and which they shall have, not for their own righteousness-sake, but for the sake of Christ's righteousness; from which they are denominated righteous persons, and which gives them a right and title to it: so that this is a reward, not of debt as due to them, and to be claimed by them on account of any thing they have done; but of grace, streaming through the blood and righteousness of Christ. *Verily, he is a God that judgeth in the earth:* that there is a God is known by the judgments that he executeth; and that he judgeth in the earth, and is the Judge of all the earth, who will do right, may be concluded from the vengeance inflicted on wicked men; and he will one day judge the world in righteousness, by him whom he has ordained to be Judge of quick and dead. The words in the Hebrew text are in the plural number, אלהים שפטים, *gods that judge:* which Kimchi and Ben Melech say is on account of honour; or as they, with Aben Ezra, interpret it, of the angels: but these are not judges in the earth; rather it is expressive of a trinity of Persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father is the Judge of all, though he does not execute judgment; but has committed it to the Son, who is Judge of quick and dead; and the Spirit judges, reproves, and convinces the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

PSALM LIX.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

THE history of Saul's sending messengers to watch the house of David, and to kill him when he rose in the morning, is in 1 Sam. xix. 11. which was the occasion of his writing this psalm; though the title of the Syriac version of it is, "David said or composed "this, when he heard that the priests were slain by "Saul:" and in the same is added, "but unto us it "declares the conversion of the Gentiles to the faith, "and the rejection of the Jews." And which perhaps is designed in ver. 5, 13. and some interpreters are of opinion that the whole psalm is to be understood of Christ, of whom David was a type, especially in his sufferings; and there are some things in it which better agree with him than with David, as particularly his being without sin, ver. 3.

Ver. 1. *Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God,* &c.] David had his enemies in his youth, notwithstanding the amiableness of his person, the endowments of his mind, his martial achievements, his wise behaviour and conduct, and the presence of God with him; yea, it were some of these things that made Saul his enemy, who, by his power and authority, made others; see 1 Sam. xviii. Christ had his enemies, though he went about doing good, both to the bodies and souls of men, continually; the chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, were his implacable enemies, and even the people of the Jews in general: and the church of God, and members of it, whom David may represent, have their enemies, sin, Satan, and the world; and as David and Christ, so the church has a covenant-God to go unto, from whom deliverance from enemies may be desired and expected. *Defend me from them that rise up against me:* or, *set me on high above them*[l]; out of their reach, as David was protected from Saul and his men, who rose up in an hostile manner against him; and as Christ was, when raised from the dead, and exalted at his father's right hand; and as the saints are in great safety, dwelling on high, where their place of defence is the munition of rocks; and therefore it matters not who rise up against them.

Ver. 2. *Deliver me from the workers of iniquity,* &c.] See the note on Psal. vi. 8. *And save me from bloody men;* such as Saul sent to kill David, as appears from the title of the psalm; and such as were concerned in the death of Christ; and such are the

[k] פרי fructus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[l] תשגבני statue me in loco alto, i. e. tuto, Vatablus; and to the same sense Piscator, Coccejus, Michaelis, Gejerus.

enemies of God's people, the followers of the man of sin. The heap of words, the various expressions used in a way of petition, in this and the preceding verse, shew the distress the psalmist was in, and whom he personates; his importunity, earnestness, and fervency in prayer.

Ver. 3. *For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul,* &c.] As the men did that watched his house, when Saul sent to kill him; so the Jews sought and lay in wait to take away the life of Christ; and very often was it the case of the Apostle Paul, that he was in danger of his life, through the lying in wait of the Jews; so Satan makes use of cunning devices, stratagems, and wiles, to ruin the souls of God's people, if possible; and false teachers lie in wait to deceive them. The emphasis lies upon the word *soul*, which is so precious, and the redemption of which has cost so much, even the blood of Christ. *The mighty are gathered against me:* or, *dwell by me:* see Psal. lvi. 6. around his house, the soldiers that Saul sent; and such were the enemies of Christ, Psal. lxix. 4. the chief priests, Scribes, and elders, men of great authority and influence among the people: the kings of the earth and rulers, Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of the Jews, Acts iv. 26, 27. yea, Satan, and his principalities and powers; and who are also those against whom the saints wrestle, and would be too mighty for them, were it not that God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the holy angels, are on their side. *Not for my transgression, nor* for my *sin, O Lord:* as the cause of such usage and treatment. David was not without original sin, in which he was conceived and born; nor without inward corruptions, of which he often complained; nor without actual transgressions, and some very gross ones, and which he owned and confessed, and prayed for the pardon of: but in the case of Saul there was no transgression nor iniquity in him, as he declared to him himself, and appeals to God for the truth of it, 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. Psal. vii. 3, 4, 5. One of the words here used signifies *rebellion*[m]; of this he was not guilty; he never entered into any treasonable measures, nor committed any treasonable practices, nor conspired against the life and crown of his sovereign; in this respect he was quite clear and innocent. Christ, his antitype, was entirely without sin, without original or actual transgression; he had no sin in his nature, nor committed any in his life; he had none inherent in him, only the sins of his people imputed to him; and therefore the usage he met with from men was very cruel and unjust. And as for the saints, though they are not free from sin, original and actual, yet in the case for which they suffer reproach, and are persecuted by men, they are not criminal; they have done nothing to deserve such usage; they do not suffer as evil-doers, but as Christians, 1 Pet. iv. 15, 16.

Ver. 4. *They run and prepare themselves without* my *fault,* &c.] Or, *without sin* in me; or *without punishment* in them; so the same word is rendered, 1 Sam. xxviii. 10. *They run,* in an hostile manner, *against me,* as the Syriac version adds; or like dogs up and down, about the city, to find him and kill him; see ver. 7, 14. Or this may denote their readiness and swiftness to shed blood, Prov. i. 16. *and prepare themselves* with weapons, with instruments of death, as the men did that were sent to kill him; and as the band of men that came with Judas to take Christ prepared themselves with swords and staves. The Targum is, "they order or ordain war;" which they prosecuted without any occasion of it from him, and with impunity in them. Wherefore it follows, *awake to help me:* or *to meet me*[n]; see Gen. xlvi. 29. Exod. iv. 14, 27. with succour and supplies, and to deliver out of the hands of enemies. The Lord, though he neither slumbers nor sleeps, yet seems to be asleep when he does not arise to help his people, but suffers the enemy to prevail; and when he seems to take no notice of their case, but hides his eyes, and shuts them as a man asleep. Hence the following petition, *and behold;* the distress the psalmist was in, and the wickedness and malice of his enemies against him.

Ver. 5. *Thou therefore, O Lord God of hosts,* &c.] Of the armies in heaven, the angels, and of all the inhabitants of the earth; who are all under him, and at his dispose, and can do among them and with them whatsoever he pleases. *The God of Israel;* of the people of Israel, literally understood; and mystically of all the elect of God, Jews and Gentiles. The former epithet is expressive of his power, this of his grace and goodness in a covenant-way; and both encouraged the psalmist to address him on the following account: *awake to visit all the Heathen:* either the wicked Israelites that rose up against David, and sought to take away his life, who behaved like Heathens towards him, and were accounted as such by him; and the petition is, that God would arise and punish them, every one of them, according to their deserts: or else the Gentiles, properly so called, whom he desires the Lord would visit, either in a way of grace, by sending the Gospel to them, and taking out of them a people for his name, as he did, Acts xv. 14. foreseeing, by a spirit of prophecy, that the Jews would be rejected for their ill usage of the Messiah; see the note on the title of the psalm: or in a way of punishment for their idolatry and impiety; and particularly the antichristian states and powers, called the Heathen, and Gentiles, and nations of the earth, Psal. x. 16. Rev. xi. 2, 18. may be here meant; whom God will visit for their idolatry, blasphemy, and bloodshed. *Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.* That are perfidiously and abominably wicked, as Judas Iscariot, the Romish antichrist. The Targum renders it, *princes of a lie;* that speak lies in hypocrisy, and are given up to believe a lie, as the followers of antichrist. God is merciful to wicked men and to transgressors, but not to wicked transgressors; apostates may be meant, such as deal perfidiously and treacherously, as the word[o] used signifies; who sin wilfully and knowingly, after they have received the knowledge of the truth; sin against light and evidence, and obstinately and wickedly persist therein; who sin the sin against the Holy Ghost, the sin unto death, which

[m] פשעי rebellionem meam, Gejerus, Michaelis.
[n] לקראתי in occursum meum, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[o] בגדי perfide agentibus, Junius & Tremellius.

is not to be prayed for, 1 John iv. 16. or otherwise this may seem to be contrary to the command and example of Christ, Matt. v. 44. Luke xxiii. 34. Of *Selah*, see the note on Psal. iii. 2.

Ver. 6. *They return at evening*, &c.] It was at evening Saul sent messengers to watch David's house, that they might take him in the morning; but missing him, perhaps after a fruitless search for him all the day, returned at evening to watch his house again; or they might come, and go and return the first evening. So it was night when Judas set out from Bethany, to go to the chief priests at Jerusalem, to covenant with them, and betray his master; and it was in the night he did betray him, after he had eaten the passover at evening with him. Or, *let them return* [p], as in ver. 14. with shame and confusion, as David's enemies, when they found nothing but an image in the bed, which they reported to Saul; and as Judas returned to the chief priests with confusion and horror. Or, *they shall return* [q]; which being prophetically said, had its accomplishment, both in the enemies of David and of Christ; and will be true of all the wicked, who will return from their graves and live again, and give an account of themselves at the evening of the day of the Lord, which is a thousand years; in the morning of which day the dead in Christ will rise, but the rest will not rise till they are ended. *They make a noise like a dog;* which is a very noisy creature, and especially some of them, which are always yelping and barking; though indeed there are some that are naturally dumb, and cannot bark: such there are in the West Indies, as we are told [r]; and to which the allusion is in Isa. lvi. 10. and which may serve to illustrate the passage there: but those referred to here are of another kind; and this noise of theirs either respects their bark in the night, as some dogs do continually, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi; or to their howling, as the Syriac and Arabic versions. Wicked men are compared to dogs, Matt. vii. 6. Rev. xxii. 15. and particularly the enemies of Christ, Psal. xxii. 16, 20. in allusion either to hunting-dogs, who make a noise all the while they are pursuing after the game; or hungry ravenous ones, who make a noise for want of food; and this character agrees not only with the Roman soldiers, who were Gentiles, and whom the Jews used to call by this name, Matt. xv. 26. but the Jews also, even their principal men, as well as the dregs of the people, who were concerned in the death of Christ; and may be truly said to make a noise like dogs when they cried Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas, crucify him, crucify him; for which they were instant and pressing with loud voices, and their voices prevailed, Luke xxiii. 18, 21, 23. *And go round about the city;* as Saul's messengers, very probably, when they found David had made his escape from his house, searched the city round in quest of him; and there was much going about the city of Jerusalem at the time of our Lord's apprehension, trial, and condemnation; after he was taken in the garden, they went with him first to Annas's house, then to Caiaphas's, then to Pilate's, and then to Herod's, and back again to Pilate's, and from thence out of the city to Golgotha. The allusion is still to dogs, who go through a city barking [s] at persons, or in quest of what they can get; so informers and accusers may be called city-dogs, as some sort of orators are by Demosthenes [t].

Ver. 7. *Behold, they belch out with their mouth*, &c.] Bark like dogs, so Aben Ezra; or *bubble out* [u], as a fountain bubbles out with water; so they cast out their wickedness in great abundance; see Jer. vi. 7. the phrase denotes the abundance of evil things and wicked speeches that came out of their mouths, which shewed the naughtiness of their hearts; so David's enemies blustered and threatened what they would do to him could they find him; and Christ's enemies poured out their wicked charges of blasphemy and sedition against him, in great plenty, and without proof. *Swords are in their lips;* the words of their lips were like sharp swords; see Psal. lv. 21. and lvii. 4. threatening the most severe and cruel things: or, besides their lips, and what they belched out with their mouths, they took swords in their hands in a literal sense; as Saul's messengers did to kill David, and as Judas and his band of men, who came to take Christ as a thief, with swords and staves, Matt. xxvi. 55. *For who*, say they, *doth hear?* what they uttered with their mouths and lips, in a blustering and threatening manner; though they were overheard by men, who carried what they said and designed to do to Michal, David's wife. The meaning may be, they would say what they pleased, and did not care who heard them, having nothing to fear from any, they having their orders from the king; see Psal. xii. 4. and so the Targum, "behold they belch out with their "mouths words which are sharp as swords, and with "their lips saying, we shall prevail; for who is he "that hears, and can punish?" Aben Ezra's note is, "they thought that God did not hear their counsels;" and therefore the next words are in direct opposition to them; but so to think is monstrous stupidity and brutishness, Psal. xciv. 4—9. some take the words to be the words of David, complaining that the civil magistrate, none of the judges, took notice of or punished such who belched out their lies and calumnies against him, saying, *for who doth hear?* no man.

Ver. 8. *But thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them*, &c.] Disappoint their counsels, hinder them from performing their enterprise; send them back with shame and confusion, and expose them to the laughter and derision of others; as Saul's messengers were, when instead of David they found an image in the bed, with a pillow of goats' hair for its bolster, 1 Sam. xix. 16. the same is said as here with respect to the enemies of Christ, Psal. ii. 4. *Thou shalt have all the Heathen in derision:* either David's enemies, who, though Israelites, yet acted like Heathens to him, as in ver. 5. or the Gentiles that were gathered together against Christ, Psal. ii. 1—4. or the antichristian states and powers, who will be triumphed over at the time of their ruin,

[p] ישובו revertantur, Gejerus, Schmidt.
[q] Convertentur, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; so Sept. Syr. Ar.
[r] P. Martyr. Decad. Ocean. decad. 1. l. 3. & de Insulis Occid. Ind. Vid. Ignatii Epist. ad Ephes. p. 124.
[s] Κυνες ανα πολιν ωρυονται. Theocrit. Idyll. 2. v. 35.
[t] Apud Salmuth. in Pancirol. Memorab. Rer. par. 2. tit. 2. p. 97.
[u] יביעון scaturient, Montanus; copiose eructant, Gejerus.

Rev. xviii. 20. and even all the wicked at the last day, Prov. i. 26.

Ver. 9. Because of *his strength will I wait upon thee*, &c.] Either because of the strength of Saul, who was stronger than David, he determined to wait upon the Lord for salvation and deliverance from him; or because of the strength of the Lord, which he expected from him, and therefore would wait upon him for it. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, and also the Chaldee paraphrase, render the words, *my strength will I keep for thee*; or *with thee*. I ascribe all my strength unto thee; I expect every supply of it from thee, and put my trust and confidence in thee for it: so did Christ as man, and had strength from the Lord, according to his promise, Isa. l. 7, 9. Psal. lxxxix. 21. and lxxxvi. 17. and so every believer, Isa. xlv. 24. and xl. 31. *For God is my defence*; or *my high refuge*; or *high tower*[w]; see Psal. ix. 9. and xlvi. 7. where he was defended and exalted, as is petitioned ver. 1. and was safe and secure from every enemy.

Ver. 10. *The God of my mercy shall prevent me*, &c.] Or *of my grace*, or *goodness*, as the Targum; see 1 Pet. v. 10. God is gracious in himself, and he has treasured up a fulness of grace in Christ: he is the donor of all the blessings of grace in the covenant; and the author of all internal grace in the hearts of his people; and who supplies them with more grace as they want it; and he is the father of all temporal and spiritual mercies. The Cetib, or writing, is חסדו, *his mercy*: the Keri, or reading, is חסדי, *my mercy*; grace or mercy is the Lord's; it is his own, which he disposes of as he pleases; being given and applied, it is the believer's; all the grace and mercy in the heart of God, in his son, and in his covenant, is the saints', which he keeps for them with Christ for evermore; *the God of my mercy*, or *grace*, is the same with *my merciful*, or *my gracious God*; who prevents his people, as he does the Messiah, with the blessings of his goodness, Psal. xxi. 3. It may be rendered, *hath prevented me*; and denote the antiquity of his love, being before his people's to him, and the early provisions of his grace and mercy for them: or *doth prevent me*; expressing the freeness of it; he not waiting for any duties, services, or conditions to be performed, but bestows his grace and mercy, notwithstanding much unworthiness: or *shall prevent me*; designing the seasonable and timely application of mercy preventing his fears, as it sometimes does the prayers of his people, Isa. lxv. 24. *God shall let me see* my desire *upon mine enemies*; expressed in the following verses, ver. 11—15. or *vengeance upon them*; as the Targum paraphrases it; see Psal. lviii. 10.

Ver. 11. *Slay thou not*, &c.] Though they deserved to be slain, and the Lord seemed as if he was about to slay them, who was able to do it; he seemed to be whetting his glittering sword, and his hand to take hold of vengeance ready to execute it; wherefore intercession is made to spare them, which agrees with Christ's petition on the cross, Luke xxiii. 34. The Targum adds, *immediately*; slay them not directly, and at once; give them space for repentance; and so the Jews had: for it was forty years after the death of Christ ere their destruction was: or the meaning may be, slay them not utterly; destroy them not totally: and so it was; for though multitudes were slain during the siege of Jerusalem, and at the taking of it, yet they were not all slain: there were many carried captive, and sent into different parts of the world, whose posterity continue to this day. The reason of this petition is, *lest my people forget*; the Syriac version renders it, *lest they should forget my people*; or my people should be forgotten. David's people, the Jews by birth and religion, though not as yet his subjects, unless in designation and appointment, and Christ's people according to the flesh: now if these had all been slain at once, they had been forgotten, like dead men out of mind: or Christ's special and peculiar people; his chosen, redeemed, and called ones, who truly believe in him, and are real Christians; and then the sense is, if full vengeance had been taken of the Jews at once, and they had been cut off root and branch, so that none of them remained, Christ's people would have forgot them, and the vengeance inflicted on them for their rejection of the Messiah; but now they are a continued and lasting instance of God's wrath and displeasure on that account, and they and their case cannot be forgotten. The Arabic version renders it, *lest my people forget the law*; its precepts and sanction, its rewards and punishments. *Scatter them by thy power*; or let them wander up and down like fugitives and vagabonds in the earth, as Cain did, and as the Jews now do, being dispersed in the several parts of the world; and which was done by the power of God, or through the kingdom of God coming with power upon that people, Mark ix. 1. or *by thine army*[x]; the Roman army, which was the Lord's, being permitted by him to come against them, and being made use of as an instrument to destroy and scatter them, Matt. xxii. 7. *And bring them down*; from their excellency, greatness, riches, and honour, into a low, base, mean, and poor estate and condition, in which the Jews now are. *O Lord, our shield*; the protector and defender of his people, whilst he is the destroyer and scatterer of their enemies.

Ver. 12. For *the sin of their mouth*, and *the words of their lips*, &c.] The words may be read as one proposition, *the words of their lips are the sin of their mouth*[y]; they speak nothing but evil; whatever they say is sin; out of the abundance of their evil hearts their mouths speak: or *for the sin of their mouth* and lips; because of the calumnies cast by them on the Messiah, traducing him as a sinful man, a blasphemer, a seditious person, and even as one that had familiarity with the devil. *Let them even be taken in their pride*; in their city and temple, of which they boasted, and prided themselves in; and so they were: or for their pride in rejecting the Messiah, because of his mean descent and parentage, and because his kingdom was not with outward pomp and observation; and being vain boasters of their carnal privileges, and works of righteousness, they refused to submit to the righteousness of God,

[w] משגבי vice arcis sublimis, Tigurine version; Vatablus, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis, all to the same purport.

[x] בחילך exercitu tuo, Michaelis, Vatablus.

[y] So Gejerus, Schmidt.

and were neither subject to the law of God, nor to the Gospel of Christ. *And for cursing and lying which they speak:* for cursing the Messiah, pronouncing him accursed, and treating him as such, by hanging him on a tree; and for lying against him, saying that he was a Samaritan, and had a devil, and cast out devils by Beelzebub; and that he was a deceiver of the people, and a wicked man: for these things they were taken in their besieged city, as is here imprecated.

Ver. 13. *Consume them in wrath, consume them, &c.*] The repetition of the request shews the ardour and vehemency of the mind of the petitioner, and the importunity in which he put up the petition; and suggests that the persons designed were guilty of very great sins, deserving of the wrath of God, and which came upon them to the uttermost, 1 Thess. ii. 16. *That they may not* be; either any more in the land of the living; be utterly extinct, having no being in this world, Jer. xxxi. 15. or that they might not be in the glory and grandeur, in the honour, dignity, and felicity, they once were in; which best suits the present state of the Jews; and this sense better agrees with what follows. *And let them know that God ruleth in Jacob, unto the ends of the earth. Selah.* This is to be understood of the Messiah, who is God over all, blessed for ever, and is the ruler in Israel, King of saints; reigns over the house of Jacob, in his church, and among his people, wherever they are; even to the ends of the earth, where he has had, or will have, some that are subject to him: for his dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth, Psal. lxxii. 8. and this his government is known to men good and bad, by the judgments which he executeth; and particularly it is apparent that he is made Lord and Christ, and that he is come in his kingdom, and with power, by the vengeance taken on the Jewish nation.

Ver. 14. *And at evening let them return, &c.*] What in ver. 6 is related as matter of fact, is here, and in the following clauses, expressed by way of imprecation; and what is there taken notice of as their sin, is here wished for as their punishment; unless it can be thought that this should refer to the conversion and return of the Jews in the evening of the world, and to their humiliation and mourning for piercing Christ, and to their very distressed and uncomfortable condition they will be in, until they have satisfaction that their sins are forgiven them; see the note on ver. 6.

Ver. 15. *Let them wander up and down for meat, &c.*] Like hungry dogs. *And grudge if they be not satisfied;* or murmur and howl as dogs when hungry, and can find nothing to eat; or *when they shall not be satisfied, and shall lodge*[a]; when they shall get nothing to satisfy their hungry appetite, and shall go to bed without a supper, and lie all night without food. The Targum is, "they shall wander about to seize "the prey to eat, and will not rest till they are satis- "fied, and will lie all night;" that is, in quest of prey.

Ver. 16. *But I will sing of thy power, &c.*] In creating all things out of nothing; in upholding all things in being; in the redemption of his people; in their conversion and vocation; in the preservation of them to eternal happiness; in the performance of his promises to them; in the destruction of their enemies; and in their protection: *yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning:* of providential mercies, which are new every morning; and of special mercy in the heart of God, in the covenant of his grace, in redemption, in regeneration, in the pardon of sin, and in eternal life and salvation. *For thou hast been my defence:* as in ver. 9. see the note there. *And refuge in the day of my trouble:* whither he fled, and found protection and safety; see the note on Psal. ix. 9.

Ver. 17. *Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing, &c.*] That is, to God, whom he made his strength, and put his trust in for strength, and from whom he received it; and he therefore determined to sing praise to him for it, and give him the glory of it. *For God is my defence:* as before in ver. 9, 16. And *the God of my mercy;* see the note on ver. 10.

PSALM LX.

To the chief Musician upon Shushan-eduth, Michtam of David, to teach; when he strove with Aram-naharaim, and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of Salt twelve thousand.

THE words *shushan-eduth* are thought, by Aben Ezra, to be the beginning of a song, to the tune of which this psalm was set; though others, as he observes, take them to be the name of a musical instrument, on which it was sung. Some take *shushan* to be an instrument of six chords, an hexachord; and *eduth*, which signifies a *testimony*, to be the title of the psalm, it being a testimony, or lasting memorial, of the victory obtained over the Syrians and Edomites; though rather they may be considered as expressing the subject-matter of the psalm; and so the Targum interprets them, "concerning the ancient testimony "of the sons of Jacob and Laban;" referring to Gen. xxxi. 47. they may be rendered, as they are by some, *concerning the lily of the testimony*[a]; and be applied to the Gospel, the testimony of our Lord Jesus, the pure, lily-white, and unblemished testimony it bears to him, his person, office, and grace; and particularly to salvation as alone in him, and to which witness is borne in this psalm, ver. 11, 12. This psalm is a *michtam*, or golden psalm of David, and its use is to *teach*. It is of the instructive kind, and teaches where help and salvation are to be expected; see Col. iii. 16. it was written when David *strove*, or fought, with Aram-naharaim, the Syrians of Mesopotamia, which lay between the two rivers, Tygris and Euphrates, from whence is the name; hence the Septuagint render it Mesopotamia of Syria; and the Targum is, "he made "war with Aram, which is by Euphrates;" and at the same time David also fought with Aram-zobah, or the

[a] וילינו nec satiati cubabunt, Tigurine version; famelici pernoctabunt, Michaelis.

[a] Super rosa testimonii, Tigurine version; super flore testimonii, Musculus.

Syrians of Zobah, as they are called in 2 Sam. x. 6. with Josephus[b], Zobah is the same with Sophene; but wrongly, as is thought by learned men[c]: for though this is a name which some part of Syria goes by in Mela[d]; and Ptolemy[e] makes mention of a place of this name; yet that was beyond Euphrates, and in Armenia; whereas this must be nearer the land of Israel; for it is said[f] that Aram-zobah is the country of Syria, which David subdued, and joined to the land of Israel; concerning which the Jews so often say, that in some things it was the same with it: according to Hillerus[g], it is the same country which the Arabians call Kinnosrina, the chief city of which is Haleb, or Aleppo; and R. Benjamin Tudelensis[h], making mention of Haleb, says, this is Aram-zobah. Moreover, this psalm was written *when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in the valley of salt twelve thousand;* the *valley of salt* was near the dead sea, and upon the borders of Idumea; the battle fought here by Joab was either the same with the former, or different from it, at or about the same time; and accounts seemingly different from this are given in 2 Sam. viii. 13. 1 Chron. xviii. 12. in the first of these the number is said to be eighteen thousand Syrians, and the victory is ascribed to David: and in the latter the same number as there, but said to be Edomites, as here, and the slaughter ascribed to Abishai. The note of R. Abendana[i], for the reconciling of this, is worth transcribing: Our Rabbins of blessed memory say there were two battles; that Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, slew eighteen thousand, and after that Joab came and smote of them twelve thousand; and this is what is said; *and Joab returned,* &c. the sense is, he returned after Abishai: and in the book of Samuel the battle is ascribed to David, because he was the root or chief (*i. e.* under whom Joab and Abishai fought); but R. David Kimchi writes, that there were between them all eighteen thousand only; that Abishai began the battle, and smote of them six thousand, and after that Joab returned, and smote of them twelve thousand; but of a truth the wise R. Joel Ben Sueb gives the right sense of this affair, which is this; when David was fighting with the Syrians of Naharaim and Zobah, it was told him that Edom was come out to meet him, and help the Syrians; and then he veiled himself in prayer, and said this psalm; and Joab turned from the army, and went to meet the Edomites, that they might not pass over to help the Syrians, and join them, and he smote of them twelve thousand; and David was left fighting with the Syrians of Naharaim and Zobah, and subdued them under him, and he turned to help Joab; and Abishai, the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and he smote of them eighteen thousand, and they were in all thirty thousand, according to our Rabbins of blessed memory; and the text in 2 Sam. viii. 13. should be inverted and explained thus; "when he returned from smiting the Syrians, he got him in the "valley of salt a name; for his fame went abroad, because he smote there eighteen thousand, and this "was in Edom." The Targum very wrongly renders it, "and there fell of the armies of David and Joab "twelve thousand." The title of this psalm, in the Syriac version, is, "which David gave out, saying, if "I should come into the hands of Saul, I shall perish; and he fled, and those that were with him: "but to us it declares the conversion of the Gentiles, "and the rejection of the Jews." The former part of which is quite foreign; but the latter seems to be right; for reference is had to both in this psalm, and to Christ, the banner displayed, or ensign lifted up, and to his dominion over Jews and Gentiles in the latter day, and to that salvation which is alone in him.

Ver. 1. *O God, thou hast cast us off,* &c.] What is said in this verse, and the two following, are by some applied to times past; to the distress of the people of Israel by their neighbours in the times of the judges; to their being smitten by the Philistines, in the times of Eli and Samuel; and to the victory they obtained over them, when Saul and his sons were slain; and to the civil wars between the house of Saul and David; but rather the whole belongs to future times, which David, by a prophetic spirit, was led to on the occasion of the victory obtained, when before this the nation had been in bad circumstances. This refers to the casting off of the Jews as a church and nation, when they had rejected the Messiah and killed him, persecuted his apostles, and despised his Gospel; of which see Rom. xi. 15, 19—21. *Thou hast scattered us;* as they were by the Romans among the several nations of the world, and among whom they are dispersed to this day; or *thou hast broken us*[k], as in Psal. lxxx. 12. not only the walls of their city were broken by the battering rams of the Romans, but their commonwealth, their civil state, were broke to pieces by them. Jarchi applies this to the Romans; his note is this; "when Edom "fell by his hand (David's), he foresaw, by the Holy "Ghost, that the Romans would rule over Israel, and "decree hard decrees concerning them." *Thou hast been displeased:* not only with their immorality and profaneness, with their hypocrisy and insincerity, with their will-worship and superstition, and the observance of the traditions of their elders; but also with their rejection of the Messiah, and contempt of his Gospel and ordinances. *O turn thyself to us again;* which prayer will be made by them, when they shall become sensible of their sins, and of their state and condition, and shall turn unto the Lord; and when he will turn himself to them, and turn away iniquity from them, and all Israel shall be saved, Rom. xi. 25, 26. or *thou wilt return unto us*[l]; who before were cast off, broken, and he was displeased with; or others to us.

Ver. 2. *Thou hast made the earth to tremble: thou hast broken it,* &c.] As is frequently done by an earthquake; which, whatever natural causes there may be of it, is always to be ascribed to God. The ancient Heathens[m] were of opinion that all earthquakes were of God. This respects not the whole earth, but the land of Israel only; and so the Targum, "thou hast

[b] Antiqu. l. 7. c. 5. s. 1. and l. 8. c. 7. s. 6.
[c] Vid. Hudson. Not. in ibid.
[d] De Orbis Situ, l. 1. c. 6.
[e] Geograph. l. 5. c. 13.
[f] Gloss. in T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 25. 1.
[g] Onomast. Sacr. p. 586.
[h] Itinerar. p. 59.
[i] In Miclol Yophi in loc.
[k] פרצתנו rupisti nos, Montanus, Michaelis; diarupisti, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.
[l] תשובב לנו reverteris ad nos, Pagninus, Montanus; reduces ad nos, Gussetius, p. 836.
[m] A. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 2. c. 28.

"moved the land of Israel, thou hast shaken and rent "it;" and it does not design a natural earthquake in it, but a figurative one; a shaking and rending of their civil and church state; see Heb. xii. 26, 27. *Heal the breaches thereof: for it shaketh*: which will be done in the latter day, when they shall return into their own land, and be restored as at the beginning, Isa. xxx. 30.

Ver. 3. *Thou hast shewed thy people hard things*, &c.] As to have their city and temple burnt, multitudes of them slain, and the rest carried captive, and put into the hands of cruel lords and hard masters, and made a proverb, a taunt, and a curse, in all places; and all this done to a people that were the Lord's by profession, who called themselves so, though now *a lo-ammi*: and these were hard things to flesh and blood, yet no other than what they deserved. *Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment*: or *of trembling*[n], Isa. li. 17. that is, to endure such troubles as made them tremble, and astonished and stupified them; took away their senses, and made them unfit for any thing, being smitten with madness, blindness, and astonishment of heart, as is threatened them, Deut. xxviii. 28. see Rom. xi. 7, 8.

Ver. 4. *Thou hast given a banner*, &c.] The word נס is, by Jarchi, taken to signify *temptation* or *trial*[o]; and he interprets it of many troubles which they had, that they might be tried by them, whether they would stand in the fear of God, and so considers these words as a continuation of the account of the distresses of the people of Israel; but they are rather to be considered as declaring a peculiar blessing and favour bestowed upon some among them, who are here described, when the rest were involved in the greatest calamities, signified by a *banner* or *ensign* given them; by which is meant, not so much David literally, and the victory he obtained over the Syrians and Edomites, of which the banner displayed might be a token; but the Messiah, who is said to be given for a banner, or set up as an ensign for the people, Isa. xi. 10. for the gathering of them to him, to prepare them for war, and animate them to fight the good fight of faith, and oppose every enemy; to direct where they should stand to be on duty, where they should go, and whom they should follow; and is expressive of the victory over sin, Satan, and the world, they have through him: and this is given *to them that fear thee*: who have the grace of fear put into their hearts; who fear the Lord and his goodness, and serve him with reverence and godly fear; who worship him both inwardly and outwardly, in spirit and in truth, whether among Jews or Gentiles, though the former may be chiefly intended; such as old Simeon, Anna the prophetess, and others, to whom Christ was made known; and especially the apostles of Christ, and those to whom their ministry became useful; whose business it was to display this banner, set up this ensign, and hold out this flag; as it follows: *that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.* Not because of the truth of Abraham, as the Targum; nor because of the truth, sincerity, and uprightness, of those that fear the Lord; but because of his own truth and faithfulness in the performance of his promises made concerning the displaying of this banner; or the sending of his son into the world, and the preaching of his Gospel in it; see Rom. xv. 8.

Ver. 5. *That thy beloved may be delivered*, &c.] Some think that these words express the effect or end of the banner being displayed; but because of the word *Selah* at the end of the preceding verse, which makes so full a stop; rather they are to be considered in construction with the following clause. By the Lord's *beloved* ones are meant, not so much the people of Israel, who were loved and chosen by the Lord above all people on the face of the earth, as the elect of God, both among Jews and Gentiles, who are the chosen of God, and precious, and are loved of him with a free, sovereign, everlasting, and unchangeable love: these are the beloved of Father, Son, and Spirit; who, falling into a state of condemnation and death in Adam, and being under the power of sin, and involved in the guilt and filth of it; and being fallen into the hands of many enemies, sin, Satan, and the world; stood in need of deliverance out of all this, which they could not work out of themselves, nor any creature for them; wherefore, that they might be delivered, the following request is made. *Save* with *thy right hand*: from sin, the cause of damnation; from the law, which threatens with condemnation and death; from Satan, that would devour and destroy; and from all their enemies; from wrath to come, from hell and the second death; or from going down to the pit of corruption. The persons for whom this petition is put up are not only David himself, but all the beloved ones; and these God has appointed unto salvation; Christ is the Saviour of them, and to them salvation is applied in due time by the Spirit, and in a little while they will be in the full possession of it: and this is wrought out by the *right hand* of the Lord; either by his mighty power, the saving strength of his right hand, who is mighty to save; or by his son, the man of his right hand, made strong for himself, who is able to save to the uttermost; and by whom God has determined to save, and does save all his people: or the words may be rendered, *save thy right hand*, thy *Benjamins*[p], who are as near and dear to thee as thy right hand, being his mystical self, to whom salvation is brought by him, Isa. lxiii. 1, 5. *And hear me*: in so doing, he suggests he would hear and answer him; his prayers would be ended and accomplished; this being the sum of them, his own salvation, and the salvation of the Lord's beloved ones. The Cetib, or writing of this clause, is, *hear us*: the Keri, or reading of it, is, *hear me*.

Ver. 6. *God hath spoken in his holiness*, &c.] Or *in his holy place*[q]; in heaven, the habitation of his holiness and of his glory; or *in the house of the sanctuary*, as the Targum: in the tabernacle, in the holy place by Urim and Thummim; and in the most holy place by his sacred oracle, from between the mercy-seat: or *by his holy ones*, as the Arabic version; by his holy prophets, Samuel and Nathan, by whom he spoke to David concerning the kingdom; and by his Holy Spirit dictating this psalm, and the rest unto him; and by his Son, his holy One, by whom he has spoken in these

[n] תרעלה tremoris, Musculus, Vatablus, Amama; trepidationis, Michaelis; horroris, Gejerus.
[o] So Yalkut Simeoni in loc. par. 2. fol. 103. 1.

[p] הושיעה ימינך.
[q] בקדשו in sanctuario suo, Tigurine version, Vatablus; in sancto suo, V. L. Musculus, Cocceius.

last times unto his people, to which this psalm has reference: or it may be understood of the perfection of his holiness in which he has spoken, and by which he has swore; not only to David literally, concerning the extent of his dominion, the perpetuity and stability of it; but to David's son and antitype, the Messiah, concerning his seed, possession, and inheritance, Psal. lxxxix. 19, 20, 35, 36. and ii. 8, 9. *I will rejoice;* at the holiness of the Lord, which is matter of joy to the saints, especially as that is displayed and glorified in salvation by Christ, Psal. xcvii. 12. and at what he said in his holiness to David, concerning his temporal kingdom, and the duration of it; because he knew that what he said he would perform; and at what was spoken to him by the Messiah, in council and covenant, concerning his seeing his seed, and prolonging his days; which was the joy set before him, which carried him through his sorrows and sufferings, Heb. xii. 2. wherefore he believed his kingdom should be enlarged, both among Jews and Gentiles, as follows. *I will divide Shechem;* a city in Mount Ephraim, Josh. xx. 7. and so was in the hands of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul; as the valley of Succoth, Gilead, Ephraim, and Manasseh, after mentioned, and all the tribes of Israel, were, but Judah, 2 Sam. ii. 4, 9. but, because of God's promise, David believed that they would be all in his possession; signified by dividing, as a land is divided for an inheritance when conquered, Josh. xiii. 7. or this is said in allusion to the dividing of spoils in a conquered place; and so the Targum, "I "will divide the prey with the children of Joseph, that "dwell in Shechem;" and as Shechem was the same with Sychar, near to which our Lord met with the Samaritan woman, and converted her, and many others of that place, then might he be said to divide the spoils there, John iv. 5, 29, 41, 42. *And mete out the valley of Succoth;* with a measuring-line, so taking possession of it, 2 Sam. viii. 2. Zech. ii. 1—4. Succoth was near to Shechem, Gen. xxxiii. 17, 18. and was in the tribe of Gad, and in a valley, Josh. xiii. 27. there was a Succoth in the plain of Jordan, 1 Kings vii. 46. it signifies booths, tents, or tabernacles, and may mystically signify the churches of Christ, wherein he dwells and exercises his dominion.

Ver. 7. *Gilead is mine,* &c.] This is particularly mentioned, because over this Abner made Ish-bosheth king, 2 Sam. ii. 9. and is the place to which the Jews shall be brought in the latter day, when converted, Zech. x. 10. It was a country that abounded with pastures fit for feeding cattle, Numb. xxxii. 1. Cant. iv. 1. and may point out those green pastures where Christ makes his flocks to lie down and rest. *And Manasseh is mine: Ephraim also is the strength of mine head:* these two were also under Saul's son when David first came to the throne, but afterwards became his, as was promised him, and he believed, 2 Sam. ii. 9. and v. 1—3. And the concord and harmony of the people of God among themselves, and under David their Prince, the King Messiah, are signified by Judah and Ephraim being one in the hand of the Lord; and by the ceasing of the envy of the one, and of the vexation of the other, Ezek. xxxvii. 19, 24. Isa. xi. 13. Ephraim was more numerous and populous than Manasseh, and abounded with mighty men, which are the strength of a prince, and therefore called here the strength of his head. *Judah is my lawgiver;* manifestly referring to Gen. xlix. 10. which furnished out persons fit to be counsellors in enacting laws, and proper to be employed in the execution of them. The great Lawgiver is Christ himself, who came of this tribe, Isa. xxxiii. 22. All this is expressive of dominion over the whole land of Judea, Ephraim, and Manasseh, with the places mentioned with them; the house of Joseph being, as Aben Ezra observes, in the north part of it, and Judah in the south. Next mention is made of the subjection of the Gentiles, and dominion over them.

Ver. 8. *Moab is my wash-pot,* &c.] To wash hands and feet in: and so the Syriac version, *and Moab the washing of my feet;* a vessel for low and mean service, and so denotes the servile subjection of the Moabites to David; see 2 Sam. viii. 2. and as the words may be rendered, *the pot of my washing*[r]. Great numbers of the Moabites might be at this time servants to the Israelites, and to David and his court particularly; and might be employed, as the Gibeonites were, to be drawers of water, to fill their pots, in which they washed their hands and feet, and their bathing-vessels, in which they bathed themselves: Aben Ezra explains it, "I will wash their "land as a pot;" and so may not only signify the very great subjection of the Gentiles, even the chief among them, to Christ and his church, Isa. xlix. 23. and lx. 14. but as Moab was begotten and born in uncleanness, and his posterity an unclean generation, it may design the washing, cleansing, sanctifying, and justifying of the Gentiles in the name of Christ, and by his Spirit, 1 Cor. vi. 11. *Over Edom will I cast out my shoe;* as a token of possessing their land, Ruth iv. 7. so some; or of subduing them; putting the feet on which the shoe is upon the necks of them, Josh. x. 24. So Kimchi interprets it, "the treading of my foot;" to which the Targum agrees, paraphrasing it thus; "upon the joint of "the neck of the mighty men of Edom I have cast "my shoe." It may allude to a custom[s] in confirming a bargain, or taking possession, to pluck off the shoe in token of it. נעלי may be rendered *my glove;* as it is by the Targum on Ruth iv. 7, 8. for, as the shoe encloses and binds the foot, so the glove the hand: and the allusion may be thought to be to a custom used by kings, when they sat down before any strong city to besiege it, to throw in a glove into the city; signifying they would never depart from the city until they had took it. Hence the custom, which still continues, of sending a glove to a person challenged to fight. And indeed the custom of casting a shoe was used by the emperor of the Abyssines, as a sign of dominion[t]. Take the phrase in every light, it signifies victory and power; that he should be in Edom as at home, and there pluck off his shoe, and cast it upon him; either to carry it after him, as some think, which was the work of a servant, to which the Baptist alludes, Matt. iii. 11. or rather to clean it for him; for as Moab was his wash-pot, to wash his hands and feet, in Edom was his shoe-cleaner, to wipe off and remove the dirt

[r] סיר רחצי olla lotionis meæ, Pagninus, Montanus, Michaelis, Gejerus; so Tigurine version, Musculus, Vatablus.

[s] Elias in Tishbi, fol. 267.

[t] R. Immanuel apud Castell. Lex. Polyglott. col. 2342.

and dust that was upon them[*]; all which denotes great subjection: and this was fulfilled in David, 2 Sam. viii. 14. and may refer to the spread of the Gospel in the Gentile world, and the power accompanying that to the subduing of many sinners in it, carried thither by those whose feet were shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. *Philistia, triumph thou because of me:* some take this to be an ironical expression, like that in Eccl. xi. 9. so R. Moses in Aben Ezra, and also Kimchi. Triumph now as thou usedst to do, or if thou canst: but rather they are seriously spoken, seeing they had reason to rejoice and be glad, because they had changed hands and masters for the better, being subject to David, 2 Sam. viii. 1. with this compare Psal. cviii. 9. and may very well be applied to the Gentiles, subdued and conquered by Christ, who triumph in him; and because delivered out of the hands of sin, Satan, and the world, through his victorious arms.

Ver. 9. *Who will bring me* into *the strong city?* &c.] Which some understand of Rabbah of the Ammonites, which Joab besieged, and sent to David to come and take it in person, 2 Chron. xii. 26, 29. The Targum interprets it of Tyre, which was a strong fortified city, Ezek. xxvi. 4, 11. It rather seems to be the same with Edom, or the metropolis of the Edomites; since it follows: *who will lead me into Edom?* which was situated in the clefts of the rock, and on the height of the hill, Jer. xlix. 6. but is mystically to be understood of the city of Rome, the great and mighty city, as it is often called in the book of the Revelation, ch. xi. 8. and xvii. 18. and xviii. 10. whose destruction is certain, being predicted; and after which there have been desires raised in the hearts of God's people in all ages; and particularly just before the time God will put it into the hearts of the kings of the earth to burn it with fire; who are here personated by David, as desirous of entering into it in triumph to destroy it, Rev. xvii. 16.

Ver. 10. *Wilt not thou, O God?* &c.] This is an answer to the question, and is made by putting another, which tacitly contains in it an affirmation that God would do it. He has foretold the destruction of the Romish antichrist; he has said it shall be: he is faithful to his purposes, predictions, and promises; he is able to effect it; strong is the Lord that judgeth Babylon, Rev. xviii. 10. He will put it into the hearts of the kings of the earth to hate her; he will encourage them to reward her double; he will give her blood to drink, because she is worthy; her destruction will be according to his righteous judgment, and will be irretrievable; he will call upon all his people to rejoice at it, whose shoutings on this occasion will be like those of persons that enter into a conquered city in triumph. Which *hadst cast us off;* who seemed in former times to have cast off his people, when they were killed all the day long; accounted as sheep for the slaughter; were slain in great numbers in the Low Countries; burnt here in England; massacred in France and Ireland: especially God seemed to have cast off his people, and to have had no regard to his interest, when antichrist so prevailed, that all the world wondered after the beast. *And thou, O God,* which *didst not go forth with our armies;* but suffered the antichristian beast to make war with the saints, and to overcome and kill them; and which was the case in many pitched battles with the Waldenses and Albigenses before the Reformation, and with the Protestants in Germany since. But this will not be always the case; he whose name is the Word of God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, will fight with the antichristian powers, and overcome them, and make his people more than conquerors over them; and his having formerly seemed to have cast them off, and not going forth with their armies, will serve as a foil to set off the glorious and complete victory that will at last be obtained.

Ver. 11. *Give us help from trouble,* &c.] To have trouble is the common lot of all men, but especially of the people of God. They have some troubles which others have not, arising from in-dwelling sin, Satan's temptations, and the hidings of God's face; and as for outward troubles, they have generally the greatest share of them, which are certain to them by the appointment of God, and the legacy of Christ; though they are needful and for their good, and lie in their way to heaven. But perhaps here is particularly meant the time of trouble, which will be a little before the destruction of antichrist; which will be great, and none like it; will be the time of Jacob's trouble, though he shall be saved out of it, Jer. xxx. 7. This will be the time of the slaying of the witnesses, the hour of temptation, that will try the inhabitants of the Christian world; and when the saints, as they do in all their times of trouble, will seek to the Lord for help, in whom it is, and who has promised it, and gives it seasonably, and which is owing wholly to his own grace and goodness; and therefore it is asked that he would give it. *For vain is the help of man;* or *the salvation of man*[*]; man himself is a vain thing; vanity itself, yea, lighter than vanity; even man at his best state, and the greatest among men; and therefore it is a vain thing to expect help and salvation from men, for indeed there is none in them; only in the Lord God is the salvation of his people, both temporal and spiritual.

Ver. 12. *Through God we shall do valiantly,* &c.] Or, *through the Word of the Lord,* as the Targum; Christ, whose name is the Word of God, appearing at the head of his armies, in a vesture dipped in blood, and with a sharp sword proceeding out of his mouth, will inspire his people to fight valiantly under him; and who, in his name and strength, will get the victory over all their enemies, the beast, false prophets, and kings of the earth, and all under them; see Rev. xix. 11—21. *For he* it is that *shall tread down our enemies;* as mire in the street, or as grapes in a winepress; even kings, captains, mighty men, and all the antichristian nations and states; the beast, false prophet, and Satan himself, Rev. xix. 15, 18, 19, 20. and xx. 2, 10. and so there will be an end of all the enemies of Christ and his people; after which they will spend an endless eternity together, in joy, peace, and pleasure. The victory is wholly ascribed to God the Word; it is not they that shall do valiantly, that shall tread down their enemies; but he by whom they shall do valiantly shall do it; even the mighty הוא, *He,* to whom was promised, in Eden's garden, the bruising the head of the serpent, and all enemies, Gen. iii. 15. and who has the same name here as there.

* Vid. Bynæum de Calceis Heb. l. 2. c. 8. Gusset. Ebr. Comment p. 520.

* תשועת אדם salus hominis, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

PSALM LXI.

To the chief Musician upon Neginah, A Psalm *of David.*

NEGINAH is either the beginning of a song, as Aben Ezra; or the musical note or tune of one: or rather the name of a musical instrument, which was touched by the hand, or with a quill or bow. It is the singular of *neginoth*, used in the title of Psal. iv. see the note there. This psalm was written by David, when at the end of the earth, or land of Judea, as appears from ver. 2. either when he was fighting with the Syrians, as R. Obadiah, and so was composed about the same time with the former; or when he was in the land of the Philistines, being obliged to fly there from Saul, as Kimchi and others: or rather after he himself was king, since mention is made of the king in it; and when he fled from his son Absalom, and passed over to the other side of Jordan, and came to Mahanaim, 2 Sam. xvii. 22, 24. where very probably he wrote this psalm. In it respect is had to the Messiah, as in ver. 2, 6. though Arama thinks it was composed after the prophecy came to Nathan that David should not build the temple; see ver. 4.

Ver. 1. *Hear my cry, O God,* &c.] Being in distress; and which was vocally expressed with great fervency and importunity. *Attend unto my prayer;* which was made by him, and not for him; inwrought in his heart by the spirit of God, and put up by him with a true heart and full assurance of faith, and related to his own case in particular. Aben Ezra thinks that the former word designs public prayer, vocally and openly expressed; and that this intends prayer in the heart, or mental prayer; both the Lord hears and attends unto, and is here requested; which is marvellous grace and condescension in him.

Ver. 2. *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee,* &c.] Where he now was, as is observed on the title of the psalm; see the note there: though he was distant from his own house, and from the house of God, he did not restrain prayer before him, but continued to cry unto him, and determined to do so; and as the people of God are sometimes forced to flee to distant parts, they have a God still to go to, who is a God afar off, as well as at hand. It may be the psalmist may personate the church in Gospel times, throughout the whole world, even at the further parts of it, in the isles afar off, where men may and do lift up holy hands to God without wrath and doubting: *when my heart is overwhelmed:* or *covered* [x]; with grief and sorrow for any trouble, outward or inward, and ready to sink, and fail and die. Sometimes the saints are overwhelmed with a sense of sin, are pressed down with the weight and burden of its guilt; their faces are covered with shame and confusion; and their hearts are swallowed up and overwhelmed with over-much sorrow, both at the number of their sins, and at the aggravated circumstances of them; and especially when they are without a view of pardoning grace and mercy, Psal. xxxviii. 4, 10. and xl. 12. Lam. iii. 42, 43. and sometimes they are overwhelmed with afflictive providences; the Lord causes all his waves and billows to go over them, and they are just ready to sink; and did he not stay his hand, and stop contending with them, the spirit would fail before him, and the souls that he has made, Psal. xlii. 6, 7. Isa. lvii. 16. and sometimes with divine desertions, which cause a deliquium of soul, and throw them into fainting fits, Cant. v. 6. and sometimes through unbelieving frames; and did not the Lord appear to them, and strengthen their faith, and remove their unbelief, they would sink and die away, Psal. lxxvii. 2, 3, 7, 8, 9. and xxvii. 13. And at all such times it is right to cry unto the Lord, and make the following request to him: *lead me to the rock that is higher than I;* not the land of Israel, as Kimchi thinks, the psalmist being now in the low lands of the Philistines; nor Jerusalem, and the fort and hill of Zion; he being now at the extreme and lower parts of the land: this sense is too low. Some think that some great difficulty is meant; which seemed insuperable, and like a rock inaccessible, which he could not get up to, and upon, and get over; and therefore desires the Lord would lead him up it, and over it, before whom every rock, mountain, and hill, becomes a plain, Zech. iv. 7. but rather Christ is meant, the Rock of Israel, the Rock of our salvation, and our refuge. He is higher than David, and all the kings of the earth; higher than the angels in heaven, and than the heavens themselves, Heb. vii. 26. and who by his height is able to protect and defend his people from all their enemies; and by the shade he casts to refresh and comfort them; and by the sufficiency in him to supply all their wants; for he is as a rock impregnable, and well stored, Isa. xxxiii. 16. and xxxii. 2. And here gracious souls desire to be led by the spirit of God always, and especially when in distressing circumstances; and he does lead them to his blood for pardon and cleansing, and to his righteousness for justification and acceptance with God, and to his fulness for fresh supplies.

Ver. 3. *For thou hast been a shelter for me,* &c.] Or *refuge* [y], from avenging justice; a hiding-place and covert from the storms and tempests of divine wrath; a shadow and a screen from the heat of Satan's fiery darts, and the blast of his terrible temptations, Isa. xxv. 4. *And a strong tower from the enemy:* from Satan the devouring lion, from furious persecutors, and every other enemy; see Prov. xviii. 10. and this experience the psalmist had of protection from the Rock in former times made him desirous of being led to it now.

Ver. 4. *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever,* &c.] Under the protection of the Lord, as in a shepherd's tent, or as in one belonging to a general of an army, where are fulness and safety; see the note on Psal. xxvii. 5. or else the tabernacle of the congregation is

[x] בעטף quum tegitur, Michaelis.

[y] מחסה asylum, Tigurine version, Vatablus; perfugium, Cocceius; refugium, Michaelis.

meant; the house of God, the place of divine and public worship, where he desired and determined always to continue, Psal. xxiii. 6. or else the tabernacle which was prefigured by that below, where he knew he should dwell to all eternity. Kimchi, by *for ever*, understands a long time; and Jarchi explains it both of this world and of the world to come; which is true, understanding the tabernacle of the church below, and the church above. *I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.* Or, *in* or *into the secret of thy wings*[z]; this he determined to make his refuge for the present time, and whilst in this world; see the note on Psal. lvii. 1.

Ver. 5. *For thou, O God, hast heard my vows,* &c.] Or *my prayers,* as the Septuagint and other versions. Vows are so called, because it was usual to make vows in trouble, when prayer was made to the Lord for help and deliverance, Psal. lxvi. 13, 14. and cxxxii. 1, 2. This is a reason why the psalmist was encouraged to put his trust in the Lord, because his prayers were heard by him; or he was sure they would be, as he had entreated, ver. 1. The past is put for the future, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; and it may be because of the certainty of his prayers being heard; and which may be concluded from the Lord's declaring himself a God hearing prayer, from the prevalent mediation of Christ, from the assistance and intercession of the Spirit, and from the exercise of faith in prayer, and the divine promises; or whilst he was crying to God an answer was returned, and he was delivered out of his troubles, Isa. lxv. 24. Dan. ix. 20, 21, 23. Another reason follows: *thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name;* not the land of Israel, as Aben Ezra and Jarchi; which was given for an inheritance to the posterity of Abraham, Psal. cv. 11. and which was never more fully in their possession than in the times of David: nor the tabernacle or sanctuary of the Lord, as Kimchi; where he desired to dwell, ver. 4. and now had his request granted: but the heavenly glory, the incorruptible inheritance, the inheritance of the saints in light, prefigured by them both; which is the gift of God their Father to them his children; comes to them through the death of Christ the testator; is not of the law, and the works of it; is not acquired nor purchased; but is owing to the free grace of God; to predestinating grace, as the source of it; to justifying grace, through the righteousness of Christ, as the right unto it; and to regenerating and sanctifying grace, as the meetness for it. Wherefore it manifestly belongs to those that *fear the name of the Lord*, himself, his perfections, particularly his goodness; who adore and admire, serve and worship him, internally and externally; not with a slavish fear, but with a filial godly fear. The Targum renders it, "thou hast given an inheritance to "them that fear thy name;" that in the King's Bible is, "an inheritance in the world to come;" so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and the Oriental versions; and which sense is given by Aben Ezra. It may be understood of them that fear the Lord, being the inheritance itself; as they are of Christ, David's son and antitype, and who is designed in the next verse: see Deut. xxxii. 9. Psal. ii. 8. and xvi. 6.

Ver. 6. *Thou wilt prolong the King's life,* &c.] Or *add days to the days of the King*[a]. Meaning either himself, who, though his life was in danger by fighting with the Syrians and Edomites, or rather through the conspiracy of his son; yet was assured that he should yet live many years more, and especially in his posterity; and that his kingdom would be established for ever, as was promised him, 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. Or rather the King Messiah, so the Targum: and Kimchi observes, that if this psalm respects the captivity, the King is the King Messiah: it may be understood of his life as man; who, though he died, rose again, and lives for evermore; and that, as to the glory of God the Father, so to the good of his people, for whom he makes intercession; and of the continuance of his spiritual seed, in whom he may be said to live, and his days be prolonged, Isa. liii. 10. and of the duration of his kingdom, of which there will be no end. For it is an everlasting one, as follows: and *his years as many generations;* he living, and his posterity and kingdom continuing, age after age. The Targum is, "his years "as the generations of this world, and the generations "of the world to come."

Ver. 7. *He shall abide before God for ever,* &c.] Or *sit*[b]; or *may he sit*. Being raised from the dead he was received up to heaven into the presence of God, and sat down at his right hand: where he abides for ever, a Priest upon his throne, having an unchangeable priesthood, Heb. vii. 24. *And prepare mercy and truth,* which *may preserve him;* which, if literally understood of David, is a prayer that the Lord would shew him favour and kindness, and perform his promises to him, whereby his life would be preserved from the plots and conspiracies of his enemies, and his kingdom be established; or that he might be exalted to exercise mercy towards his subjects, and administer justice, or execute the judgment of truth among them; which would make for the preservation of his person, and the support of his throne and government, Prov. xx. 28. But as the words may be applied to the Messiah, they are to be understood, not of the preservation of his corporeal life whilst here on earth; but either of the preservation of his people, in whom he lives, through the mercy and truth of God, expressed in the exertion of his power, by which they are preserved unto the heavenly kingdom and glory; or of the security of his kingdom, which not being of this world, is not supported by worldly power and policy, but in a spiritual manner, and by spiritual means; such as mercy, or *grace and truth:* that is, the doctrines of grace and truth, which came by Christ, and are preached by his ministers, and are the means of continuing, promoting, and preserving his kingdom and interest in the world. Or the words may be rendered, *may mercy and the truth of manna keep thee:* the true manna, Christ; see John vi. 32. or *mercy and truth, as the manna, keep thee*[c]; as that was kept in the golden pot, Exod. xvi. 33. or rather as that kept and sustained the Israelites in the wilderness.

[z] בסתר in abscondito, Pagninus, Montanus; in occultum, Junius & Tremellius.

[a] ימים על ימי מלך תוסיף dies super dies regis adjicies, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[b] ישב sedebit, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Musculus, Cocceius, Michaelis; so Ainsworth; vel sedeat, Vatablus, Gejerus, Amama.

[c] Vid. Hackman. Præcidan. Sacr. tom. 1. p. 71.

Ver. 8. *So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever,* &c.] Or constantly; and not only in this world, but in that to come, for the favours before mentioned; for hearing his prayers; giving him a goodly heritage; prolonging the King's life; and preparing mercy and truth to preserve him. *That I may daily perform my vows:* which is done by praising the Lord, giving him the glory of all mercies, as vowed and promised; see Psal. l. 14. The Targum adds, "in the day of the re-"demption of Israel, and in the day that the King "Messiah shall be anointed, that he may reign."

PSALM LXII.

To the chief Musician, to Jeduthun, A Psalm *of David.*

CONCERNING *Jeduthun*, see the note on the title of psalm thirty-ninth. Kimchi thinks this psalm was written concerning the captivity; and Jarchi על הדתות, concerning the decrees and judgments made against Israel by their enemies; and so some of their ancient expositions[d]; but it seems to have been composed by David when in distress, either through Saul and his courtiers, or by reason of the conspiracy of Absalom. Theodoret takes it to be a prophecy of the persecution of Antiochus in the times of the Maccabees.

Ver. 1. *Truly my soul waiteth upon God,* &c.] In the use of means, for answers of prayer, for performance of promises, and for deliverance from enemies, and out of every trouble: or *is silent*[e], as the Targum; not as to prayer, but as to murmuring; patiently and quietly waiting for salvation until the Lord's time come to give it; being *subject* to him, as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions; resigned to his will, and patient under his afflicting hand: it denotes a quiet, patient, waiting on the Lord, and not merely bodily exercise in outward ordinances; but an inward frame of spirit, a soul-waiting on the Lord, and that in truth and reality, in opposition to mere form and shew; and with constancy *waiteth*, and *only*[f] on him, as the same particle is rendered in ver. 26. and so Aben Ezra here. *From him* cometh *my salvation;* both temporal, spiritual, and eternal, and not from any creature; the consideration of which makes the mind quiet and easy under afflictive providences: the contrivance of everlasting salvation is from the Father, the impetration of it from the Son, and the application of it from the Spirit.

Ver. 2. *He only* is *my Rock and my salvation,* &c.] The Rock on which the church is built, and every believer; and which was David's safety, shelter, and shade, and which made him easy in his present state; and he was the author of his salvation, and the rock and strength of it, Psal. xcv. 1. He is *my defence:* or refuge; see Psal. ix. 9. and xlvi. 7. and lix. 9, 17. *I shall not be greatly moved;* or *with much motion*, as Kimchi; or *with great motions*, as Jarchi: he could not be moved off of the rock on which he was built; nor out of the city of refuge, whither he had betook himself for safety; and though he might be troubled in spirit, and shaken in mind, and staggered in his faith, and fall from some degree of steadfastness of it; yet not fall so as to be utterly cast down, or finally and totally, and so as to perish eternally. Aben Ezra interprets it, *shall not be moved* into the great deep; into the abyss or bottomless pit; and so some of the ancient Midrasses expound רבה of *hell*[g]; but much better is the Targum, "I shall "not be moved in a day of great affliction;" see Acts xx. 23. 1 Thess. iii. 3.

Ver. 3. *How long will ye imagine mischief against a man?* &c.] Against a good man, as the Targum; or against any Israelite, as Kimchi; or rather he means himself, a single man, a weak man, and an innocent one; which aggravated their sin, in devising his hurt, and contriving ways to take away his life, as did Saul and his courtiers; and Absalom, and those that were with him. R. Jonah, from the Arabic language, interprets the word here used of putting or drawing out the tongue to a great length; that is, multiplying words, as lies and calumnies, in agreement with the next verse; but Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi, explain it as we do, of devising mischief. The Targum is, "how long "do ye rage against a good man?" *Ye shall be slain all of you;* this is a further aggravation of their folly, since it would issue in their own ruin; the mischief they devised for him would fall upon themselves. Some understand this דרך תפלה, *by way of prayer;* as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, "may ye be slain all "of you:" there is a double reading of these words; Ben Napthali, who is followed by the eastern Jews, reads them actively, *ye shall slay;* with which agree the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions; and so the Targum, "ye shall become mur-"derers all of you." Ben Asher, who is followed by the western Jews, reads passively as we do, *ye shall be slain;* and which is approved by Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and others. *As a bowing wall* shall ye be, and as *a tottering fence;* which are easily and suddenly pushed down; and so these similes denote the easy, sudden, and certain destruction of those men; see Isa. xxxvi. 13. though some connect the words with the men against whom mischief was imagined by his enemies, who was like a bowing wall and a tottering fence; and so are expressive of his weakness, and of the easy destruction of him; and read the words, *ye shall be slain all of you*, in a parenthesis; but the former sense seems best.

Ver. 4. *They only consult to cast him down from his excellency,* &c.] Either from the excellency of God, from his greatness, and from his height, as

[d] Vid. Yalkut Simeoni in loc.

[e] דומיה silet, Pagninus, Munster, Coccejus; silens, Montanus, Tigurine version; so the Targum.

[f] אך tantum, Pagninus, Montanus, Musculus; tantummodo, Junius & Tremellius, Schmidt.

[g] Vid. Jarchi & Yalkut Simeoni in loc.

Kimchi; or from his grace, as the Arabic version: that is, they consulted to discourage him from looking to God, his rock and fortress, and from trusting in him; or rather, from his own excellency, from that high estate of dignity and honour he was advanced to, or designed for, namely his kingly office. Saul and his courtiers consulted how to prevent his coming to the throne, and Absalom and Ahithophel how to pull him down from it, and seize his crown and kingdom; which latter best agrees with the expression here. *They delight in lies;* in making and in spreading them, in order to hurt his character, and give his subjects an ill opinion of him; and thereby alienate their affections from him, and weaken their allegiance and obedience to him; see Rev. xxii. 15. *They bless with their mouth;* saying, God bless the king, or save the king: *but they curse inwardly;* they curse the king in their hearts, and when by themselves in private, when they imagine nobody hears them; see Eccl. x. 20. *Selah;* see the note on Psal. iii. 2.

Ver. 5. *My soul, wait thou only upon God,* &c.] Be silent and subject to him, acquiesce in his providences, rest in him patiently and quietly, wait for his salvation; see the note on ver. 1. perhaps some new temptation might arise, and David's soul began to be uneasy and impatient; for frames are very changeable things; and therefore he encourages it to be still and quiet, and patiently wait on the Lord, and on him only: *for my expectation is from him;* or *my hope,* as the Targum; the grace of hope is from the Lord, and the thing hoped for is from him; he is the author and the object of it; and his word of promise encourages to the exercise of it; or *my patience;* as the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Arabic versions. The grace of patience is from the Lord; the means of it is his word; and it is exercised, tried, and increased by afflictions sent and sanctified by him; and *expectation* is nothing else than these graces in exercise, a waiting patiently for things hoped for. Old-Testament saints expected the first coming of Christ; New-Testament saints expect his second coming; and all expect good things from him in time and eternity; nor shall their expectation fail and perish; and therefore is a reason why their souls should wait only on the Lord.

Ver. 6. *He only is my rock and my salvation,* &c.] See the note on ver. 2. He is *my defence;* these epithets of God are repeated, to strengthen his faith and hope in him, and to encourage a patient waiting upon him. *I shall not be moved;* neither greatly, nor at all; his faith gets fresh strength and vigour, the more he considers God as his rock, salvation, defence, and refuge; see the note on ver. 2.

Ver. 7. *In God is my salvation,* &c.] Or *upon God*[h]; he that is God over all has took it upon him to save me; he is the author of salvation to me; and it is in him safe and secure, and I shall be saved in him with an everlasting salvation: *and my glory;* the author of all his temporal glory, honour, and dignity; and of all his spiritual glory, which lay in the righteousness of Christ put upon him, and in the grace of God wrought in him; and of the eternal glory he was waiting for; and besides, God was the object of his glorying, of whom he boasted, and in whom he gloried; see Psal. iii. 3. *The rock of my strength,* and *my refuge,* is *in God;* not only his strength, as well as his righteousness and refuge; but the firmness and security of his strength were in God, who is the Rock of ages, in whom is everlasting strength.

Ver. 8. *Trust in him at all times; ye people,* &c.] Of the house of Israel, as the Targum; or of God, as Aben Ezra; all that are Israelites indeed, and are the Lord's covenant-people; these are exhorted and encouraged to trust in him; not in a creature, nor in any outward thing, in riches, wisdom, strength, birth, privileges, the law, and the works of it; in their own righteousness, in their hearts, in themselves or in others; but in the Lord only, both for temporal and spiritual blessings: the Targum is, *in his Word;* his essential Word, by whom the world was made, and who, in the fulness of time, was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and who is a proper object of trust; in him should the people of God trust; in his person for acceptance with God, in his righteousness for justification, in his blood for pardon, in his grace for supply, and in his strength for support, deliverance, and salvation, and that *at all times:* there is no time excepted; there is not a moment in which the Lord is not to be trusted in: he is to be trusted in in adversity as well as in prosperity; in times of affliction, when he is present, and will not forsake; in times of temptation, when his grace is sufficient for them; and in times of darkness, when he will arise and appear unto them. *Pour out your heart before him;* as Hannah did, 1 Sam. i. 15. and as water is poured out, Lam. ii. 19. it means the desires of the heart, the complaints of the soul, the whole of their case which they should spread before the Lord, and make known unto him; see Psal. cii. title, and cxlii. 2. the phrase denotes the abundance of the heart, and of its requests, and the freedom with which they should be made to the Lord; for through the blood and sacrifice of Christ a believer may come to the throne of grace with boldness and liberty, and there freely tell the Lord all his mind, and the whole that is in his heart. *God is a refuge for us. Selah.* To whom the saints may have recourse in all their times of trouble, and where they find safety and plenty, Isa. xxxiii. 16.

Ver. 9. *Surely men of low degree are vanity,* &c.] Or *sons of Adam*[i]; of the earthly man; of fallen Adam; one of his immediate sons was called Hebel, *vanity;* and it is true of all his sons; but here it designs only one sort of them; such as are poor and low in the world; mean men, as the phrase is rendered in Isa. ii. 9. see the note on Psal. xlix. 2. these are subject to sinful vanity; their thoughts are vain, their affections vain, their minds vain, their conversation vain, sinful, foolish, fallacious, and inconstant. The wicked poor are, generally speaking, of all persons, the most wicked; and therefore, though they are the multitude, they are not to be trusted in. The Arabic version is, they are as a *shadow,* fleeting and unstable, no solidity in them; the Syriac version, *as a vapour,* that soon passeth away, like the breath of the mouth, and so not to be accounted

[h] על אלהים super Deo, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis; super Deum, Vatablus, Cocceius.

[i] בני אדם filii Adam, Musculus, Michaelis; nati plebeio homine, Junius & Tremellius; plebeii, Gejerus; sons of base men, Ainsworth.

of. And *men of high degree are a lie*; or *sons of men*: of איש, *the great man*[k], as it is rendered in Isa. ii. 9. noblemen, men of high birth, fortune, rank, and quality; these are a *lie*, fallacious and deceitful: they talk of their blood, as if it was different from the rest of mankind; but, trace them up to their original, Adam, and it is a lie. All men are made of one blood, Acts xvii. 26. their riches promise them peace and pleasure, and long life, but do not give those things, Luke xii. 16—20. their honour is fickle and inconstant: they are set in high places, and those are slippery ones; they are brought to desolation in a moment; and if they continue in them till death, their glory does not descend after them, Psal. xlix. 17. and lxxiii. 18. they make promises of great things to those who apply to them, but rarely perform, and are by no means to be confided in. This distinction of high and low degree is observed in Jam. i. 9, 10. *To be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity*; take a pair of balances, and put men both of high and low degree together in one scale, and vanity in the other, vanity will weigh heaviest; the scale in which men are will go up, as the word[l] here used signifies: they are *in the balances to ascend*; or being put in the balances, they will ascend, and the scale in which vanity is will go down; for, take them altogether, they are *lighter* than that: the word *lighter* is not in the text, but is rightly supplied, as it is by Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech. This last clause, according to the accents, may be best rendered thus; being put *in the balance, they must ascend; they are* lighter *than vanity together*. The Targum is, "if "they should take the sons of men in a balance, and "weigh their fates, they themselves would be *lighter* "than nothing, as one;" or than vanity together.

Ver. 10. *Trust not in oppression*, &c.] Either in the power of oppressing others; see Isa. xxx. 12. or in riches gotten by oppression, which being put into a man's hand by his friend, he keeps, and will not return them; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret it of mammon unlawfully obtained; mammon of unrighteousness, or unrighteous mammon; see Jer. xvii. 11. *And become not vain in robbery*; in riches gotten by open rapine and theft; and men become vain herein when they boast of such riches, place their confidence in them, and think to make atonement for their sins by burnt-sacrifices purchased with them, Isa. lxi. 8. *If riches increase*; in a lawful way, in such manner as the fruits of the earth do, as the word[m] used signifies: if they increase in great abundance from a little, as from one grain of corn many proceed; and insensibly, as the seed sown grows up, a man knows not how, through diligence and the blessing of God from heaven. *Set not your heart* upon them; your affections on them; they are insnaring, they are apt to take the heart from God, to draw off the affections from Christ and things above, to choke the word, and lead into many temptations and hurtful lusts; let not your hearts be elated, or lifted up with them; be not high-minded, or filled with pride and vanity on account of them; nor put any trust in them, for they are uncertain things. Jarchi interprets it of the increase of the riches of others; see Psal. xlix. 16, 17.

Ver. 11. *God hath spoken once*, &c.] One word of his is more to be confided in, and depended on, than all the men and things in the world. The meaning is not that God hath only spoke once; he has spoke often; he spoke all things out of nothing in creation; he spoke all the words of the law at Mount Sinai; he spoke by the prophets under the Old-Testament dispensation, and by his Son in the last days, and still by the ministers of the Gospel: but the sense is, that what God has once spoken stands; it is irreversible and immutable; it is firm, sure, and unalterable; he does not repent, he cannot lie, nor will he alter the thing that is gone out of his lips; and therefore his word is to be trusted to, when men of high degree are a lie. *Twice have I heard this*; that is, many times, as Kimchi explains it: the Targum refers this, and the preceding clause, to the delivery of the law: "one law God spake, and twice "we heard it from the mouth of Moses the great scribe;" but the meaning is, that the psalmist had heard of two things, and was well assured of the truth of them, and which were the foundation of his trust and confidence; one is mentioned in this verse, and the other in the next; the first is, *that power* belongeth *unto God*; great power, even almighty power, as appears from the creation of all things out of nothing, the preservation of them in their beings, the government of the world, the redemption of his people by Christ, the work of grace upon their hearts by his Spirit, the perseverance of the saints, their deliverance from their enemies, and the destruction of them. The ancient Cabalists[n] among the Jews have endeavoured, from this passage, to establish a Trinity in unity, they speak of "three superior "*Sephirot*, or numbers; and of them it is said, *God* "*hath spoken once, twice have I heard this*: once and "twice, lo, the three superior numbers, of whom it is "said, one, one, one, three ones; and this is the meaning of *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this*; "*this* in it makes them one."

Ver. 12. *Also unto thee, O Lord*, belongeth *mercy*, &c.] This is the other thing the psalmist had heard, and was assured of, and which encouraged his hope and trust in the Lord; that mercy belonged to him, Psal. cxxx. 7. as appears, not only from the common bounties of his providence, daily bestowed upon his creatures; but from the special gift of his Son, and of all spiritual mercies and blessings in him; from the regeneration of the Lord's people, the pardon of their sins, and their eternal salvation. *For thou renderest to every man according to his work*; and which is a reason proving that both power and mercy belong to God; power in punishing the wicked according to their deserts, and mercy in rewarding the saints, not in a way of merit, or of debt, but of grace. Some interpret the words, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe, *though thou renderest*, &c. that is, God is gracious and merciful, though he is also just and righteous in rendering to every man as his work is, whether it be good or evil.

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[k] בני איש nati præstante viro, Junius & Tremellius; sons of noble men, Ainsworth. Vid. Schindler. col. 914.

[l] לעלות ascendant, Pagninus, Cocceius; so Musculus, Junius & Tremellius, &c.

[m] ינוב cum pullulaverit, Montanus; efflorescunt, Cocceius; germinant, fructificant, Amama.

[n] Tikkune Zohar, Correct. 25. fol. 83. 1.

PSALM LXIII.

A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

THIS psalm was composed by David, either when he was persecuted by Saul, and obliged to hide himself in desert places, as in the forest of Hareth, the wildernesses of Ziph, Maon, and En-gedi, 1 Sam. xxii. 5. and xxiii. 14, 24, 25. and xxiv. 1. all which were in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 55, 62. or when his son Absalom rebelled against him, which obliged him to flee from Jerusalem, and go the way of the wilderness, where Ziba and Barzillai sent him food, lest his young men that were with him should faint there, 2 Sam. xv. 23. and xvi. 2. and xvii. 29. The Septuagint version, and those that follow that, call it the wilderness of Idumea, or Edom, as the Arabic version; and so the Chaldee paraphrase, "in the wilderness which "was on the border of the tribe of Judah;" as Edom was, Josh. xv. 21. so the Messiah, David's son, was in a wilderness, where he was tempted by the devil, and where he was hungry and thirsty in a literal sense, as David was here in a spiritual sense, as the psalm shews, Matt. iv. 1, 2. and the church of God, whom David sometimes personates, is said to be in a wilderness, where she is fed for a time, and times, and half a time, even during the whole reign of the antichristian beast, Rev. xii. 14. and, indeed, all the saints are, at one time or another, in a desert condition, and whilst they are here are in the wilderness of the people, Hos. ii. 14. Ezek. xx. 35.

Ver. 1. *O God, thou* art *my God*, &c.] Not by nature only, or by birth; not merely as an Israelite and son of Abraham; but by grace through Christ, and in virtue of an everlasting covenant, the blessings and promises of which were applied unto him; and he, by faith, could now claim his interest in them, and in his God as his covenant-God; who is a God at hand and afar off, was his God in the wilderness of Judea, as in his palace at Jerusalem. The Targum is, "thou "art my strength." *Early will I seek thee; or I will morning thee*[*]; I will seek thee as soon as the morning appears; and so the Targum, "I will arise in the "morning before thee;" it has respect to prayer in the morning, and to seeking God betimes, and in the first place; see Psal. v. 3. and lv. 17. or *diligently*[p]; as a merchant seeks for goodly pearls, or other commodities suitable for him; so Aben Ezra suggests, as if the word was to be derived, not from שחר, *the morning*, but from סחר, *merchandise*; and those who seek the Lord both early and diligently shall find him, and not lose their labour, Prov. ii. 4, 5. and viii. 17. Heb. xi. 6. *My soul thirsteth for thee*; after his word, worship, and ordinances; after greater knowledge of him, communion with him, and more grace from him; particularly after pardoning grace and justifying righteousness; see Psal. xlii. 1, 2. Matt. v. 6. *My flesh longeth for thee*; which is expressive of the same thing in different words; and denotes, that he most earnestly desired, with his whole self, his heart, soul, and strength, that he might enjoy the presence of God. *In a dry and thirsty land, where no water is*; such was the wilderness of Judea, where he now was, and where he was destitute of the means of grace, of the ordinances of God's house, and wanted comfort and refreshment for his soul, which he thirsted and longed after, as a thirsty man after water in a desert place.

Ver. 2. *To see thy power and thy glory*, &c.] Either the ark, as the Jewish writers generally interpret it; the symbol of God's presence and glory, and which is called his strength and his glory; see Psal. lxxviii. 61. and cxxxii. 8. or rather the Lord Christ, who is the power of God, as well as the wisdom of God; by whom he made the world, and upholds it; by whom he has redeemed his people, and keeps and preserves them; and whose power is seen in the efficacy of the word and ordinances: and who is also the glory of God; he is the brightness of his Father's glory; his glory is the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father; he has the same glorious nature, perfections, names, homage, and worship; and the glory of all the divine attributes is displayed in the work of salvation and redemption he has wrought out; and this glory is to be seen, through the glass of the word and ordinances, in the house of God. Hence it follows; *so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary*; where he comes and blesses his people, and manifests himself unto them, as he does not unto the world; where his goings are seen, and his footsteps traced, Psal. lxviii. 24. The psalmist calls to mind former experiences in the sanctuary; and these stimulate him to an eager desire of fresh tastes of the grace of God, and clearer views of his power and glory. Or, as in a dry and thirsty land my soul longed and thirsted for thee, so have I desired to see thee in the sanctuary; or so I see thee there as if in the sanctuary.

Ver. 3. *Because thy loving-kindness* is *better than life*, &c.] For life without the love of God is nothing else than death: a man that has no share in the love of God is dead while he lives: all the enjoyments of life, health, riches, honour, friends, &c. are nothing without the love of God; the meanest temporal blessings with it are preferable to the greatest without it, Prov. xv. 17. it lasts longer than life, and therefore must be better than that; death cannot separate from it; it continues to all eternity. And that the saints prefer it to this natural life' appears by their readiness to lay it down for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, in which the loving-kindness of God is so richly manifested unto them; to which may be added, that it is the love of God which gives to his people spiritual life, and which issues in eternal life, and therefore must be better than a temporal one. The Targum is, "for better is thy "kindness, which thou wilt do for the righteous in

[*] אשחרך sub auroram quaero te, Piscator.

[p] Studiosissime, Gejerus, Michaelis.

" the world to come, than the life which thou givest " the wicked in this world." *My lips shall praise thee*: that is, for thy loving-kindness, and because it is better than life, and any enjoyment of it.

Ver. 4. *Thus will I bless thee while I live*, &c.] With his whole heart and soul, as he had sought after him, and as under a sense of his loving-kindness; and as he now praised him with his lips, so he determined to do as long as he had life and being; by proclaiming his blessedness, by ascribing blessing and honour to him, and by giving him the glory of all mercies temporal and spiritual. *I will lift up my hands in thy name*: not against his enemies, against those that fought against him, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it, but unto God in heaven; and that not as a gesture used in swearing, but either in blessing, as Aben Ezra observes; so the high-priest lifted up his hands when he blessed the people; or in prayer, or in both, so Jarchi's note is, to pray and to praise: see the note on Psal. xxviii. 2. The Targum is, " in the name of thy " Word I will spread out my hands in prayer for " the world to come;" that is, in the name of the Messiah, the essential Word, in whose name prayer is to be made, and whereby it becomes prevalent and successful; see John xiv. 13, 14. and xvi. 23, 24, 26. This is a prayer-gesture; see the note on Psal. xxviii. 2.

Ver. 5. *My soul shall be satisfied as* with *marrow and fatness*, &c.] When he should return to the house of the Lord, and partake of the provisions of it, called the fatness of his house, Psal. xxxvi. 8. see the note there. The phrase denotes the abundance of spiritual refreshment and delight in the word and ordinances, and the great satisfaction had in them; and may have some regard to benefits arising from prayer, as well as other ordinances. Fat was not to be eaten under the legal dispensation, and therefore not to be literally taken; but in the typical and spiritual sense which David understood, and therefore respects that, or otherwise he would speak contrary to the law of God: he refers to those spiritual good things which they typified, and give spiritual pleasure and satisfaction. *And my mouth shall praise* thee *with joyful lips*; such a full meal, such a rich entertainment, calls for abundant thankfulness; which is here signified by the mouth praising the Lord, and doing this with lips of shouting, expressions of joy, songs of praise, jubilee-songs. The allusion is to the use of music and singing at festivals; see Isa. v. 12.

Ver. 6. *When I remember thee upon my bed*, &c.] Or *beds*[a]; seeing he lay in many, as Kimchi observes, being obliged to flee from place to place. The sense is, that when he was on his bed in the night-season, when alone, and free from worldly cares and fatigues, and called to mind the love of God to him, the past experience of his kindness, his promises to him, and the fulfilment of them; that he should then be delightfully entertained, abundantly satisfied, and his mouth be filled with songs of praise. And *meditate on thee in the night-watches*; which the Jewish writers on the text say were three, as they were with the Jews, but with the Romans four; see the note on Matt. xiv. 25. and the night, in the times of Homer[r], was divided into three parts: the night-season is a very proper one for meditation on the perfections, providences, promises, word and works of God; and which is very delightful and profitable, when attended with the presence, spirit, and grace of God. The Targum is, " in the watches I " will meditate on thy word."

Ver. 7. *Because thou hast been my help*, &c.] Or, *that thou hast been my help*[s]; and so the words may be considered as the subject of his meditation in the night-watches, at least as a part of it; and as what gave him a great deal of pleasure to reflect upon, how the Lord had been in times past a present help to him in time of trouble. *Therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice*; meaning under the protecting power of God, where he knew he was safe, and therefore had reason to rejoice. The allusion is to the chirping of chickens under the wing of the hen; see Psal. lvii. 1. and lxi. 4. The Targum is, " in the " shadow of thy Shechinah will I rejoice;" referring it may be to the Shechinah, or presence of God, between the cherubim, whose wings overshadowed the mercy-seat.

Ver. 8. *My soul followeth hard after thee*, &c.] In a way of duty, and in the use of means; as prayer, meditation, *&c.* though at a distance from the house of God, and worship of it; that he might not lose sight of him; that he might know more of him, and have more communion with him; being drawn after him with the cords of love, and strongly affected to him. Or, *my soul cleaveth after thee*, or *to thee*[t]; not to the world, and the things of it; not to that which is evil, but to that which is good, even the *summum bonum*; not to the creature, but to the Lord; which is expressive of union to him, even such an one as is between man and wife, who cleave to each other, and are one flesh, Gen. ii. 24. and as is between head and members, vine and branches; see 1 Cor. vi. 17. and of communion in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty. To cleave to the Lord is to hold to him, the head; to exercise the graces of faith, hope, and love upon him; and to follow him in his ways and worship; to abide by his truths; to attend his ordinances; to keep close to his people, and to adhere firmly to his cause and interest; see Acts xi. 23. The Targum is, " my " soul cleaveth after thy law." *Thy right hand upholdeth me*: that he fell not through the snares laid for him, and the stumbling-blocks thrown in his way; that he stood and bore up under all his afflictions, temptations, and difficulties; that he was enabled to follow hard after the Lord, and cleave unto him; this supported, supplied, and protected him, even the mighty power and grace of God. In what a happy, comfortable, and safe condition must the psalmist be! his soul following hard after the Lord; and the Lord holding and sustaining him with his right hand! and how vain must be the attempts of his enemies against him! whose destruction is next predicted.

[a] יצועי stratis meis, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius; so Junius & Tremellius, Ainsworth.
[r] Iliad. 10. v. 252, 253.

[s] כי quod, Musculus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.
[t] דבקה אחריך adhaesit post te, Montanus, Gejerus; tibi adhaesit, Tigurine version; so Piscator, Michaelis.

Ver. 9. *But those that seek my soul to destroy it*, &c.] Meaning his life; for as for his soul, that was immaterial and immortal, and could never be destroyed by man: but as for his natural life, his enemies laid snares for that, and sought to take it away, and nothing less would satisfy them. *Shall go into the lower parts of the earth;* not the grave, whither the righteous go as well as the wicked; besides, by their being the portion of foxes, as follows, it seems that they should have no burial; but hell is meant, the bottomless pit. Some take it to be a prayer, as Kimchi and Ben Melech; *may they go*, or *let them go*, &c. see Psal. lv. 15. The allusion may be thought to be to the death of Korah and his company.

Ver. 10. *They shall fall by the sword*, &c.] As Saul, his sons, and mighty men, did, 1 Sam. xxxi. 4, 5, 6. or, *they shall make him pour out*[u]; that is, his blood, *by the hands* or means *of the sword;* meaning either some principal enemy, as Saul in particular, or every one of his enemies; who should be thrust with the sword, their blood let out, and they slain: so antichrist, the enemy of David's son, will be put to death in this manner, Rev. xiii. 10. *They shall be a portion for foxes:* falling in desolate places where foxes run, and so become the food of them, and have no other burial. The foxes hunt after dead carcasses, and will find them out where they are, in holes and ditches; as appears from the case of Aristomenes, related by Pausanias[w]: so the followers of antichrist, their flesh will be eaten by the fowls of heaven, Rev. xix. 17, 18.

Ver. 11. *But the king shall rejoice in God*, &c.] Not Saul, as R. Obadiah; as if David wished him well, and that he might have reason to rejoice in God, though he sought his hurt; which sense is rejected by Aben Ezra: but either David, who speaks of himself as king, being anointed by Samuel, and who, upon the death of Saul, was so in fact; and who rejoiced, not merely at the destruction of his enemies, for he lamented the death of Saul, 2 Sam. i. 17. but in God, in his grace and goodness to him, and in his power and justice shewn in the vengeance taken on them. Or rather, the King Messiah, who rejoiced in God because of the good of his people, their conversion and salvation, and their deliverance from their enemies, Psal. xxi. 1. Luke x. 21. *Every one that sweareth by him shall glory;* not by David, though such a form of swearing was used; see 2 Sam. xv. 21. or, *to him;* and so describes his faithful subjects swearing allegiance to him: but rather by the Lord, in whom the king should rejoice; and designs the worshippers of him; swearing by him being sometimes put for the whole worship and service of God, Deut. vi. 13. The Heathens used to swear by their deities, and their chief was called Jupiter Horcius, because he presided over oaths[x]. Or else that the King Christ should rejoice in God; and intends such as believe in him and confess him; see Isa. xlv. 23. compared with Rom. xiv. 11. And every such an one will glory, not in themselves, nor in any thing of theirs, but in Christ, in his grace and righteousness, and in what he is unto them. *But the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped;* such as Saul's courtiers, who invented and spread lies of David; but now upon the death of Saul, and David's advancement to the throne, would be silent; their mouths being stopped either by death, or through fear: and so all the followers of antichrist, that make and believe a lie, will have their mouths stopped, when cast into the lake of fire, Rev. xxi. 8.

PSALM LXIV.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

THIS psalm is applied by R. Obadiah to Haman and Mordecai. The enemy is Haman, the perfect man shot at is Mordecai; about whom Haman communed with his friends to lay snares for him, and searched diligently for occasions against him and his people, which issued in his own destruction. The ancient Midrash[y] of the Jews applies it to Daniel, when cast into the den of lions; and Jarchi supposes that David, by a spirit of prophecy, foresaw it, and prayed for him who was of his seed; and that every thing in the psalm beautifully falls in with that account: Daniel is the perfect man aimed at; the enemy are the princes of Darius's court, who consulted against him, communed of laying snares for him, and gained their point, which proved their own ruin. But the psalm literally belongs to David, by whom it was composed. The Arabic versions call it a psalm of David, when Saul persecuted him; and the Syriac version refers it to the time when Gad said to him, abide not in the hold, 1 Sam. xxii. 5. He is the perfect man, who was upright and innocent as to what he was charged with in respect to Saul; who is the enemy, from the fear of whom he desires his life might be preserved; and who with his courtiers took counsel against him, and laid deep schemes to destroy him, but at last were destroyed themselves. Moreover, the psalm may very well be applied to the Messiah, the son of David, and who was his antitype, and especially in his sufferings: he is the perfect man in the highest sense; the Jews were the enemies that took counsel, and searched for occasions against him, and accomplished their designs in a good measure; for which wrath came upon them to the uttermost. The psalmist also may be very well thought to personate the church and people of God; who in all ages have had their enemies and their fears; against whom wicked

[u] יגירהו fundere facient eum, Montanus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.

[w] Messenica, sive l. 4. p. 251.

[x] Euripidis Medea, v. 170. Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 5. c. 10.

[y] Apud Jarchium & Yalkut Simeoni in loc.

men have devised mischief, and levelled their arrows of persecution; though no weapon formed against them shall prosper.

Ver. 1. *Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer*, &c.] The prayer of the psalmist was vocal, and expressed in a mournful manner, with groans and cries, as the word [a] used signifies, and with great ardour and fervency; his condition, by reason of his enemies, being very distressing, and therefore he is very eager and earnest that he might be heard. *Preserve my life from fear of the enemy;* David had his enemies, Saul and his courtiers, and was afraid of them; Christ had his enemies, the wicked Jews, who sought his life before the time, and therefore he walked no more in Jury till near the time; and whose human nature was sometimes possessed of the fears of death, though they were sinless ones: the church and people of God have their enemies; as the men of the world, who revile, reproach, and persecute them; Satan their adversary, who goes about seeking to devour them; and their own corruptions and lusts, which war against their souls; and death, the last enemy, which is so to human nature, though by the grace of Christ friendly to the saints. And the people of God have their fears of these enemies; they are afraid of men, their revilings and persecutions, though they have no reason, since God is on their side; and of Satan, whose fiery darts and buffetings are very distressing, though if resisted he will flee; and of their own corruptions, lest they should one day perish by them; or, at least, lest they should break out, to the wounding of their souls, and the dishonour of God: and some of them, through fear of death, are all their life-time subject to bondage: which fears, though they are not the saints' excellencies, but their infirmities, yet are consistent with the grace of God; and under the power and influence of these fears they apprehend sometimes their life to be in danger; and therefore pray to the God of their life, who has given them it, and is the preserver of it, that he would preserve their natural life, as he does: as also their spiritual life, which is preserved by him; is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord their God, and is hid with Christ in God.

Ver. 2. *Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked*, &c.] The word used denotes both the place where wicked men meet together for consultation; see Gen. xlix. 6. Psal. i. 1. and the counsel itself they there take; from the bad effects of which the psalmist desired to be hid and preserved. So Saul and his courtiers secretly took counsel against David, and the Jews against Christ, and that very privily and secretly; see Matt. xxvi. 3. and xxvii. 1. *From the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:* their noise, rage, and tumult; see Psal. ii. 1, 2. The former phrase denotes their secret machinations and designs, and this their open violence; and the persons that entered into such measures are no other than evil-doers and workers of iniquity; though they might be under a profession of religion, as David's enemies, and the Jews, who were Christ's enemies, were, Matt. vii. 22, 23. and who are further described in the next verses.

Ver. 3. *Who whet their tongue like a sword*, &c.] Use cutting, wounding, killing, and devouring words; on which they set an edge, and make them keener and keener, to hurt and ruin the characters and reputations of good men, and grieve and distress their minds. And *bend* their bows to shoot *their arrows, even bitter words;* such are the false doctrines of heretical men, which are roots of bitterness, that defile some and trouble others; such are the oaths and curses of profane sinners, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; and such are the blasphemies of antichrist against God, against his tabernacle, and against them that dwell therein; and such are the hard speeches spoken by ungodly sinners against Christ and his people; these are like arrows shot from a bow, and full of deadly poison. The Targum is, "they stretch out "their bows, they anoint their arrows with deadly "and bitter poison." There seems to be an allusion to fixing letters in arrows, and so shooting or directing them where it was desired they should fall and be taken up; so Timoxenus and Artobazus sent letters to one another in this way, at the siege of Potidæa [a]; and after the same manner, the Jews say [b], Shebna and Joab sent letters to Sennacherib, acquainting him that all Israel were willing to make peace with him; but Hezekiah and Isaiah would not suffer them.

Ver. 4. *That they may shoot in secret at the perfect*, &c.] Meaning himself, who though not without sin, and far from perfection in himself, in the sight of God and with respect to his righteous law, which was exceeding broad; and therefore he saw an end of all perfection, and desired that God would not enter into judgment with him; but yet, in the case of Saul, he was quite clear and innocent, and without fault. Likewise the Messiah, of whom David was a type, may be meant; who has all the perfections of the divine and human nature in him, and is without sin, holy, harmless, pure, and undefiled: and it may be applied to the church and people of God, who, though they are not perfect in themselves, far from it, sin being in them, and their graces weak; unless it be in a comparative sense; yet they are perfect in Christ Jesus, their souls being clothed with his righteousness, and so are the spirits of just men made perfect. And this character may also respect the truth and sincerity of grace in them, and the uprightness of their hearts and conversation; and such as these wicked men level their arrows at, and direct their spite and venom against, and that in the most private and secret manner. *Suddenly do they shoot at him;* as unseen by him, so unawares to him. *And fear not;* neither God nor judgment to come. Though some understand this of the perfect, who, though shot at in this manner, are intrepid and courageous, and have no fear of their enemies; but the former sense seems best, which describes persons that neither fear God, nor regard man.

Ver. 5. *They encourage themselves in an evil matter*, &c.] Or *strengthen him* [c]; that is, Saul, by making use of arguments and reasonings to induce him to go on in his wicked persecution of David; or they

[a] בשיחי in querimonia mea, Tigurine version; in oratione mea gemebunda, Gejerus; so Michaelis.

[a] Herodot. Urania, sive l. 8. c. 128.

[b] Derash R. Aba in Kimchi in Psal. xi. 2.

[c] יחזקו למו firmant illi, Muis.

strengthened and hardened themselves in their wickedness, as Saul's courtiers and the enemies of Christ did, and as all wicked men do, when they observe the sentence against them is not speedily executed, Eccl. viii. 11. *They commune of laying snares privily*; that is, they conversed together, and consulted how to lay snares for the perfect man in the most private manner, that they might entrap him and destroy him. *They say, who shall see them?* either the snares laid, or the persons that laid them? None; no, not even God himself; see Psal. x. 11, 14.

Ver. 6. *They search out iniquities*, &c.] The Targum adds, "to destroy the just." Either occasions against them, by charging them with sin and suborning false witnesses against them, as did the enemies both of David and Christ; they sought for proper time and opportunity of committing the iniquities they were bent upon, and even searched for new sins, being inventors of evil things, Rom. i. 30. *They accomplish a diligent search*; diligently searched out the perfect man, and found him; and also false witnesses against him, and carried their point; which was especially true with respect to Christ. *Both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep*; being full of cunning, craftiness and wickedness, so as not to be searched out and fully known; see Psal. v. 9. Jer. xvii. 9.

Ver. 7. *But God shall shoot at them* with *an arrow*, &c.] With one or other of his four judgments; famine, pestilence, sword, and wild beasts, Ezek. xiv. 21. which he brings upon wicked men; and may be compared to arrows, as they are, Ezek. v. 16, 17. Psal. xci. 5, 6. Deut. xxxii. 41, 42. because they move swiftly. The judgment of wicked men lingereth not, though it may seem to do so; and because they often come suddenly and at an unawares, when men are crying Peace, peace; and because they are sharp and piercing, penetrate deep and stick fast, and wound and kill; they are not arrows of deliverance, unless to the Lord's people, who, by his judgments on the wicked, are delivered from them; but destroying ones, 2 Kings xiii. 17. Psal. cxliv. 6. when God draws the bow and shoots, execution is done. This is said in opposition to what wicked men do, ver. 3, 4. and in just retaliation; they shoot at the perfect, and God shoots at them. *Suddenly shall they be wounded*; with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, with a deadly wound that shall never be healed; not with the arrow of God's word, but with the stroke of his hand; which comes suddenly, falls heavy, and makes the wound incurable.

Ver. 8. *So shall they make their own tongue to fall upon themselves*, &c.] The evil things they have wished for, threatened unto, and imprecated on others, shall come upon themselves; the curses they have cursed others with shall come upon themselves; the pit they have dug for others, they fall into. So Haman, to whom some apply the psalm, was hanged on the gallows he made for Mordecai; and the accusers of Daniel, to whom others apply it, were cast into the same den of lions they procured for him; and Babylon, who has been drunk with the blood of the saints, shall have blood given her to drink. *All that see them shall flee away*; not being able to help them, nor to bear the horrible sight, and fearing the same judgments should fall on themselves; see Numb. xvi. 34. Rev. xviii. 10, 15. Or, *they shall move themselves* [a]; shake their heads in a way of derision, as Jarchi interprets it; or skip for joy, as the word is rendered in Jer. xlviii. 27. and then it must be understood of the righteous; who, seeing the vengeance on the wicked, rejoice, as in Psal. lii. 6. and lviii. 10. though, as they are afterwards particularly mentioned, others seem to be designed. The word is used for lamenting and bemoaning one's self, in Jer. xxxi. 18. and so may be applied to the friends of the wicked lamenting and bemoaning their ruin, and their being bereaved of them, Rev. xviii. 9, 11.

Ver. 9. *And all men shall fear*, &c.] Either God himself, or his judgments: they shall be affrighted at them, learn righteousness by them, worship God, and give glory to him; they shall fear him as King of saints, his judgments being made manifest; not with a slavish fear, but with reverence and godly fear; see Rev. xi. 13. and xv. 4. *And shall declare the work of God*; the punishments inflicted on wicked men; his work of justice and judgment, which is his work, his strange work; for there is no evil of punishment but the Lord has done it, Isa. xxviii. 21. Amos iii. 6. *For they shall wisely consider of his doings*; consider that it is done by him, and done well and wisely, after the counsel of his own will; and so consider it as to be admonished, and take warning and caution by it. This is the use men in general should make of such dispensations of Providence; the use the righteous in particular make of them follows:

Ver. 10. *The righteous shall be glad in the Lord*, &c.] They rejoice at the vengeance executed on the wicked; but then their joy centres in the Lord: it is not at the ruin of the wicked, simply considered, but because of the glory of God's justice displayed therein, and of his grace and mercy to them. They rejoice in the Lord, because of what he is unto them, and because of what he has done for them; because of his righteousness they are clothed with, from whence they are denominated righteous ones; and because of the salvation he has wrought out for them; and they are the more affected with it when they see the calamities, woes, and destruction of wicked men; see the note on Psal. xxxii. 11. *And shall trust in him*; who is known by his judgments he executes on the wicked; and the more he is known, be it in what way it will, the more is he trusted in, Psal. ix. 10, 16. The Targum paraphrases it, "and shall trust in his Word;" either in his word of promise, or rather in his essential Word, Christ. *And all the upright in heart shall glory*; not in men, nor in themselves, nor in any creature, or creature-enjoyments; nor in their wisdom, strength, riches, nor righteousness; but in Christ, in his wisdom, righteousness, and strength; in whom all the seed of Israel are justified and glory; and in what he is to them, and has done for them; of the upright in heart, see the note on Psal. xxxii. 11.

[a] יתנודדו amovebunt se, Montanus; commovebuntur, Vatablus.

PSALM LXV.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm and Song of David.

SOME copies of the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions read "a song of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, *sung* "by the people of the captivity, when they were about "to come out;" and some copies have *Haggai*: but though it is possible it might be sung upon that occasion, it is certain it was not then composed, but was written by David, as the genuine title shews: as for Jeremiah, he was not carried captive to Babylon, and Ezekiel died before the return of the people from it; nor is there any thing in the psalm relating to that captivity. The title of it, indeed, in the Arabic version, is concerning the captivity of the people; which it seems to have taken from some Greek copy; and Kimchi and Arama interpret it of the captivity of the people of the Jews; but then they mean their present captivity, and their deliverance from it. According to the title of it in the Syriac version, the occasion of it was the bringing up of the ark of God to Sion; and Aben Ezra is of opinion that David composed the psalm at that time; or that one of the singers composed it at the building of the temple, and which he thinks is right, and perhaps is concluded from ver. 1, 3. and who also says it was composed in a year of drought; but it rather seems to have been written in a year of great plenty, as the latter part of it shews; and the whole seems to respect the fruitful, flourishing, and happy state of the church in Gospel times, for which it is a song of praise.

Ver. 1. *Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion*, &c.] Who dwells in Sion, as Jarchi interprets it; and so the Targum; whose Shechinah, or glorious Majesty, is in Sion; see Psal. lxxvi. 2. or else Sion, which designs no other than the church of God, and which is so called under the Gospel dispensation, Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xiv. 1. is the place where *praise* waits for God, that being the city of our solemnities, as well as the city of the great King; and not only a house of prayer, but of praise, where the sacrifices, both of prayer and praise, are offered to God through Christ with acceptance: and praise may be said to *wait* for him here, because it is *due* to him here, as some render it, on account of many blessings and privileges of grace here enjoyed, through the word and ordinances; and because the people of God wait upon him here with their tribute of praise, which is comely in them to bring, and is *agreeable* and acceptable to him; and because it *remains*, abides, and continues here; or, in other words, the saints are continually praising the Lord here, giving thanks to him always for all things, Psal. lxxxiv. 4. Eph. v. 20. some render the words *praise is silent for thee*[e]; because there is no end of it, as Jarchi observes; or, because of the greatness of the works of the Lord, praise cannot reach him, as Ben Melech expresses it. The greatest shouts, and loudest acclamations of praise, are but silence in comparison of what ought, if it could be expressed, on account of the nature, perfections, and works of God. The Targum is, "before thee praise is reputed as silence." In the king of Spain's Bible it is, "the praise of angels is reputed "before thee as silence;" perhaps it may be best rendered, to *thee* belong, or are due, *silence* and *praise*[f]; there ought to be first a silent and quiet waiting upon God for mercies wanted, and which he has promised to give; and, when they are bestowed, praise should be rendered unto him. Gussetius[g] gives the sense of the words, and renders them, "praise, which is thine "image, which bears a likeness to thee, shall be paid "in Sion." *And unto thee shall the vow be performed*; that is, of praise and thankfulness for deliverance and salvation, made in a time of trouble and distress; see Psal. lxvi. 13, 14.

Ver. 2. *O thou that hearest prayer*, &c.] So as to answer it sooner or later, in one way or another, and always in the fittest time, and in the best way; so as to fulfil the requests and supply the wants of men, so far as may be for their good, and God's glory; which is a proof of the omnipresence, omniscience, and all-sufficiency of God; who can hear the prayers of his people in all places at the same time, and knows all their persons and wants, and what is most proper for them, and can and does supply all their needs, and causes all grace to abound towards them; and it also shews his wondrous grace and condescension, to listen to the cries and regard the prayers of the poor and destitute. *Unto thee shall all flesh come*; being encouraged by the above character of him. All sorts of persons may come to him; men of all nations, of every rank and degree, condition and circumstance; there is no bar unto nor bounds about the throne of grace; the way to it lies open through the Mediator; and all sensible sinners shall and do come thither, though they are but *flesh*, frail and mortal, corrupt and sinful creatures, and know themselves to be so; and they that come aright come through Christ, the new and living way, in his name, and in the faith of him, and of being heard for his sake, and under the gracious influences of the spirit of grace and supplication: it may be considered as a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, and of their calling upon God through Christ, and of their coming to God in his house, which was to be, and is, an house of prayer to all people, Isa. lvi. 7. Zech. viii. 21, 22, 23.

Ver. 3. *Iniquities prevail against me*, &c.] Or, *are mightier than I*[h]; this may be understood either of the iniquities of others, his enemies; their *words of iniquities*[i]; or iniquitous words, as in the Hebrew text;

[e] לך דמיה תהלה tibi silet laus, Pagninus, Vatablus.
[f] Tibi silentium est & laus, Piscator, Gejerus.
[g] Ebr. Comment. p. 193.

[h] מני prae me, Muis, Michaelis.
[i] דברי עונת verba iniquitatum, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

their calumnies, reproaches, false charges, and accusations, which prevailed against David in Saul's court; or rather his own iniquities, inward lusts, in-dwelling sins, as well as open transgressions, which he considers as his enemies, as numerous and powerful, too mighty for him, which warred against him, and sometimes got the ascendant of him, and threatened him with utter ruin and destruction; but amidst all this he spies atonement and pardon through the blood and sacrifice of Christ, as follows. As for *our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away;* not only his own, but others, which Christ has done by the sacrifice of himself; and when his blood is applied to the conscience of a sensible sinner, it purges it from all his sins, Heb. i. 3. and ix. 14. it may be rendered, *thou shalt expiate them*, or *make atonement for them* [k]; which Christ, our propitiation, has done: this was the work appointed him, which he undertook, came into the world to do, and has performed, Dan. ix. 24. Heb. ii. 17. and ix. 26. or *thou shalt cover them;* with the blood and righteousness of Christ; or forgive them for the sake of them, Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.

Ver. 4. *Blessed* is the man whom *thou choosest*, &c.] In eternity; both to grace and glory; for such have true faith in Christ given them, called the faith of God's elect, and shall never perish: they are effectually called by the grace of God, and are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and shall be glorified; or in time, for there is a choice in time, as the fruit, effect, and evidence of the eternal choice, and is no other than effectual vocation; see John xv. 19. 1 Cor. i. 26. and happy are those who are both chosen and called; both election and vocation are to grace and glory, and spring from the good will and pleasure of God; and the Targum in the king of Spain's Bible is, "blessed is the "man in whom thou art well-pleased." *And causest to approach* unto thee; the same Targum supplies, "unto the fear of thee;" or unto thy fear and worship. The persons whom God has chosen for himself are, in their state of nature, at a distance from him by reason of sin; and through the blood and sacrifice of Christ, by which atonement is made, they are brought nigh to him; and in the faith of Christ the Mediator, their hearts are engaged to approach unto God, and come with boldness to his throne, and ask grace and mercy of him; and through the grace of Christ they have nearness to him, and communion with him, Eph. ii. 13, 18. and iii. 12. That *he may dwell in thy courts;* or *he shall dwell* [l]; the man that is chosen of God, and brought nigh by Christ; he shall not only come into the house of God, and tread in his courts, but he shall dwell there, ever abide, and never go out. *We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house;* even all that are like this man, chosen by the grace of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, brought into the house of God, and have a place and a name there, better than that of sons and daughters of men: by *the house* of God we are to understand the church of God; and by *the goodness* of it the provisions of grace in it, the word and ordinances, and the blessings of grace held forth in them, and especially Christ the bread of life, whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed; of which true believers may eat, and do to full satisfaction; and blessed are they that have such food, and appetites for it, and are filled with it. The Targum paraphrases it, "the righteous shall say, we "shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house." It follows, even *of thy holy temple;* which means the same as the house of God; namely, the church: see Eph. ii. 21. Some, as Aben Ezra observes, interpret it, *thou holy One in thy temple;* as if it was an address to God, and a description of him as in his temple.

Ver. 5. By *terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us*, &c.] Not by afflictive dispensations of Providence, which, though disagreeable to flesh and blood, and are sometimes terrible to good men, when they apprehend the wrath of God in them, and look upon them as punishments for sin; yet these are consistent with the love of God to them, are for their spiritual good, and, when viewed in this light, they rejoice and glory in them; but as afflictions are not prayed for, nor to be prayed for, there being no direction for it, nor example of it, they cannot be considered as answers of prayer; but the Lord answers his people in this way, by inflicting judgments on their enemies: by such terrible things did he answer the Israelites at the Red sea, in the wilderness, and in the land of Canaan, Deut. x. 17, 21. Psal. cvi. 21, 22. and lxvi. 5, 6. and in this way will he answer his people in the destruction of antichrist and his followers, Rev. vi. 9. and xvi. 6. and xviii. 8. and xix. 20. Moreover, by *terrible things* may be meant things stupendous, marvellous, and even miraculous; and by such things does God sometimes answer his people, in destroying their enemies and saving them; and which are so called, because they inject horror and terror into their enemies, and fill them with fear and reverence of God: and which are done *in righteousness;* in faithfulness to his promises made to his people; in the exercise of his vindictive justice upon their enemies; in goodness, grace, and mercy to them, as *righteousness* sometimes signifies, as in Psal. li. 14. and not for their righteousness, who do not present their supplications to him for the sake of that; but for the righteousness of his son, for the sake of which they are heard and answered. *O God of our salvation;* not only temporal, but spiritual and eternal; which he has resolved upon, and chose his people to, and has settled the way and manner of, in which it should be brought about; has secured it in covenant for them, promised it in his word, sent his Son to obtain it, and his Spirit to give knowledge and make application of it; and from this character of his, and the concern he has in salvation, it may be concluded he will answer the prayers of his people for their good. Who art *the confidence of all the ends of the earth;* of all that dwell upon the continent, to the uttermost parts of the habitable world. *And of them that are afar off* upon *the sea;* not only in ships upon the sea, but upon islands in the sea; and so the Targum, "and of the islands of "the sea, which are afar off from the dry land;" and Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it in the same manner; such as are the isles in which we live: this seems to refer to Gospel times, in which the Lord is not only the *confidence* or *hope* of *Israel*, but of the Gentiles

[k] תכפרם propitiaberis, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus; expiabis, Vatablus, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[l] ישכן habitabit, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Musculus.

also; who are encouraged to hope in the Lord, and put their confidence in him, seeing with him there is forgiving mercy, and plenteous redemption; hath appointed Christ to be his salvation to the ends of the earth; has sent his Gospel into all the world declaring this; and Christ in it encourages all the ends of the earth to look unto him for salvation; and multitudes upon the continent, and in different isles, have been enabled to hope in him.

Ver. 6. *Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains*, &c.] In the first creation and formation of them, when they were settled on their basis so firmly that they are rarely removed, and when they are it is something extraordinary. Some understand this of the Lord's preparing the mountains with the rain of his strength, for the bringing forth of herbs and grass for the service of man and beast, and of his adorning them with trees; and the Targum is, "who preparest food "for the wild goats of the mountains:" others interpret them of kingdoms and communities, comparable to mountains, Jer. li. 25. Zech. iv. 7. Rev. xvii. 9. but these are not set fast, they are not firm and stable, but in a course of time are removed, and give way to others; rather the church of God is meant; see Isa. ii. 2. where the same phrase is used as here; and *mountains* may signify particular churches, or indeed particular believers; for all that trust in the Lord are like to mountains, Psal. cxxv. 1. and these are set fast in the everlasting love of God, by which their mountain is made to stand strong; in eternal election, which is the foundation of God that stands sure; in the covenant of grace, which is more immovable than hills and mountains; and on Christ the Rock, against whom the gates of hell can never prevail; and who are so established, settled, and kept by the power of God, that they cannot be removed by the most boisterous storms and winds of the world's persecutions, Satan's temptations, or their own sins and corruptions. Being *girded with power*: not the mountains, but God himself; whose power, like himself, is infinite, and appears in the works of his hands, of nature, providence, and grace: the allusion is to a mighty man girded for battle; or for the performance of great undertakings.

Ver. 7. *Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves*, &c.] By a word speaking; as our Lord did when here on earth, and which was a proof and evidence of his eternal power and Godhead. These figurative expressions are interpreted by the next clause, *And the tumult of the people*: of wicked men, who foam and rage against the people of God, and are like a troubled sea that cannot rest; but God can say to these proud waters, which threaten to go over their souls, Peace, be still; he can stop their opposition, quell their insurrections, restrain their wrath, and make them peaceable and quiet; wherefore the saints have no reason to be afraid of them, Psal. xlvi. 2, 3. and lxxvi. 10. and cxxiv. 1—5.

Ver. 8. *They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens*, &c.] The tokens of his wrath and displeasure at wicked men, seen in the punishments inflicted on them, which cause them to fear and tremble. Some interpret them of the sun, moon, and stars, which are set for *signs*, as the word[m] used signifies; and which declare the glory of God to the uttermost parts of the earth, and strike men with awe and reverence of him; and others of thunder and lightning, which are sometimes very dreadful and terrible. Moreover, the word[n] signifies signs and wonders, marvellous things, miraculous operations; and may be understood of those that were wrought in the first times of the Gospel, for the confirmation of it; some of which were wrought in the uttermost parts of the earth; or, however, were heard of there, and believed; which caused them to receive the Gospel with all reverence, not as the word of man, but as the word of God. *Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and of the evening to rejoice*; some interpret this of the morning and evening sacrifices; others of the sun that goes forth in the morning, and rejoices as a strong man to run his race, and of the moon and stars that appear in the evening, and both give pleasure and delight to the inhabitants of the earth; others of men who go forth in the morning cheerfully to their labour, and of the beasts that go out in the evening to seek their prey, Psal. xix. 5. and civ. 20—23. but it seems better to understand it of the rising of the stars before the sun in the morning, and the appearance of them after the moon is up in the evening; or of the rising and setting sun; of the east and west, which include the whole world, and the inhabitants of it; who are made to rejoice at the coming of the Gospel among them, which brings the good news and glad tidings of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation, by Christ, whereby his name becomes great, and is praised among the Gentiles; see Mal. i. 11.

Ver. 9. *Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it*, &c.] So the Lord looked upon the earth, quickly after its formation, before rain came upon it, and he watered the whole face of the ground, Gen. ii. 5, 6. so he cared for the land of Judea in particular, and watered it with the rain of heaven, Deut. xi. 11, 12. see 2 Sam. xxi. 1—14. to which some think reference is had here; and so he visits and waters the whole earth in general, at certain times and seasons, Acts xiv. 16, 17. this may be applied to the church and people of God in Gospel times, who are his husbandry, and the good ground on which the seed falls and is received, and brings forth fruit; and are comparable to the earth that drinks in the rain that comes oft upon it, and brings forth herbs meet for those that dress it, and receives a blessing from God, Heb. vi. 7. thus the Lord visited his people, by the mission of his son to redeem them, whose coming was as the rain, the former and latter, to the earth, Luke i. 68, 78. Hos. vi. 3. so he visited the Gentile world, by the preaching of the Gospel by his apostles, whose doctrines dropped as the rain, and distilled as the dew and small rain on the tender herb, and as showers on the grass; and so made a wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water, Acts xv. 14. Deut. xxxii. 2. Isa. xl. 18. and in like manner he visits particular persons in conversion, and waters them with the graces of his spirit, by which he regenerates, quickens, and sanctifies them, and makes them fruitful, Isa. xliv. 3. John iii. 5. and iv. 14. and vii.

[m] מאותתיך a signis tuis, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[n] A signis & prodigiis tuis, Michaelis.

37, 38. *Thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water*; not Shiloah nor Jordan; but the clouds which are full of rain, which falling upon the earth, impregnate it with rich particles, which make it very fertile and fruitful; so the Targum, "with "a multitude of fruits thou enrichest it out of the "river of God, which is in heaven, which is full of "rain:" this may mystically denote the river of God's everlasting love, which is full of the blessings of grace, and which flowing upon his people, makes them fruitful, and enriches them with the riches of grace and glory; see Psal. xlvi. 4. *Thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it*; or *because thou hast so prepared it* [n]; that is, the earth being disposed and prepared by the Lord, watered and enriched with the rain of heaven, produces corn in great plenty for the inhabitants of the earth; which may spiritually design either the fruitfulness of the saints, whose hearts are disposed and prepared by the grace of God to receive the seed of the word, which brings forth fruit in them; or the bread-corn, that wheat of the Gospel, and Christ the sum and substance of it, which is of God's preparing for his people, and by which they are nourished and made comfortable; see Zech. ix. 17.

Ver. 10. *Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly, &c.*] Kimchi calls them the eminences of the earth, the little hills, the higher parts of ploughed land; those which lie between furrow and furrow seem to be meant, which being watered with rain become lower, and are made fruitful: these may denote such as are lifted up with their own imaginary purity and righteousness; and who, when the grace of God takes hold upon them, are humbled, and confess themselves the chief of sinners and the least of saints, renounce their own righteousness, and submit to Christ's. *Thou settlest the furrows thereof*; or *thou causest* the rain *to descend into the furrows thereof* [p]; which fills them, and makes them fruitful; and may design humble souls, whom the Lord fills with his good things, and makes them fruitful in every good work. *Thou makest it soft with showers*; which through drought is become like iron and brass, and, without large and heavy showers, as the word [q] used signifies, and these repeated, it is so hard, that no impressions can be made upon it, nor any thing spring out of it; and such is the hard heart of man, which God only can make soft by the means of his word, through the energy of his spirit, and the efficacy of his grace; which coming in great abundance, like large showers of rain, removes the hardness of the heart, makes it susceptible of divine impressions, and of receiving the seed of the word, whereby it becomes fruitful. *Thou blessest the springing thereof*: the tender blade, when it first peeps out of the earth; this the Lord nourishes and cherishes; he preserves it from the nipping frosts, by covering it with snow; he waters it with the dews of heaven, and warms it with the beams of the sun; he causes it to grow, and brings it to perfection: so the Lord takes great notice of the springing and buddings forth of grace, of the first acts and exercises of it in young converts, and takes care of them; and as he will not hurt them himself, nor break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; so he takes care that others should not; see Cant. vi. 11. vii. 11. and ii. 15. he gives them more grace, and strengthens what they have; causes it to grow, and brings it on to perfection. The word here used is the same by which Christ, the branch, is expressed, Zech. iii. 8. and vi. 12. and as the Lord has blessed him with the blessings of goodness, so he blesses all the branches which are in him, John xv. 4, 5. Eph. i. 3.

Ver. 11. *Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, &c.*] The whole circling year, from one end of it to the other; particularly that season of it when the harvest is gathered in; the seed being sown, the earth watered, the springing of it blessed, and the corn brought to perfection, the year is crowned with a plentiful harvest: this may denote the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of the redeemed, the whole Gospel dispensation, Isa. lxi. 2. and lxiii. 4. in certain seasons and periods of which there have been great gatherings of souls to Christ; at the first of it multitudes were converted in Judea, and in the Gentile world, which were the first-fruits of the spirit; and in all ages there have been more or less instances of this kind; and in the latter day there will be a large harvest, when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in. *And thy paths drop fatness*; the heavens, as Jarchi interprets it; or the clouds, as Kimchi; which are the chariots and horses of God, in which he rides, and are the dust of his feet, Psal. civ. 3. Hab. iii. 15. Nah. i. 3. and these drop down rain upon the earth, and make it fat and flourishing; and may mystically design the ministration of the Gospel, and the administration of ordinances; which are the paths in which the Lord goes forth to his people, and directs them to walk in, and in which he meets them with a fulness of blessings, and satisfies them as with marrow and fatness.

Ver. 12. *They drop* upon *the pastures of the wilderness, &c.*] As well as upon the ploughed land, and turn them into a fruitful field; which may denote the Gentile world, whither the Gospel was sent by Christ, and preached by his apostles; and whose doctrines dropped as the rain, and prospered to the thing whereunto they were sent, and made this wilderness as the garden of God. *And the little hills rejoice on every side*; or *joy girds the hills*; or *they are girded with joy* [r]; or *gird themselves with joy*, as the Targum; being covered on all sides with grass, herbs, and trees: these may denote the churches of Christ, and little hills of Sion, who rejoice when the interest of Christ flourishes, Psal. lxviii. 14, 15. and xiv. 7.

Ver. 13. *The pastures are clothed with flocks, &c.*] Of sheep, which are so thick, that there is scarce any thing to be seen upon the pastures but them; which look as if they were clothed with them: these may intend the multitude of converts, signified by the flocks of Kedar, and rams of Nebaioth; which gathering about the church, and joining to her, she clothes herself with them as with an ornament, Isa. lx. 7, 8. and xlix. 18. it may be rendered *the rams clothe, or cover, the*

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[n] כי כן תכינה quia sic parasti eam, Pagninus; so Coccejus.
[p] נחת גדודיה descendere facis pluviam in sulcos ejus, Vatablus.
[q] ברביבים guttis grandioribus, Piscator.

[r] וגיל גבעות תחגרנה colles que exultatione accinguntur, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Ainsworth; accinxerunt se, Pagninus; accingent se, Montanus.

*flocks**; or the flocks are clothed, or covered, with the rams, as expressive of their copulation with them; and so the Targum, "the rams ascend upon the flocks;" which sense is favoured by the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions. *The valleys also are covered over with corn;* being made very fruitful with the rain, and bringing forth in great abundance; so humble souls are the most fruitful ones. *They shout for joy, they also sing:* that is, the pastures, hills, and valleys, being laden with all kind of fruit for the use of man and beast, for necessity and pleasure, which occasion joy to the inhabitants of the earth: this may be expressive of the joy that will be among men, when the interest of Christ will be in a more flourishing condition in the latter day; see Isa. xlix. 13. and lv. 9—13.

PSALM LXVI.

To the chief Musician, A Song or Psalm.

THIS psalm does not bear the name of David in the title of it, yet is generally thought to be one of his; but because the plural number is used in it, which is not so common in David's psalms, Aben Ezra is of opinion it is not his, but wrote by the singers. This is not a sufficient objection: and besides, from ver. 13, to the end, the singular number is used. The Arabic version ascribes it to David, and that version makes the subject-matter of it to be *concerning the resurrection;* as do the Septuagint, Ethiopic, and Vulgate Latin versions. The title of the Syriac version is, "concerning "sacrifices and burnt-offerings, and the incense of "rams; the spiritual sense intimates to us the calling "of the Gentiles, and the preaching, *i. e.* of the Gos-"pel;" which comes nearest the truth: for the psalm respects Gospel times, and the church of Christ under the New Testament, spread throughout the world, and especially as it will be in the latter day; see ver. 1, 4. and so in Yalkut Simeoni on the psalm, it is said to be a psalm for time to come, and agrees with Zeph. iii. 9. *I will turn to the people a pure language,* &c. Kimchi says it is a psalm concerning the gathering of the captives of Israel; and so Jarchi and Obadiah expound it; and Theodoret says David wrote this psalm for the captives in Babylon.

Ver. 1. *Make a joyful noise unto God,* &c.] The Creator of the ends of the earth; the Provider for all his creatures; and the Dispenser of the blessings of grace, under the Gospel dispensation, to men in all countries. The Messiah may well be thought to be intended, since the psalm refers to Gospel times; who is God over all, blessed for ever; to whom a joyful noise, shouts, and acclamations, are to be made by all his subjects, true believers in him, in all lands, as to their King; see Numb. xxiii. 21. who is ascended on high, has led captivity captive; received gifts for men, and gives them to them; is enthroned on his father's right hand, is crowned with glory and honour, where he reigns, and must reign, till all enemies are put under his feet; when his kingdom will be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth: and upon the destruction of his enemies, and the enlargement of his kingdom in the latter day, voices will be heard in heaven, the church; and such joyful noises as are here exhorted and directed to, Rev. xix. 1—7. and xi. 15, 16, 17. and xv. 3, 4. Moreover, such acclamations are suitable to him, as a victorious conqueror; who, at his death, overcame sin, Satan, the world, and death itself; and, by the ministry of the Gospel, went forth conquering, and to conquer; and has subdued many people in all nations, and caused his ministers to triumph in him in every place; and who, by his spirit and grace, still continues to bring souls to a subjection to him, to dispossess Satan from them, to set up his throne in their hearts, and reign there, and to make them more than conquerors through himself that has loved them: of which there will be more numerous instances in the latter day; and all such are under great obligations to make a joyful noise unto him, or to express their joy and thankfulness in loud singing of his praises. *All ye lands;* that is, all the inhabitants of the earth, as the Targum; not Judea, to which some restrain it, but the whole earth: for Christ is the Saviour of some, in all countries, of the children of God, that are scattered abroad throughout the whole world, for whom he is a propitiation. The Gospel has been sent to all nations, and preached to every creature; some in all lands have been converted, and made partakers of the blessings and privileges of the Gospel, and therefore have reason to be glad and make a joyful noise; and the more so, inasmuch as they were in a state of great darkness and ignorance before, without Christ, without hope, and without God in the world.

Ver. 2. *Sing forth the honour of his name,* &c.] Meaning not any particular names of the Messiah, such as in Isa. ix. 6. and vii. 14. or his name *Jesus,* a Saviour; though they are all honourable and glorious, and furnish out sufficient matter for a song: but rather that by which he was made known to the sons of men, his Gospel; see Acts ix. 15. Which is a glorious Gospel; the truths of which may be expressed in a song of praise, to the honour and glory of Christ, and to the instruction and profit of men, Coloss. iii. 16. Or rather Christ himself is meant; his name often designs himself, Matt. xii. 21. Psal. ix. 10. Prov. xviii. 10. There is a glory that is due unto him, and ought to be given him; which is done when all divine perfections and works are ascribed to him, divine worship is paid him, and the glory of salvation given him; which may be done in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. *Make his praise glorious;* let the high praises of him be in your mouths; give him the most excellent praise; praise him in the best manner. This is done when we sing his praise with grace in our hearts in exercise; when

* כרים κριοὶ, Sept. arietes, V. L.

we with one mind and mouth glorify him; and when we honour him, the Son, as we honour the Father.

Ver. 3. *Say unto God*, &c.] Or, *concerning God*[t], as some; or, *before God*, as the Targum; say to him as follows, in psalms and hymns of praise: *how terrible art thou in thy works!* or *reverend*[u]; to be feared and reverenced with a godly fear on account of them; such as the works of nature and providence, which are stupendous and marvellous, fearfully and wonderfully wrought; and especially those of grace and redemption, in which the goodness of Christ is manifest, and for which he is to be feared: unless rather his judgments upon his enemies are here meant; who, though he is a Lamb to his own people, is the Lion of the tribe of Judah to them, whom he will break in pieces as a potter's vessel. It may be read, *how terrible*, or *tremendous*, is every one of *thy works*; so Aben Ezra, and also Jarchi, who interprets the next clause, *through the greatness of thy power*, thus, "when thou shewest "to the world thy power, by the pestilence, or sword, "or famine, or lightnings:" *shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee?* in a lying, flattering, and deceitful manner, as the word[w] here used signifies; see the note on Psal. xviii. 44. or, as the above interpreters, "they "shall, through the greatness of fear, confess the lies "and transgressions they have committed." It will be a forced, and not a free, confession and submission; Christ's enemies, whether they will or no, will be obliged to own that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, Phil. ii. 10, 11.

Ver. 4. *All the earth shall worship thee*, &c.] The Messiah, who is equal with God; the Creator of men; the Redeemer of his people; the Head of the church, and King of saints; their Lord, and therefore to be worshipped; with internal worship, in the exercise of faith, hope, and love; and with external worship, in the word and ordinances, by prayer and praise, public and private. This universal worship, that will be yielded him, will be in the latter day; which shews that this psalm respects those times, when Christ shall be King over all the earth, and his name, worship, and religion, one, Zech. xiv. 9, 16. Rev. xv. 4. *And shall sing unto thee*; the song of Moses and the Lamb, the Lamb's new song, the song of redeeming grace; which none but the redeemed ever can sing aright, Rev. xiv. 3. and xv. 3. *They shall sing to thy name*; or, *they shall*, or *let them sing thy name*[x]; thou shalt be the subject of their song; thy person, offices, kingdom, grace, and glory: or they shall sing to the honour of thy name, as in ver. 2. *Selah*; of this word, see the note on Psal. iii. 2.

Ver. 5. *Come and see the works of God*, &c.] Of the Messiah, God manifest in the flesh; those divine works which he did when here on earth; his miraculous works, which were proofs of his deity and Messiahship; his preaching the Gospel, in so divine a manner as never man did; his works of obedience to the law, which were pure and perfect; the everlasting righteousness he wrought out for the justification of his people; and the great work of redemption and salvation finished by him, which none but God could ever have effected. This is an invitation to the inhabitants of all lands, where the Gospel should come with power, to take notice of and consider these works of Christ, and the glory of his might, wisdom, and grace in them, in order to engage them to sing his praise. He is *terrible* in his *doing toward the children of men*; in his vengeance on the Jews, for disbelieving and rejecting him; in destroying antichrist, and pouring out the vials of his wrath on the antichristian states; and in the everlasting damnation of the wicked. So that as his other works in the former clause design those of grace, this doing of his respects his work, his strange work of judgment on his enemies; on account of which he is terrible to them, and reverenced by his people.

Ver. 6. *He turned the sea into dry land*, &c.] The Red sea, or sea of Suph, as the Targum; by causing a strong east wind to blow, which made it dry, so that the children of Israel passed through it on dry ground, Exod. xiv. 21, 22. Or, *he turneth*[y]; for though the allusion is to the making the Red sea dry land, when the Israelites passed through it; yet it refers to something to be done in the times of Christ and the Gospel dispensation. So Christ might be said to do this literally, when he walked upon the sea of Galilee as on dry land, and enabled Peter to do so likewise, Matt. xiv. 25, 29. and figuratively, when he makes his people walk through the sea of this world, and the waters of afflictions in it, without overflowing them. He is with them, bears them up, and upholds them with his right hand; so that they pass on, as on dry land, till they come safe to the shores of bliss and happiness. *They went through the flood on foot*; or *river*[z]; the river Jordan, as the Targum: for this alludes not to the passage of the Israelites through the sea, but through Jordan, when they entered into the land of Canaan, Josh. iii. 17. The words may be rendered, according to Kimchi, "they shall pass through the river on foot;" the Targum adds, "the children of Israel;" so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions. Such things are said in prophecy concerning the people of God in future times; see Isa. xi. 15, 16. and li. 10, 11. So the river Euphrates shall be dried up, to make way for the kings of the east, Rev. xvi. 12. *There did we rejoice in him*; still alluding to the above cases, when Israel passed through the Red sea, and sung praise to God; and went through Jordan, and set up stones of memorial, Exod. xv. 1. Josh. iv. 6, 7. Or, *there shall we rejoice in him*; so the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, Syriac, and Arabic versions; only the latter reads in the singular, *he shall rejoice*. The Targum is, "I will lead them to the mountain of his holiness, there shall we rejoice in his word:" in the essential Word, the Messiah, as the saints do rejoice in him in his house, under his word and ordinances; when they see the salvation wrought out by him, and their interest in it; the righteousness he has brought in, and

[t] אמרו לאלהים dicite de Deo, Campensis apud Gejerum; and some in Michaelis.

[u] נורא reverendus, Junius & Tremellius.

[w] יכחשו mentientur, V. L. Musculus, Montanus; mendaciter se dedunt, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Amama.

[x] יזמרו שמך canent nomen tuum, Gejerus; cantabunt nomen tuum, Michaelis.

[y] הפך convertit, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[z] בנהר per fluvium, Gejerus.

themselves clothed with it; pardon procured by him, and that appplied to them; and when they are favoured with a sight of him, and communion with him; so will they rejoice in him when the marriage of the Lamb is come, and the bride is ready; when antichrist shall be destroyed, and they shall have got the victory over him; then they shall stand on the sea of glass, and there shall they sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, Rev. xix. 7, 8. and xviii. 20. and xv. 2, 3. and when they shall have got through all their difficulties safe to heaven; there shall they rejoice in Christ, and with him to all eternity.

Ver. 7. *He ruleth by his power for ever, &c.*] Christ is the Ruler in Israel, King over his holy hill of Zion; who must reign till all enemies are put under his feet. He rules in the kingdom of nature and providence by his power, and does whatsoever he pleases; nor can any stay his hand. He rules in the kingdom of grace, in the hearts of his people, by his efficacious grace; which makes them willing, in the day of his power, to be subject to him; and in the latter day he will take to himself his great power and reign, when he will be King for ever. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, it shall never be subverted nor usurped; nor will he in it be succeeded by another; he will reign to the end of the world, throughout the thousand years, with his saints on earth, and then with them in heaven for evermore. The Targum renders it, "over the "world;" over the whole world; for Christ will be King over all the earth in the latter day, Zech. xiv. 9. *His eyes behold the nations;* the antichristian states. He sees all the idolatry and wickedness committed in them; and his eyes will be as flames of fire to destroy them, when the time is come. The allusion is to God's looking through the pillar of fire and cloud upon the Egyptians in the Red sea, and troubling them, Exod. xiv. 24. *Let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.* That are rebels against Christ, would not have him to reign over them; antichrist, who exalts himself above all that is called God, and all his followers. Or, *they shall not exalt themselves*[a]: or, as the Targum, "they shall not be exalted in them- "selves for ever;" see Rev. xviii. 7, 8.

Ver. 8. *O bless our God, ye people, &c.*] In all countries, that know the Lord and fear him; ascribe blessing, and honour and glory, to Christ our God, on account of his works, actions, perfections, kingdom and power; and because of the destruction of those who are rebels to his government. *And make the voice of his praise to be heard;* far and near, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; by shoutings, and loud acclamations of joy; see Rev. xix. 5, 6. where Christ is called our God, and a like exhortation is made as here.

Ver. 9. *Which holdeth our soul in life, &c.*] Or, *putteth our soul in life*[b], or *among the living*, which is not to be understood of infusing a living soul in man, nor of the preservation of natural life, which is common to all men; but of appointing and ordaining them unto eternal life, as the Targum; and of procuring it for them by Christ; and of implanting a principle of spiritual life in them, by his spirit and grace; and of the preservation of the principle of life, that it be not lost; and of giving them a right and title to eternal life, and that itself: all which are a sufficient reason, and powerful argument, to bless our God, and praise his name. It follows: *and suffereth not our feet to be moved;* that is, not to be greatly moved; or if moved so as to slip and fall, yet not so as to fall finally and totally; see Psal. lv. 22. and lvi. 12, 13.

Ver. 10. *For thou, O God, hast proved us, &c.*] And by the experiment found them to be true and faithful; to have the truth of grace, and the root of the matter in them; not reprobate silver, or their grace counterfeit grace; but of the right kind, solid and substantial. *Thou hast tried us as silver is tried;* in a furnace, where it is put and melted by the refiner, and purified from the dross that attends it. So the Targum, "thou hast purified us as the silversmith "purifieth the silver;" or tries it by melting and purifying it. Thus the Lord puts his people into the furnace of afflictions, and sits as a refiner and purifier of them; hereby he tries their graces, faith, patience, hope, and love, their principles and their professions; refines their graces, and makes them more bright and illustrious; removes their dross and tin, and reforms their manners; and proves them to be good silver, and approves of them, and esteems them as such, even as his peculiar treasure. From whence it appears, as well as from the following verses, that afflictions are of God; that they are for the good of his people, and not their hurt; like silver they are put into the fire of affliction, not to be destroyed and lost, but to be purged and refined; and that they are not in wrath, but in love: and this, with what follows, may respect the sufferings of the saints under Rome, Pagan and Papal; when Christ's feet, the members of his mystical body, were like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; when their graces were tried, their works were known, and their persons proved and approved, Rev. i. 15. and ii. 9, 10—13, 18, 19. see Zech. xiii. 9.

Ver. 11. *Thou broughtest us into the net, &c.*] That is, suffered them to be taken in the net of wicked men, which they laid and spread for them; whereby they were drawn either into bad principles or bad practices, or into ruinous circumstances; though the Lord does not leave his own people there, but breaks the net or snare, sooner or later, and they escape; see Psal. ix. 15. and x. 9, and cxxiv. 6, 7. Jarchi interprets it of a strait place, as in a prison; and which has often been literally true of the people of God, into which, though they have been cast by Satan, or by men instigated by him, yet, because permitted by the Lord, it is ascribed to him, Rev. ii. 10. *Thou laidst affliction upon our loins;* the Targum renders it *a chain:* the word signifies any thing that is binding and pressing; it seems to be a metaphor taken from the binding of burdens upon the backs of any creatures. Afflictions often lie heavy upon the saints, are very close upon them, and press them sore, even, as they sometimes think, beyond measure; though the Lord supports them, and will not suffer them to sink under them.

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[a] אל ירימו למו haudquaquam sese exultabunt, Tigurine version, Musculus, & Gejerus.

[b] השם qui posuit, V. L. Pagninus, Musculus, Vatablus; ponens, Montanus; qui ponit, Gejerus, Michaelis.

Ver. 12. *Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads,* &c.] Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of the kings and nations of the world ruling over Israel; and may very well design the Heathen powers and antichristian states tyrannizing over Christian people. The word in the original text is singular, *a man*[c], a frail mortal man; and may be understood of the man of sin and son of perdition; who rides upon the heads of men, exalts himself above all that is called God, and has exercised dominion over the saints in a most lawless and tyrannical manner. Vitringa, on Isa. xliii. 2. interprets it of Antiochus Epiphanes, who was a type of antichrist, and supposes the following clause to refer to the persecution of the church in his time. The Targum renders it, *a lord of rebuke*; that is, either one worthy of rebuke, as antichrist is; or one that gives rebukes, delivers out anathemas and excommunications, as he does: though some translate the words of the Targum, *lords of usury*, or *usurers*: a title not unfit for the creatures of antichrist. *We went through fire and through water*: through afflictions, compared to fire and water; through fiery trials and overwhelming providences, though not destroyed by them, because the Lord was with them; see Isa. xliii. 2. therefore they are said to go through them, not to abide in them; nor to sink under them, and perish by them: they went cheerfully through them for Christ's sake, even the greatest hardships and difficulties, which this phrase may be expressive of. It may have a particular reference to the sufferings of the saints in Gospel times; to the burning of the martyrs with fire and faggot, who, like Elijah, went up to heaven in a fiery chariot; and to the flood of waters cast out after the woman, the church, by the dragon; see Rev. i. 15. and xii. 15, 16. *But thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place*; the Targum is, *into largeness*; or into a large place; see Psal. xviii. 19. and cxviii. 5. This may intend either the state of the church upon the Reformation, or rather as it will be in the latter-day glory; when there will be a large spread of the Gospel, and of the interest of Christ, everywhere; when the church will be enlarged with converts, and the members of it with the gifts and graces of the spirit; and which will be a state of great liberty and freedom in the worship of God, both inward and outward. The Septuagint version renders it, *into refreshment*; so the Tigurine version, and Piscator; as those times will be times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which will be everywhere among his people, in his word and ordinances, and to a great degree; see Acts iii. 19. The Arabic version, *unto rest*; from adversity, from persecution; for, after this state takes place, there will be no more persecution; no more fines, imprisonment, racks, and torturing deaths, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel. The word used signifies a well-watered place[d], or land; such as was the land of Canaan, Deut. viii. 7, 8, 9. and such will be the state of the church in the latter day: the spirit will be poured down like floods of water upon the dry ground; the doctrines of the Gospel will drop as the rain, and as showers upon the grass: the ordinances of it will be as green pastures beside the still waters; and every believer will be as a watered garden, whose springs fail not; it will be a time of great plenty and prosperity in spiritual things. Ainsworth renders it, *to an abundant place*: so Gejerus: a place abounding with all good things: a *wealthy* one, as we translate it. And even in a literal sense this will be the wealthy time of the church; when kings shall come into it, and bring their riches and honour there, and use them for the good of it, Isa. xlix. 23. and lx. 3, 11, 16, 17. and then also will the saints be enriched with every gift, and be rich in grace and in all good works.

Ver. 13. *I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings,* &c.] The psalmist here personates the saints and faithful in those times, who being delivered out of all their troubles, and brought into a large, free, plentiful, and comfortable condition, will come together into the place of public worship, and there unite in their sacrifices of praise to God; will come and present themselves as a whole burnt-offering to the Lord; will come with hearts inflamed with love to God and one another, which is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices, Mark xii. 33. *I will pay thee my vows*; thanksgivings promised in time of distress, as follows; see Psal. l. 14.

Ver. 14. *Which my lips have uttered,* &c.] Or *opened*[e]; publicly and distinctly declared, and from which there is no going back; see Judg. xi. 35. *And my mouth hath spoken when I was in trouble*; this refers to the time when the people of God were under antichristian tyranny and bondage; and when they vowed and promised, that, if the Lord would deliver them, they would give him all praise and glory.

Ver. 15. *I will offer unto thee burnt-sacrifices of fatlings,* &c.] Of the fattest of the flock; that is, of the best; such as Abel offered, Gen. iv. 4. *With the incense of rams*; or *rams with incense*[f]; the Targum is, "with sweet incense, the sacrifice of rams;" Kimchi interprets it of incense of the fat of rams. *I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.* He proposed to offer all kind of offerings, to shew gratitude and thankfulness for the favours received; by all which are meant the calves, or fruit of the lips, the sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving to God, in the name of the whole church and people of God; see Rev. xix. 1—7.

Ver. 16. *Come and hear, all ye that fear God,* &c.] Who have a reverential affection for him, and by whom he is worshipped and served with reverence and godly fear; these have good things done for themselves, and will glorify God for what he does for others: these know the nature, worth, and value of the good things the Lord does for the souls of men, and hear them with pleasure and profit; when to tell them to others is casting pearl before swine, and giving that which is holy to dogs; and therefore only such as fear the Lord are called upon to come and

[c] אנוש hominem, Pagninus, Montanus.
[d] לרויה ad irriguum, Pagninus, Montanus.
[e] פצו aperuerunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Gejerus.

[f] עם קטרת אילים arietes cum incenso, Gejerus; so Campensis in ibid.

hear what follows. Jarchi interprets this character of proselytes; see Acts xiii. 26. *And I will declare what he hath done for my soul*: not what he had done for God, or offered unto him, or suffered for his sake; nor what God had done for his body in the make and preservation of it; but what he had done for his soul, and the salvation of that: what God the Father had done in setting him apart for himself; in making a sure, well-ordered, and everlasting covenant with him in Christ; in blessing him with all spiritual blessings in him; in providing for the redemption of his soul by him; in pardoning his sins, justifying his person, adopting him into his family, and regenerating, quickening, and sanctifying him: also what God the Son had done for him; in engaging to assume a true body and a reasonable soul on his account; and to make that soul an offering for his sin, and thereby obtain for him eternal redemption, even the salvation of his immortal soul: likewise what God the Spirit had done for him; in quickening and enlightening his soul; in implanting principles of grace and holiness in it; in shewing Christ unto him, and bringing near his righteousness, and leading him to him for salvation and eternal life; in applying exceeding great and precious promises to him, and remembering to him such on which he had caused him to hope; in delivering him out of temptation and troubles, and in carrying on the work of his grace in him hitherto: these are things that are not to be concealed in a man's breast, but to be told to the church and people of God, to their joy and comfort, and to the glory of divine grace; see Mark v. 19.

Ver. 17. *I cried unto him with my mouth*, &c.] Crying designs prayer, and supposes distress; and crying with the mouth denotes vocal, ardent, and fervent prayer. *And he was extolled with my tongue*: at the same time the psalmist prayed for deliverance out of his distresses, he praised God for the mercies he had received; and did, as the Apostle Paul directs, make known his requests with thanksgiving, Phil. iv. 6. or *he was exalted under my tongue* [g]; that is, in his heart, as some interpret it; his heart and his mouth went together; and out of the abundance of his heart his tongue spoke of the goodness, kindness, and mercy of God to him. The Targum is, "and his promise was "under my tongue;" and so he was very different from a wicked man, who keeps iniquity under his tongue, as a sweet morsel, Job xx. 12.

Ver. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart*, &c.] There was iniquity in his heart, as there is in every good man's heart, and a great deal too; it is full of it; and it should be regarded in some sense, so as to guard against it, and pray to be kept from it, that it may not break forth into action; and so as to loath it, abhor it, and be humbled for it; but not so as to nourish and cherish it, to take delight and pleasure in it: or *if I look upon it* [h], as it may be rendered; that is, with approbation of it, and satisfaction in it, and ordered his conversation according to it; or acted the deceitful and hypocritical part in prayer; or had any evil intention in his petitions, to consume on his lusts what he asked for. *The Lord will not hear* me; for the Lord hears not sinners that delight in sin, and live in it; neither profane sinners nor hypocrites; see John ix. 31. Job xxvii. 8, 9.

Ver. 19. But *verily God hath heard* me, *&c.*] So that it was a plain case that he had not regarded iniquity in his heart; had not lived a vicious course of life, nor was an hypocrite; otherwise God would not have heard his prayer; whereas he had, and which is confirmed in the following clause. *He hath attended to the voice of my prayer*: which is an instance of the grace and condescension of God, and shewed in what high favour the psalmist was with the Lord, and what regard he had unto him; and therefore could not be the man his enemies represented him to be.

Ver. 20. *Blessed* be *God, which hath not turned away my prayer*, &c.] Has not been angry against it, shut it out, or covered himself with a cloud that it might not pass through, which sometimes saints have complained of, Psal. lxxx. 4. Lam. iii. 8, 44. but graciously heard and received it. *Nor his mercy from me*: for that endures for ever, and is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear the Lord, Psal. ciii. 17. all which require thankfulness and praise, which is here given.

PSALM LXVII.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm or Song.

ACCORDING to the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, this psalm is a psalm of David; and very probably it was written by him, since the spirit and language of it agree with that sweet singer of Israel, though his name is not in the title; wherefore Aben Ezra says, we know not who composed it: and so the inscription of the Syriac version pronounces the same uncertain; which adds, "the "people sung it when they brought David over Jor"dan;" meaning after Absalom's rebellion was over, 2 Sam. xix. 41. but what follows better expresses the occasion and intent of it; "but to us it intimates a "prophecy in it concerning the calling of the Gentiles, "and the preaching of the apostles; likewise con"cerning the judgments of the Lord:" and it seems indeed to breathe out the desires of the church after the coming of Christ, and spiritual blessings by him, and the spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, as what would bring forth much fruit in the earth, and be the occasion of great joy. The ancient Jews [i] apply

[g] תחת לשוני sub lingua mea, Montanus, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Musculus, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[h] אם ראיתי si vidi, Pagninus, Montanus; si aspexi, V. L. si cuspexi, Gejerus.

[i] Debarim Rabba, s. 1. fol. 233. 4. Yalkut Simeoni in loc.

it לעתיד לבא, *to future time;* the world to come, the times of the Messiah: and Kimchi understands it of the gathering of the present captivity when the Messiah comes, and of the destruction of Gog and Magog. Of the word *neginoth,* see the note on the title of Psal. iv.

Ver. 1. *God be merciful unto us, and bless us,* &c.] That is, God, of his unmerited mercy, of his rich grace and free favour, bless us with the coming of his Son, the promised seed, in whom all nations are to be blessed; and with the blessings of peace, pardon, and righteousness in him; all which with him spring from the tender mercy of God, the riches of his grace, and his great love; than which nothing could be more desirable to the Old-Testament saints, who were shut up under the law, until faith came; and though children, they differed nothing from servants, being in a state and under a spirit of bondage: for the psalmist seems to personate the whole church under that dispensation: some understand the words as a prophecy, expressing the certainty of what would be; and, as the words may be rendered, *God will be merciful,* or *gracious to us*[k], *and he will bless us;* as he has promised to do. And *cause his face to shine upon us. Selah.* That is, grant his gracious presence, and the discoveries of his love; that he would favour with communion with himself through Christ, and a greater knowledge of him in him; or that he would cause him, who is his face, his image, the brightness of his glory, to appear and shine forth; the great light, the sun of righteousness, and day-spring from on high, that was to arise and shine upon the people of God. The Targum is, "and "cause the splendour of his face to shine with us "always;" there seems to be some reference to the high-priest's form of blessing in Numb. vi. 24—26.

Ver. 2. *That thy way may be known upon earth,* &c.] God's way and method of grace, in the salvation of sinners; the contrivance of it in Christ, the impetration of it by him, and the application of it by his spirit; and the way of sinners to him through Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, the new and living way to the father; and the way of life and salvation, which is of grace, and by Christ alone; and the Gospel which points out this way, and is itself called the way of God, Acts xviii. 25. together with the ordinances of it, which are ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace; all this was made known by the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel; not only in the land of Judea, but throughout the whole earth. *Thy saving health among all nations;* or *thy salvation;* or *thy Jesus*[l]; whose name signifies a Saviour; and who is the only one, and an able and willing one, and is God's salvation, of his appointing, promising, and sending; salvation is by him, and by him only; he came to obtain it, and he is the author of it; health is also by him, he is the physician of souls, and his blood the balm that cures every disease; so that he is the Saviour, salvation, and saving health, to his people; this was unknown to the nations of the world until the Gospel came among them, until the grace of God bringing this salvation appeared unto them, and shone upon them, Titus ii. 11.

Ver. 3. *Let the people praise thee, O God,* &c.] Let them have occasion to praise God, the people of the Jews, for the mission of Christ, and for the blessings of grace and peace with him. *Let all the people praise thee:* all the nations of the world, for making known the way of life and grace, and the saving health or salvation of God unto them: the word used signifies to *confess*[m]; and so the Targum, "the people shall confess before "thee, O God; all the people shall confess before "thee;" that is, shall confess their sins, being made sensible of them; and confess the true and living God, turning from their idols to serve him; and Christ to be the only Saviour and Redeemer, being now made known unto them, through the preaching of the Gospel.

Ver. 4. *O let the nations be glad and sing for joy,* &c.] As they were glad, and did sing for joy, and glorified God, when Christ was made known, and the Gospel was preached unto them, Acts viii. 5, 8. and xiii. 47, 48. *For thou shalt judge the people righteously;* meaning not the people of the world at the last day, at the general judgment, which will be a righteous one; when God will judge the world in righteousness, according to the strict rules of justice and equity, by him whom he has ordained, Psal. xcvi. 13. Acts xvii. 31. but either the righteous judgment which will be executed on the enemies of Christ's church and people; particularly on antichrist, which will be matter of great joy, Rev. xix. 1, 2. and Kimchi interprets it of the judgment of the nations which shall come with Gog and Magog; or else the judging and vindicating the Lord's own people, defending their cause, righting their wrongs, and suffering no weapon to prosper against them. *And govern the nations upon earth. Selah.* or *lead* them[n]; not to punishment, as Kimchi, who interprets this clause as the other; but by his grace and spirit, into the knowledge of his way, and saving health; or as a shepherd leads his flock into green pastures, and beside the still waters; or as a king leads and governs his people, as David guided the people of Israel, with the skilfulness of his hands; so Christ leads and governs his people, protects and defends them, holds them by his right hand, guides them with his counsel, and then receives them to glory; see Psal. xxiii. 2. and lxxviii. 72. and lxxiii. 24.

Ver. 5. *Let the people praise thee, O God,* &c.] This is repeated from ver. 3, to shew the earnest desire of the church that it might be so; or that there might be an occasion for it; the ardour of her mind, and fervency of her petitions, and how much she was solicitous for the praise and glory of God; or to declare the certainty of it, she most strongly believing that so it would be; as the Targum, *the people shall confess,* &c. because of a new favour to be enjoyed, mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 6. *Then shall the earth yield her increase,* &c.] Not literally the land of Israel, as in some copies of the Targum, and as Kimchi interprets it; see Lev. xxvi. 3, 4. but mystically and spiritually the church of God in

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[k] יחננו miserebitur, Gejerus, Schmidt.
[l] ישועתך salutem tuam, Pagninus, Montanus, &c. i. e. salvatorem cujus nomen erit Jesus, Gejerus.
[m] יודוך confitentur, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
[n] תנחם duces eas, Montanus; deduces, Junius & Tremellius, Cocceius; deduces, Piscator.

the times of the Messiah, Ezek. xxxiv. 23—27. the word of God preached in the world is the seed sown in it; converts to Christ are the increase or fruit of it; and the church is God's husbandry, where it is yielded or brought forth; and this increase is of God, and is owing to the efficacy of his grace attending the ministration of the word, 1 Cor. iii. 6. it had its accomplishment in part in the first times of the Gospel, when it was preached by the apostles throughout the earth, and brought forth fruit everywhere, Col. i. 5, 6. and has been fulfilling more or less ever since, and will appear more abundantly in the latter day; a large increase and a plentiful harvest of souls shall be brought in, both Jews and Gentiles: or this may be understood of the fruitfulness of believers in Christ, who may be called *earth*, because of their common original from the earth with the rest of mankind; because they are inhabitants of the earth; and because they have earthly as well as heavenly principles in them; but more especially because they are the good ground on whom the seed of the word falls and becomes fruitful; or are the earth which drinks in the rain of the Gospel, and of grace, and brings forth fruit meet for them, by whom it is dressed, and receives blessing of God, Matt. xiii. 23. Heb. vi. 7. these yield the fruits of the spirit, increase in grace, and abound in the exercise of it; bring forth fruits meet for repentance, being filled with the fruits of righteousness by Christ; for the increase and fruit yielded by them are owing to the grace of God, to their ingrafture into Christ the vine, and to the influence of the blessed Spirit. Some of the ancients understand this of the incarnation of Christ; see Psal. lxxxv. 11. Isa. xlv. 8. then *the earth* is the Virgin Mary, who was, as to her original, of the earth, earthly; of whose earthly substance Christ took flesh, and is called the fruit of her womb; yea, the fruit of the earth, Luke i. 42. Isa. iv, 2. for though he is the Lord from heaven, as to his divine nature, and came down from thence, not by change of place, but by assumption of nature; yet, as to his human nature, he was made of a woman, and is the seed of the woman, the promised seed, in whom all nations of the earth were to be blessed; and it here follows: and *God*, even *our own God, shall bless us;* not as the God of nature and providence only; but as the God of grace, as a covenant-God in Christ, in which sense he is peculiarly his people's own God, so as he is not others'; and as such he blesses them with all spiritual blessings in Christ: or the repetition of the word *God*, with the affix *our own*, may denote the certainty of the divine blessing, the assurance had of it, and the great affection of the persons that express it: and some think, because the word is repeated three times in this and the following verse, respect is had to the trinity of Persons in the Godhead; God the Father blesses his people in Christ with the blessings of justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life: the Son, who is Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, our own God, God manifest in the flesh; he blesses with the same blessings of grace, peace, and eternal happiness; he was raised up of God as man and Mediator, and sent to bless his people, Acts iii. 26.

Ver. 7. *God shall bless us,* &c.] The Holy Spirit blesses with regenerating and renewing grace; with faith, comfort, joy and peace, by shedding abroad in the heart the love of the Father and the Son; by applying precious promises; by testifying adoption; by making meet for heaven and happiness, and working up for the self-same thing eternal glory. *And all the ends of the earth shall fear him;* the one God, Father, Son, and Spirit, the object of religious fear, internal and external; for this includes the exercise of that inward grace of filial fear, and the performance of all divine worship, public and private; and which in the latter day will be found among Jews and Gentiles, in all the inhabitants of the earth, even to the ends of it, Hos. iii. 5. Rev. xv. 4.

PSALM LXVIII.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm or *Song of David.*

THE Targum makes the argument of this psalm to be the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt, and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; in which it is followed by many of the Jewish interpreters: but Aben Ezra rejects such an interpretation of it, and thinks that David composed it, concerning the war he had with the uncircumcised nations, the Philistines and others, 2 Sam. viii. 1, &c. And so the title of the Syriac version begins, "a psalm of David, when "the kings prepared themselves to fight against him:" and Kimchi says it was composed on account of Sennacherib's army coming against Jerusalem, in the times of Hezekiah, and so delivered by David, under a spirit of prophecy concerning that affair; though he owns that some of their writers interpret it of the war of Gog and Magog, in the times of the Messiah they yet expect. But they are much nearer the truth, who take it that it was written on occasion of the ark being brought to the city of David; seeing it begins with much the same words that Moses used when the ark set forward in his times, Numb. x. 35. and the bringing of which was attended with great joy and gladness, 2 Sam. vi. 14, 15. such as the righteous are called upon to express in this psalm, ver. 3, 4. And this being a type of Christ, and of his ascending the holy hill of God, may be allowed of; for certain it is that this psalm treats of the coming of Christ, and of blessings by him, and of victory over his enemies; and particularly of his ascension to heaven, as most evidently appears from Ephes. iv. 8, 9. and from prophecies in it, concerning the calling of the Gentiles. Wherefore the latter part of the Syriac inscription of it is very pertinent; "also a prophecy concerning the dispensa- "tion of the Messiah, and concerning the calling of the "Gentiles to the faith." Jarchi interprets ver. 31 of the Messiah.

Ver. 1. *Let God arise*, &c.] Which, as Kimchi observes, is either by way of prayer, or by way of prophecy; and in either way the sense is the same: for, if it is considered as a prayer, it is a prayer of faith that so it would be; or, if as a prophecy, it is certain that so it should be. And this is to be understood of the same divine Person, whose chariots the angels are; who is said to be the *Adonai*, or *Lord* in the midst of them; and of whom it is prophesied that he should ascend to heaven, ver. 17, 18. even the Messiah, who is God over all. And this *arising*, attributed to him, may be interpreted either of his incarnation, his exhibition and manifestation in the flesh; which is sometimes called in Scripture a raising of him up, as in Acts iii. 26. and xiii. 23. or of his resurrection from the dead, as it is interpreted by many of the ancients; which, as it was a certain thing, and previous to his ascension hereafter spoken of, so it was a proof of his deity; for though it was only the man that rose, who died and was buried, yet as in union with the divine Person of the son of God, and who rose by virtue of that union; and thereby he was declared to be the son of God with power. Or else rather this is to be understood of his arising and exerting his power as a man of war, as a mighty and victorious hero, on the behalf of his people, and against his enemies; as he did when he arose and met Satan, the prince of the world, and engaged with all the powers of darkness; see Psal. xlv. 3, 4. John xiv. 30, 31. and this sense is confirmed by what follows: *let his enemies be scattered; let them also that hate him flee before him*: the sense of these two clauses is the same; his enemies, and those that hate him, are the same persons; and to be scattered and flee express the same things; for enemies, being discomfited, flee and scatter. Some interpret this of the watch set to guard our Lord's sepulchre; who, upon his rising from the dead, were filled with great fear and dread, and scattered, and fled to the priests, to acquaint them with what was done: others, of the Jewish nation in general, who were enemies to Christ, and hated him, and would not have him to reign over them; against whom he rose up and exerted his great strength; came in his kingdom and power against them; poured out his wrath upon them to the uttermost; which issued in the utter destruction of them, as a body politic; and in the entire dispersion of them in all countries, which remains unto this day. Or rather the whole is to be applied to Satan, and to his principalities and powers; the professed enemies of Christ, personal and mystical; who, when he arose and exerted his mighty power in his conflict with them, in the garden and on the cross, were spoiled and dissipated, and obliged to fly before him; and who at the same time overcame the world, made an end of sin, abolished death, as well as destroyed him which had the power of it; see Numb. x. 35.

Ver. 2. *As smoke is driven away*, so *drive* them *away*, &c.] This both describes the character of wicked men, Christ's enemies; as their darkness and ignorance, their will-worship and superstition, and their detestableness to God, Rev. ix. 2. Isa. lxv. 5. and the manner of their destruction; which is as easily brought about as smoke is driven by the wind, and is as irretrievable, like smoke that vanisheth into air *; see Psal. xxxvii. 20. Isa. li. 6. *As wax melteth before the fire*; whereby its consistency, form, and strength, are lost. Respect may be had, both in this and the foregoing metaphor, to the fire of divine wrath, and the smoke of eternal torments; since it follows: so *let the wicked perish at the presence of God*; the appearance of Christ, either in his awful dispensation against the Jews, or in the last judgment; when the wicked shall not be able to stand before his face, but shall call to the rocks and mountains to hide them from him; and when they shall be bid to depart from him, and shall be punished with everlasting destruction in soul and body, from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power.

Ver. 3. *But let the righteous be glad*, &c.] At the incarnation of Christ, which is matter of joy to all people that believe in him; as did Zacharias and Elisabeth, who were both righteous, and also Simeon; and at his resurrection from the dead, since it is for their justification, by which they are denominated righteous; as did the disciples of Christ, and as do saints in all ages; who know the power of his resurrection, and the influence it has on the regeneration of their souls, the justification of their persons now, and the resurrection of their bodies hereafter; and at the destruction of the enemies of Christ and theirs. *Let them rejoice before God*; in the presence of him; enjoying communion with him; having views of interest in him; as they do when this is the case, and as they will when they shall appear before him, and stand at his right hand at the last day, clothed with his righteousness, and having palms in their hands. *Yea, let them exceedingly rejoice*; as they have just reason to do, in his person, grace, righteousness, and salvation. All these expressions denote the greatness, frequency, fervency, fulness, and continuance of their joy. They may be rendered in the future, *but the righteous shall be glad* p, &c. so the Targum.

Ver. 4. *Sing unto God*, &c.] Manifest in the flesh, risen from the dead, ascended on high, set down at the right hand of his divine Father; having exerted his great strength in their redemption; and therefore should sing the song of redeeming love, with grace and melody in their hearts, unto him. *Sing praises to his name*; to the honour of his name Jesus, a Saviour, because of the great work of salvation wrought out by him; give him all the praise and glory of it, which is due unto his name. *Extol him that rideth upon the heavens*: having ascended above them, and being higher than they, and so is exalted above all blessing and praise; and uses his power and greatness for the help of his people; see Deut. xxxiii. 26. Some choose to render the words, *prepare the way* q, as John the Baptist is said to do before him, Isa. xl. 3. *for him*

* —— & tenues fugit, ceu fumus in auras. Virgil. Æneid. 5. prope finem.

p ישמחו lætabuntur, exultabunt, & gaudebunt, Pagninus, Montanus, Piscator, Cocceius, Michaelis.

q סלו elevate viam lapidibus, Vatablus; parata viam, Gejerus; make an highway, Ainsworth.

that rideth through the deserts, or *fields* [t]; as he did through the fields of Judea on an ass; and through the nations of the world, in the ministry of the word, carried thither by his apostles; whereby places, comparable to deserts for their barrenness and unfruitfulness, became like the garden of the Lord: or rather, *that rideth in the west*; it being at the west end of the tabernacle and temple, where the cherubim were, on which Jehovah rode, they being his chariot. *By his name* JAH; or Jehovah; which being a name incommunicable to creatures, and given to Christ, shews him to be the the most High; a self-existent Being, the immutable and everlasting *I AM*; which is, and was, and is to come; from whom all creatures receive their being, and are continued in it; and who is also Jehovah our righteousness; and by, in, and because of this name, is he to be extolled and magnified. *And rejoice before him*; see the note on ver. 3.

Ver. 5. *A father of the fatherless*, &c.] In a literal sense, so as to shew mercy to them, take care of them, and protect them; and this is a character which the great God often assumes, partly to express his power and providence over such, and partly to signify his tenderness, mercy, and goodness to them; and in which he should be imitated by civil magistrates, and by all good men: for it was not only a law in Israel to shew regard to such, and take care not to afflict them, but it is also a branch of pure undefiled Christian religion, James i. 27. in attending to which we resemble the great Author of it, who is here intended. Moreover, this may be understood in a spiritual sense of such who are deserted by their friends, or are called to leave father and mother for the sake of Christ and his Gospel; and who are like fatherless ones, in an helpless condition in themselves, and are sensible of it; and will not trust in the creature, nor in any works of their own, but apply to Christ, where they have help and salvation, in whom the fatherless find mercy, Hos. xiv. 3. and who afterwards, when they are without the presence of Christ, and sensible communion with him, are like orphans or fatherless children; but Christ, who is the father of such, will not leave them so, will have pity on them, shew favour to them, provide every thing needful for them, and will come and visit them, as in John xiv. 18. where the word *orphans* or *fatherless* is used of Christ's disciples. *And a Judge of the widows*; of such who are widows indeed in a literal sense, and especially that are believers, his elect that cry unto him; see Luke xviii. 2, 3, 6, 7. and of such who are so in a spiritual sense; even of the whole church of Christ, who may, even now, be said to be in a widowhood-estate, as well as under the former dispensation; since Christ, her bridegroom, is gone to heaven, and who yet, in the mean time, is her Judge, protector, and defender; and when she is made ready for him, as a bride adorned for her husband, will come and take her to himself, and she shall remember the reproach of her widowhood no more, Isa. liv. 4, 5. *Is God in his holy habitation*; in heaven, the habitation of his holiness, where is Christ the high and holy One; and has respect to the poor and lowly, the fatherless and the widow: or in his church, his holy temple, where he dwells and walks, and grants his gracious presence, and will do to the end of the world, according to his promise; or in his holy human nature, the temple and the tabernacle, in which the Godhead dwells.

Ver. 6. *God setteth the solitary in families*, &c.] Which the Jewish writers generally understand of an increase of families, with children in lawful marriage; see Psal. cxiii. 9. an instance of which we have in Abraham and Sarah; from which single or solitary ones, when joined in marriage, sprung a numerous offspring, Isa. li. 2. Heb. xi. 12. And to this sense the Targum paraphrases the words; "God is he that joins, "couples single ones into a couple, as one:" some copies add, "to build an house out of them;" that is, a family; see Ruth iv. 11. But it may be better interpreted of the fruitfulness and increase of the church with converts, under the Gospel dispensation, even from among the Gentiles; who were before solitary, or were alone, without God and Christ, and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; but being called and converted by the ministry of the word, were brought into and placed in Gospel churches, or families; see Isa. liv. 1. Gal. iv. 26, 27. Ephes. ii. 12. Acts xiv. 23. and may be applied to particular persons, who, before conversion, may be said to be *solitary* or alone; living without God, the knowledge and fear of him, and fellowship with him, being alienated from the life of him through ignorance; and without Christ, and communion with him, he not dwelling in them, nor they in him; and also sensual, not having the Spirit, his graces and fruits; being destitute of faith, hope, and love: and, moreover, aliens from the people of God, having no society with them, being in a state of solitude and darkness, and under the power of sin and Satan; helpless and *desolate*, as the word here used is rendered, Psal. xxv. 16. But, in effectual calling, such are brought out of this dismal state, and being drawn with the cords of love by the Spirit, to the Father and the Son, and brought to a spiritual acquaintance with them, they are *set in families*, or placed in Gospel churches; which, as families, have a master over them, who is Christ the Son and first-born, of whom they are named; where are saints of various ages, sizes, and standing; some fathers, some young men, and some children; where are provisions suitable for them, and stewards to give them their portion of meat in due season, who are the ministers of the word; and laws and rules, by which they are directed and regulated, and every thing is kept in good decorum. *He bringeth out those which are bound with chains*; as Peter and others literally, Acts xii. 5—11. 2 Cor. xi. 23. or rather it is to be understood spiritually of such as are bound with the chains of their own sins, and are under the power of them, with the fetters of the law, in which they are held, and who are led and kept captive by Satan; those Christ the Son makes free, proclaims liberty to them, says to such prisoners, Go forth; and, by the blood of

[t] בערבות per deserta, Hieron. Theodoret. Bugenhagius, aliique in Michaelis; in campestribus, Piscator, Cocceius; in campis, vel per campos, Gussetius, p. 641; in the deserts, Ainsworth.

his covenant, sends them forth, and directs them to himself, the strong hold, as prisoners of hope; see Isa. lxi. 1. and xlix. 9. Zech. ix. 11, 12. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, *he bringeth forth the prisoners with fortitude*; so Apollinarius, *with his great power and strength*; and the Syriac version, *with prosperity*; or in a pompous manner, as the Targum. But the words may be better rendered, *he bringeth forth the prisoners*, either as Ainsworth, *into fit (and commodious) places*, or rather, *into the conveniencies* or *commodities*; that is, of life, such as prisoners are destitute of. *But the rebellious dwell in a dry* land; meaning the Jews, to whom Christ came, and whom they rejected, reviled, hated, and would not have him to reign over them, and were a gainsaying and disobedient people; for which their land was smitten with a curse, and in the time of their wars became a dry land; when famine and pestilence were everywhere, and such tribulation as was never known, Isa. viii. 21, 22. Matt. xxiv. 6, 7, 21. Moreover, the nations of the world, among whom they are dispersed, are a dry land to them; and even such places as are become fruitful through the preaching of the Gospel are no other to them, who neither do hear it, nor will they hear it; and they are like persons in a dry and thirsty land, vainly expecting a Messiah, who will never come. This may also be applied to all that obey not the Gospel of Christ, who will be punished with everlasting destruction from his presence, and shall not have a drop of cold water allowed them to cool their tongue. The allusion may be thought to be to the Jews, that murmured and rebelled against God, and vexed his Spirit in the wilderness, where their carcasses fell; and so dwelt in a dry land, and entered not into rest, or the land of Canaan. The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, render it, *in graves*; Apollinarius paraphrases it, "he bringeth the dead out of "the graves to light."

Ver. 7. *O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people*, &c.] In the pillar of cloud, and in the pillar of fire, as the Targum adds; and this divine Person was the Son of God, the Angel of his presence, in whom his name was, even his name JAH or Jehovah before mentioned. *When thou didst march through the wilderness. Selah.* At the head of the Israelites, leading, guiding, and directing them; providing for them all things necessary, and protecting them against their enemies. And so Christ goes before his people, as they pass through the wilderness of this world; and does the like good offices for them, until he, as the great Captain of their salvation, brings them safe to glory: for what is here said is taken notice of as a resemblance of what he now does, or has done, under the Gospel dispensation, to which this psalm belongs; particularly of his marching through the wilderness of the Gentile world, in the ministry of the word by his apostles, wherein he went forth conquering and to conquer.

Ver. 8. *The earth shook*, &c.] Not only about Sinai, but in other places; see Psal. cxiv. 1, 4, 6, 7. Hab. iii. 6, 10. It may also design the dread and trembling of the inhabitants of the earth, when they heard of the wonderful things God did for his people, Exod. xv. 14, 15, 16. *The heavens also dropped at the presence of God*: the Targum supplies, *dew*; to which may be added, quails and manna: though it rather seems to design a large shower of rain, which followed the lightning and thunder, when the law was given. Even *Sinai itself* was moved *at the presence of God, the God of Israel*: it is said to quake greatly, Exod. xix. 18. The words of this and the preceding verse seem to be borrowed out of the song of Deborah, Judg. v. 4, 5. Like effects followed the promulgation of the Gospel, even a shaking of the heavens and of the earth as an emblem of the removing of the ceremonial rites and Mosaic ordinances. Let it be observed, that Christ, who went before the Israelites in the wilderness, and whom they tempted and rebelled against, is called the God of Israel.

Ver. 9. *Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain*, &c.] Not of water literally taken, as when the Israelites passed through the sea, Psal. lxxvii. 17. or when the thunderings and lightnings were on Mount Sinai, at the giving of the law, which are commonly attended with rain, Exod. xix. 16. or in the land of Canaan, which was the land that drank in the water of the rain of heaven, Deut. xi. 11. nor the rain of manna and of quails, as Arama, Exod. xvi. 4. Psal. lxxviii. 23, 27. but either the effusion of the Holy Spirit, ordinary or extraordinary; that, on the day of Pentecost, in consequence of Christ's ascension, prophesied of in this psalm, was a *plentiful* one indeed; when the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, and baptized with it: yea, the ordinary measure of the Spirit's grace in conversion is abundant, and exceeding abundant; it is shed abundantly through Christ, and superabounds sin, and may be called, as the words here signify, *a rain of liberalities*[t], or a free and liberal rain; for it comes from the free grace of God, and makes those on whom it descends a willing people in their obedience. The Spirit of God is a free Spirit; and, where he is, there is liberty, in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty. Or else the ministration of the Gospel[u] is meant; which is compared to rain, Deut. xxxii. 2. Isa. lv. 9, 10, 11. This, especially in the first times of the Gospel, was a very large and plentiful one; it being sent all over the world, and brought forth fruit in every place: this was also a *liberal* one, flowed from the free grace of God; the subject of it is free grace; and the tendency and effect of it are, to make men free from the bondage of the law, and the spirit of bondage which that induces. The Targum is, "thou hast let "down the dews of quickening, and the rains of good "pleasure;" grace, or free favour. *Whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary*; that is, the church, as the Targum explains it; the inheritance of Christ, which he has chosen, the Father has given him, and he possesses: the people of God, *weary* with the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the law; with their own sins and corruptions, a burden too heavy for them to bear; with the sins of others, among

[t] גשם נדבות pluviam munificentiarum, Montanus; vel liberalitatum, Vatablus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth; to the same purpose the Tigurine version, Cocceius, Junius & Tremellius.

[u] Dicitur de pluvia, Psal. lxviii. 10. quæ effusionem Spiritus sancti, & præconium evangelii designat. Stockius, p. 600.

whom they dwell; with the temptations of Satan, with which they are annoyed; with the persecutions of the men of the world, which make them weary sometimes, and faint in their minds; and with the common afflictions of life, which often make them weary of life itself. Now, by the plentiful ministration of the doctrines of the Gospel, accompanied with the spirit and grace of God, the hearts of the Lord's people are refreshed, as the weary, dry, and thirsty land, is with a comfortable shower of rain; and by it weary souls have rest, or at least are directed by it to Christ, where they find it: and as the earth is *prepared* [s], as the word used signifies, by rain, for the nourishment of plants; so is the church by the Gospel, whose plants are an orchard of pomegranates, for the reviving and fructifying of those who are planted in it; whereby they appear to be trees of righteousness, and the planting of the Lord; and so are confirmed, settled, and established in the house of God, and in the truths of the Gospel.

Ver. 10. *Thy congregation hath dwelt therein*, &c.] That is, in the Lord's inheritance, in the midst of his church and people. The word for *congregation* signifies *beasts* or *living creatures* [w]: some understand them of the Gentiles, who, before the Gospel came among them, were comparable to such; but, under the Gospel dispensation, being called and taken out by it, were put among the people of God, and dwelt in his inheritance. Though, without any limitation, it may be applied to all that are quickened and made alive by the grace of God; to all that are written among the living in Jerusalem; and particularly to the ministers of the Gospel, who are signified by the four living creatures, in Ezekiel's vision and in John's Revelation; though not to the exclusion of any living believer, who has a name and a place here, and who are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: *thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor*; blessings of goodness, spiritual blessings, blessings of grace and of glory; which flow from divine goodness, are in themselves good, and in their effects; and these were prepared in the covenant of grace and in Christ from all eternity; and that for persons poor and mean, indigent and helpless; and so the goodness of God in preparing them appears to be free and unmerited. The Targum is, "thou hast prepared "an host of angels to do good to the poor of God." Arama interprets it of the manna.

Ver. 11. *The Lord gave the word*, &c.] The word of the Gospel to his apostles. He committed the word of reconciliation to them; he intrusted them with it, as a sacred depositum; he gave gifts unto them, qualifying them for the ministration of it; he gave them a commission to preach it; and he gave them a door of utterance to speak it as it should be, and an opportunity to publish it. The Targum wrongly interprets it of the word of the law. *Great was the company of those that published* it; there were in our Lord's time twelve apostles and seventy disciples, who were sent out to preach the Gospel; and many more in the times of the apostles, and since. The word for *company* signifies an *army* [x]: Christ's ministers are soldiers, and war a good warfare; they have weapons which are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God, and they are made to triumph in Christ in every place. And the word rendered *those that published* is in the feminine gender; not as suggesting that women would be preachers of the Gospel under the New-Testament dispensation, for that is forbidden, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. but in allusion to the custom of women in Israel publishing the victories obtained by their armies and generals; see 1 Sam. xviii. 7. and it may be it is used to denote the weakness of Gospel ministers in themselves, who have the treasure of the word put into their earthen vessels, that the power may appear to be of God, and not of man; so ministers are called maidens, Prov. ix. 3. and this same word is used of them in Isa. xl. 9. And it may be observed, that notwithstanding it is of the said gender, yet it is by the Targum interpreted of men, thus; "but Moses and "Aaron evangelized the word of God to the great "army of Israel." And it may also be observed, that this word המבשרות, which signifies a *publishing of good news*, is derived from a root which signifies *flesh*; denoting, that the good tidings of the Gospel, or of peace and pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, published in it, are by an incarnate Saviour, or through his assumption of our flesh, and suffering in it.

Ver. 12. *Kings of armies did flee apace*, &c.] Or *they fled, they fled* [y]; or *they flee, they flee*. This is either the subject-matter of the word *published*, the words of the publishers so saying; or the effect of the publication of the Gospel: for though some, by these kings of armies, understand the apostles either fleeing from place to place because of persecution, or running to and fro, as they interpret the words, to spread the Gospel; yet they rather intend the enemies of the Gospel, and the chief of them that opposed themselves to it; namely, the Roman emperors and kings, and who fled before it; particularly at the time of the downfal of Paganism, when they fled to the mountains and hills, and called upon them to hide them from Christ, Rev. vi. 15, 16. *And she that tarried at home divided the spoil*; the church, compared to a woman that keeps at home, Titus ii. 5. who shared in the spoils taken out of the hands of Satan, and from among the Gentiles, even converted souls, brought unto her. What is promised to Christ, Isa. liii. 12. is said of the church; she being made more than a conqueror through him, and sharing in all his victories and spoils. It denotes the certain and easy success of the Gospel ministry, attended with a divine power, and the advantages thereof to the church of Christ; this was particularly true of the church in the times of Constantine.

Ver. 13. *Though ye have lien among the pots*, &c.] Kimchi takes these words to be the words of the women, or of the psalmist addressing the Israelites going out to war; that though they should lie in a low, dark, and disagreeable place, in the camp, in the open field, exposed to wind and weather; yet they should be fair and beautiful, and be loaded with gold and silver, the spoil

[s] כוננתה parasti eam, Michaelis; præparas, Gejerus.
[w] חיתך τα ζωα σου, Sept. animalia tua, V. L. so Eth. Syr. Arab. & Cocceius; pecus tuum, Musculus, and some in Vatablus.
[x] צבא exercitus, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus, Cocceius.
[y] ידדון ידדון fugiebant, fugiebant, Pagninus, Montanus; fugerunt, fugerunt, Tigurine version, Musculus.

of the enemy. But Fortunatus Scacchus[a] refers them, much better, to the encampment of the Israelites in their tents, and to the disposition and order of their army going to battle: the body of the army in the middle, and the two wings, right and left, on each side; whose glittering armour of gold and brass, the rays of the sun striking on them, are fitly resembled by the colours on the wings and back of a dove. Another learned writer[a] thinks they are an address to the wings of the dove; that is, to the dove itself, meaning the Holy Spirit, expostulating with him how long he would dwell within the limits and borders of the land of Canaan; which was not long after the ascension of Christ, for soon was the gift of the Holy Ghost poured down upon the Gentiles. But rather they are an address to the people of Israel; intimating, that though they had been in adversity, and their lives had been made bitter with hard bondage, in morter and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; and had lain among the brick-kilns and furnaces when in Egypt; and in the times of the Judges had suffered much from their neighbours, by whom they were frequently carried captive; and had been in affliction in the times of Saul; yet now in prosperous circumstances in the times of David, who had conquered their enemies, and enlarged their dominions, and restored peace; and especially would be more so in the days of Solomon, when they enjoyed great plenty and prosperity, and silver was made to be as the stones of the street. Though it is best of all to apply the words to the church and people of God in Gospel times; and they may describe their state and condition by nature and by grace, in adversity and in prosperity: the former in this clause, in which there is an allusion to scullions, or such as lie among coppers and furnaces, and are black and sooty; and so it describes the Lord's people before conversion, who are black with original sin and actual transgressions; who being transgressors from the womb, and as long as they live and walk in sin, and have their conversation with the men of the world, may be said to lie among the pots: and this may also be expressive of the church of Christ being in adversity, and black with the sun of persecution smiting her; and she might be said to lie among the pots while the ten Heathen persecutions lasted, and also in the reign of antichrist; during which time the church is in the wilderness, and the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth. Yet shall they be as *the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold*: alluding to the white silver colour of some doves. Such were the white doves Charon of Lampsacum speaks of[b], seen about Athos, which were like the white crow Ovid calls[c] the silver fowl with snowy wings: and also it may be to the time when they become of a golden colour, at which time they are fit for sacrifice, as the Jews[d] observe; or to the different appearances of them, according as the rays of light and of the sun differently fall upon them. So the philosopher[e] observes, that the necks of doves appear of a golden colour by the refraction of light. And this describes the saints and people of God as they are by grace. They are comparable to the *dove* on many accounts: like doves of the valleys, every one of them mourn for their iniquities; like the trembling and fearful dove, tremble at the apprehensions of divine wrath, and judgment to come under first convictions; and are fearful of their enemies, and of their own state; are humble, modest, and meek; think the worst of themselves, and the best of others; flee to Christ for refuge, and to ordinances for refreshment; are chaste and affectionate to Christ, and harmless and inoffensive in their lives and conversations, Ezek. vii. 16. Hos. xi. 11. Cant. iv. 1. Isa. lx. 8. Matt. x. 16. Being *as the wings of a dove covered with silver* may denote the purity of doctrine held by them; the words of the Lord being as silver purified seven times, Psal. xii. 6. and the preciousness and sincerity of their faith, by which they mount up with wings as eagles; and the holiness of their conversation, being as becomes the Gospel of Christ: and being as the *feathers* of a dove covered *with yellow gold* may denote their being adorned with the graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, and love; which are more precious than gold that perisheth, and are called chains of gold, Cant. i. 10. see 1 Pet. i. 7. or their being clothed with the righteousness of Christ, signified by gold of Ophir, and clothing of wrought gold, Psal. xlv. 9, 13. or their being enriched with the unsearchable, solid, substantial, and durable riches of Christ, Rev. iii. 18. And both may describe also the prosperous estates of the church, either in the first ages of Christianity, when she was clothed with the sun, and had a crown of twelve stars on her head, Rev. xii. 1. or in the latter day, when her light will be come, and the glory of the Lord will rise upon her; when her stones will be laid with fair colours, and her foundations with sapphires; when she shall have the glory of God upon her, and be as a bride adorned for her husband, Isa. lx. 1, 2. and liv. 11, 12. Rev. xxi. 9, 10, 11.

Ver. 14. *When the Almighty scattered kings in it,* &c.] His inheritance, his congregation, the church, ver. 9, 10. Which some understand of his diffusing, and spreading and giving, in large numbers, ministers and preachers of the Gospel, pastors and teachers; who are kings and spiritual governors, are over churches, and have the rule over them in the Lord: and so Jarchi interprets them of the disciples of the wise men. Or they may be understood of the Lord's bringing into his churches such as are made kings and priests unto God, and in whose hearts grace reigns; and even of kings, in a literal sense, who will be brought into the church in the latter day, Isa. xlix. 23. and lx. 3, 11, 16. see ver. 27, 29. Though they may be interpreted of wicked kings, and the destruction of them *by it*[f], the dove, the church of Christ; which will be done at the battle of Armageddon, at which time we read of the church being clothed in white, as follows; see Rev. xvi. 14, 16. and xix. 8, 14, 18, 19. The name of Almighty well agrees with Christ, Rev. i. 8. or Shaddai, who is sufficient, all-sufficient; and whose grace is sufficient for his people, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *It was* white *as snow in Sal-*

[a] Elæochrism. Sacr. l. 3. c. 24.
[a] Gusset. Comment. Heb. p. 884.
[b] Apud Ælian. Var. Hist. l. 1. c. 15.
[c] Metamorph. l. 2. Fab. 7.
[d] Maimon. Issure Mizbeach, c. 3. s. 2.
[e] Aristotel. de Color. c. 3. Vid. Lucret. l. 2. v. 800.
[f] בה per eam, vel propter eam, Gejerus.

mon; a mountain near to Shechem, Judg. ix. 48. which seems to have had its name from the shady trees upon it; and which also, as it seems from hence, was sometimes covered with snow; as was Lebanon, so called from the whiteness of the snow on it: and Olympus is called snowy by Homer, from the snow continually on it[z]. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it, *in darkness*, or *in the shadow of death;* denoting, as Ainsworth observes, light in darkness, joy in tribulation: but rather it may design the purity of the church and people of God, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness to them, which is as fine linen, clean and white; and through his pardoning blood, whereby their scarlet and crimson sins are as white as wool, as white as snow; and through the sanctifying grace of the Spirit, by which they are washed and cleansed, and made all-glorious within; and through the holiness of their lives and conversations, they hating the garment spotted with the flesh; and washing their garments, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb: or they may be said to be so, as having got the victory over all their enemies; and especially this will be the case when the kings of the earth will be scattered and destroyed by the Almighty Saviour, Rev. vii. 9. and xix. 14.

Ver. 15. *The hill of God* is as *the hill of Bashan,* &c.] The church is the hill of God, an excellent and supereminent one, and in which he dwells, as is said in the next verse; called an hill for its visibility, and especially as it will be in the latter day, when it will be established and exalted above the mountains and hills, the kingdoms of this world, Isa. ii. 2. this is compared to the hill of Bashan for fertility and fruitfulness; hence we read of the kine and bulls, the rams and lambs, and fatlings of Bashan, and of the oaks thereof, Deut. xxxii. 14. Psal. xxii. 12. Isa. ii. 13. Ezek. xxxix. 18. Amos iv. 1. the ordinances of the church are green pastures, where his people become fat and flourishing, Psal. xxiii. 2. and xcii. 13, 14. *An high hill,* as *the hill of Bashan;* or *an hill of eminences*[h]; it had several tops, or little hills that rose up from it; so the church of Christ, though but one hill or church in general, yet there are several little hills belong unto it, or particular congregational churches, of which it consists: or *a mountain abounding with cheese*[i]; which fed much cattle, and these produced much milk, of which large quantities of cheese were made, and so is expressive of the fruitfulness of it.

Ver. 16. *Why leap ye, ye high hills?* &c.] Meaning the kingdoms of this world that lift up themselves above, and look with contempt upon the interest, kingdom, and church of Christ; lie in wait for it, leap upon it, insult over it, and endeavour to crush and extirpate it; but all in vain; these high hills and mountains are nothing before Zerubbabel King of saints; his church is built on a rock, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it; the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands will become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth, and break in pieces and consume the kingdoms of it: the word רצד, in the Arabic language, signifies *to lie in wait*, as Jarchi from R. Moses Hadarsan observes; and to look out, and leap upon the prey; so R. Hai in Ben Melech says, it has the signification of looking, observing, hoping, or waiting, in the Arabic language[k]. This is *the hill* which *God desireth to dwell in;* as in Psal. cxxxii. 13. the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; the essential Word, the Messiah: his desire was towards his church and people, in eternity, in time, and now is; he has chosen and desired them for his habitation, and in the midst of them he delights to be, Rev. i. 13. *Yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever:* he dwells in his church now by his gracious presence; he will dwell in the New-Jerusalem church-state personally for the space of a thousand years; and after that he will dwell with and among his people to all eternity; see Psal. cxxxii. 14.

Ver. 17. *The chariots of God* are *twenty thousand,* &c.] By which are meant the angels, as the following clause shews; called *chariots*, because they have appeared in such a form, 2 Kings ii. 11. and vi. 17. and because, like chariots of war, they are the strength and protection of the Lord's people; and because of their swiftness in doing his work; and because they are for his honour and glory: they are the chariots of God, in which he rides about the world doing his will; they are the chariots in which Christ ascended up to heaven, and in which he will descend at the last day; and in which he now fetches the souls of his people to him at death, and will make use of them at the resurrection to gather them to him, when their bodies are raised by him: their number is very great, and in other places is mentioned as greater, Dan. vii. 10. Rev. v. 11. Christ speaks of twelve legions of them, Matt. xxvi. 53. there is a multitude of them, and they are said to be even innumerable, Luke ii. 13. Heb. xii. 22. which is observed, both for the glory of God, and for the safety of his people: even *thousands of angels;* the word for *angels* is only used in this place; Kimchi and Ben Melech take it to be one of the names of angels by which they were called: some derive it from a word which signifies *peaceable* and *quiet;* as expressive of the tranquil state in which they are in heaven, always beholding the face of God there: others from a word which signifies *sharp*, as Jarchi; and so refers to their being the executioners of God's wrath and vengeance on men, and alluding to a sort of chariots with sharp hooks used in war: others from a word which signifies to *second;* these being the second, or next to God, the chief princes; or, as Aben Ezra, it denotes the number of angels, even *two thousand;* so the Targum, "the chariots of God "are two myriads (or twenty thousand) of burning "fires, two thousand of angels lead them." *The Lord is among them* as *in Sinai, in the holy* place; that is, at the head of them, being their Governor and Commander, at whose beck they are, and ready to do his will; and he was among them when he ascended to heaven, as it follows, being carried up by them; as he was

[z] Iliad. 1. v. 420. & 18. v. 615.

[h] הר גבננים mons gibborum, Montanus; vel eminentiarum, Gejerus; monte frequente gibbis, Junius & Tremellius; mons fastigiorum, Cocceius.

[i] Mons qui caseis abundat, Tigurine version.

[k] Ratzad, insidiatus fuit, uti prædæ leo, Golius, col. 991. Castel col. 3602.

among them at Sinai, when the law was given; for Christ was there then, Acts vii. 38. and attended with ten thousands of his holy angels, by whom the law was ordained, spoken, and given, Deut. xxxiii. 2. Acts vii. 53. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2. which Sinai is called the holy place, from the presence of God there, and the law given from it: or else the sense is, that Christ is among the angels as in Sinai of old; so in the holy place, in Sion his holy hill, the church under the Gospel dispensation, where there are an innumerable company of angels, Heb. xii. 22. according to the construction of the word in the Hebrew text, it seems as if Sinai was in the holy place, the inside of it being of cedar, like the Shittim-wood that grew about Sinai[l]; or rather the worship commanded and directed to on mount Sinai was performed in it.

Ver. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high*, &c.] Which is to be understood, not of Moses ascending up to the firmament, as the Targum and Jarchi interpret it, of which we nowhere read; nor of David's going up to the high fortresses, as Aben Ezra; nor of God's ascent from Mount Sinai; but of Christ's ascension to heaven, as the apostle cites and explains it in Ephes. iv. 8, 9. which ascension respects him as man, was not figurative, as in Gen. xvii. 22. but real and local, from earth to heaven, and was certain and visible; he was seen to go up by angels and men; and, because of the certainty of it, it is here expressed in the past tense, though it was then future. *Thou hast led captivity captive*: meaning either such who had been captives, in which sense the word is used, Psal. cxxvi. 1. and so may design either those who had been prisoners in the grave, but were set free at Christ's resurrection, and went with him in triumph to heaven; or all his people, whom he redeemed by his blood from that captivity and bondage they were in by nature; or rather those who led them captive are here meant by *captivity*; such as sin, Satan, the world, death, and every spiritual enemy, whom Christ conquered and triumphed over; the allusion may be to public triumphs, when captives were led in chains, even kings and great men, that had captivated others: the words seem to be borrowed out of Judg. v. 12. *Thou hast received gifts for men*; the gifts of the Holy Spirit, qualifying men for the ministry of the Gospel, as they are interpreted by the Apostle, Ephes. iv. 11. these Christ received from his divine Father in human nature, when he ascended up to heaven, in order to give them to men; and which he did in a very extraordinary manner on the day of Pentecost. The Targum and Syriac version render it, *thou hast given gifts to men*; and the Arabic version, *and he gave gifts to men*, as the apostle, Ephes. iv. 8. *Yea*, for *the rebellious also*; disobedient and unbelieving[m], as all men are by nature, even God's elect, before conversion, Tit. iii. 3. who are not only called by grace, and have the blessings of grace bestowed upon them; but some of them have gifts given them, whereby they are fitted to preach the Gospel to others, as Saul, the blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious; and some of those among the Jews, that were concerned in the crucifixion of Christ: though some think the Gentiles are intended, on whom the Holy Spirit was poured forth after our Lord's ascension; and so the Targum interprets it of the rebellious, who become proselytes, and return by repentance. *That the Lord God might dwell* among them; that is, that they, by the gifts and graces of the Spirit bestowed on them, might become a fit habitation for God; or that *they*, the rebellious, being now partakers of the grace of God and his gifts, *might dwell* with *the Lord God*[n] in his churches; enjoy his divine presence, and have communion with him in his word and ordinances.

Ver. 19. *Blessed* be *the Lord*, who *daily loadeth us* with benefits, &c.] With all spiritual blessings, with an abundance of grace, as well as with temporal mercies, for which he is, and ought to be, praised day by day: so Aben Ezra and Kimchi supply the text, and suppose the word *blessings* or *goodnesses* to be wanting; though the words may be rendered, *blessed be the Lord day by day, he will bear us*, or *carry us*[o]; as a father his child, or a shepherd his lambs; and so he does from the womb, even to hoary hairs; and therefore blessing and praise should be ascribed to him; see Isa. xlvi. 3, 4. and lxiii. 9. or *he will put a burden upon us*[p]; meaning the burden of afflictions: these are of the Lord's laying upon his people; and he will lay no more upon them than he will enable them to bear; and will, in his own time and way, deliver them from them, and be the author of salvation to them, as follows; and therefore his name is to be praised, 1 Cor. x. 13. the Targum interprets it of the burdensomeness of the law; "blessed be the Lord every day, he burdens us, adding precepts unto precepts." Even *the God of our salvation. Selah*; the author of temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation, as Christ is.

Ver. 20. *He that is our God*, &c.] Or *God for us*[q]; is on our side; and is the mighty God, able to save to the uttermost; is *the God of salvation*; or *God for salvations*[r]; for the obtaining of them for his people, and giving them to them, even of every kind. *And unto God the Lord* belong *the issues from death*; deliverance from it; Christ has abolished it, and him that had the power of it; has delivered himself from it, and will deliver all his people from it, though they become subject to it, as well as from eternal death; for he has the keys of hell and death in his hands. Some render the words, *to God the Lord* belong *the issues*, or *ways unto death*[s]; he has various ways of bringing persons to death, of destroying his and his people's enemies; and so Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Kimchi interpret it; though the following words seem to be opposed to these: the Heathens had a notion that the power of death belonged to God; hence they had a deity called the god of death, *Dites*[t].

Ver. 21. *But God shall wound the head of his enemies*, &c.] Him who is the chief of his enemies, even Satan

[l] Vid. Texelii Phœnix, l. 3. c. 7. p. 281.
[m] סוררים ἀπειθοῦντες, Sept. non credentes, V. L.
[n] לשכן ut habitent cum Jah, Jehovah, Piscator; cum Deo, Gejerus; ut habitent pulchritudinem Dei, Coccejus.
[o] יעמס לנו portat nos, Vatablus, Musculus; bajulat nos, Coccejus.
[p] Onus imponit nobis, Lutherus, Gejerus.

[q] האל לנו Deus nobis, vel est nobis, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator.
[r] אל למושעות Deus ad salutes, Pagninus, Montanus, &c.
[s] למות תוצאות ad mortem exitus, Pagninus, Montanus; mille viæ lethi, Lucan.
[t] Macrob. in Somn. Scip. l. 1. c. 11.

the prince of devils, the god of the world, the father of the wicked Jews, all enemies of Christ; to *wound* is the same as to bruise him, as in Gen. iii. 15. and so the Targum here, "but God shall break the head of his "enemies;" disappoint his schemes, blast his designs, crush his power and authority, demolish his empire, and eternally destroy him with the fire prepared for him and his angels; and the same may be applied to the man of sin, and all other enemies of Christ, who is the divine Person here, and all along, spoken of; see Psal. cx. 6. And *the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses*; by whom may be meant antichrist: Jarchi interprets it of Esau, who was an hairy man, and a figure of antichrist: and his hairy scalp may denote his fierceness and cruelty, appearing like a savage beast, drinking the blood of the saints; and like a thief and a robber, who used to let their hair grow long, shagged, and entangled, to strike terror into men they met with, Job v. 5. and also his pride and haughtiness; he exalting himself above all that is called God, and opening his mouth in blasphemy against him: and likewise it signifies his great power and authority, he having people, kingdoms, and nations, depending upon him, as hair on the head, and subject to him: and of him it may be truly said, that he *goes on still in his trespasses*, in tyranny, idolatry, superstition, and will-worship; taking no notice of what God says by his witnesses, nor any warning by what the eastern empire suffered by the Turks and Saracens; so as to repent of the works of his hands, of worshipping idols of gold, silver, brass, and wood; nor of his murders, sorceries, fornications, and thefts; but still persisting in them, until his, and the sins of his followers, reach to heaven, Rev. ix. 20, 21. and xviii. 5. but the Godman, Christ Jesus, will give him a deadly wound, of which he shall never be healed: this also holds true of all that persist in a sinful course of life without repentance; who are workers of iniquity, whose lives are one continued series of sinning; these will be punished by Christ with everlasting destruction.

Ver. 22. *The Lord said*, &c.] Within himself, in his own heart; he resolved upon it in his mind; or he said it in council and in covenant; he undertook and engaged to do what follows; or he spoke of it in promise and in prophecy, as what would be done. *I will bring again from Bashan*; as he delivered his people from Og king of Bashan formerly, Numb. xxi. 33—35. so he purposed and promised to ransom them out of the hands of him that was stronger than they; to recover them from the strong man armed, and deliver them from the power of darkness, and translate them into his own kingdom, and save them from all the bulls of Bashan; see Psal. xxii. 14. to which text Jarchi refers in the exposition of this; though some understand it of the fat and great ones of the earth, of the conversion of kings and princes, Psal. xxii. 29. *I will bring* my people *again from the depths of the sea*; out of the most wretched and desperate condition, out of the depths of sin and misery; out of an helpless and hopeless state, in which they were through the fall, and their actual transgressions: the allusion is to the bringing of the children of Israel through the Red sea, and out of the depths of it, unto dry land: the Targum interprets the whole of the resurrection of the righteous, whether devoured by wild beasts, or drowned in the sea; see Rev. xx. 13. some interpret the passage of the Lord's gathering of his people, in effectual vocation, from the east and from the west; from the east, signified by Bashan; and from the west, by the depths of the sea; see Isa. xliii. 5.

Ver. 23. *That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies*, &c.] This verse is in connexion with ver. 21. the 22d verse being to be read in a parenthesis: the sense is, that the Messiah would so wound the head and hairy scalp of his people's enemies, and there should be such a large effusion of blood, that their feet should be dipped therein, Rev. xiv. 20. see the note on Psal. lviii. 10. And *the tongue of thy dogs in the same*; who should lick it up, as the dogs licked the blood of Jezebel, 1 Kings xxi. 19. 2 Kings ix. 35, 36. and so such a carnage will be made of antichrist and his followers, that the fowls of the heavens will be called upon to eat the flesh of kings, captains, and mighty ones, Rev. xix. 17, 18.

Ver. 24. *They have seen thy goings, O God*, &c.] In saving his people, and destroying his enemies. Even *the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary*; the walk and conversation of Christ, when he was made flesh, and dwelt among men; his manner of life and deportment; his works and miracles, his sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead; all which his apostles were eye-witnesses of; as also his going up to heaven, which was visible to angels and men; likewise his progress and victorious expeditions in Judea, and in the Gentile world, by the ministry of the word, in which he went forth conquering, and to conquer; which sense is confirmed by the following words: for Christ, who is God over all, the Lord and God of his people, and King of saints, is here, as throughout the psalm, intended. The Targum interprets it of the path or goings of the divine Majesty upon the sea, which the house of Israel saw.

Ver. 25. *The singers went before*, &c.] The apostles and ministers of the word, the sweet singers of Israël, the charmers that charm so very wisely: the Gospel is a joyful sound; it is like vocal music, harmonious and delightful; it is as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, as Ezekiel's ministry was, Ezek. xxxiii. 32. it is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of peace, pardon, and righteousness, and of eternal life and salvation by Christ; it is as music in the ears of sensible souls, when sounded forth, and sung out clearly and distinctly by the faithful ministers of it. The allusion seems to be to singers going before armies, when marching to battle, or returning with victory; see 2 Chron. xx. 21, 28. *The players on instruments* followed *after*; so the sweet strains of the Gospel, the melodious notes and distinguishing sounds of it, as well as the praises of God's people, are, in the New Testament, signified by harps, and men's playing upon them, Rev. v. 8. and xiv. 2. and xv. 2. *Amongst* them were *the damsels playing with timbrels*; or *in the midst of the virgins playing* with *timbrels*[a]; or *beating on tabrets*; as women used to do when they met their kings returning from

[a] בתוך עלמות in medio puellarum, Pagninus, Montanus; inter puellas, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Cocceius, Gejerus.

the conquest of their enemies; see 1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7. these may be the pure and primitive churches of Christ, and the members thereof, rejoicing at the preaching of the Gospel, and praising God for the blessings of grace in it; in the midst of which the ministers of the word sung the new song of Gospel truths: and who may be compared to damsels or virgins for their beauty and comeliness through Christ; for their relation to him, being betrothed unto him; and for their strong and chaste affection for him; for their incorruptness in doctrine and worship, and their uprightness in their lives and conversation, Rev. xiv. 4. the allusion may be to Miriam and the women with her at the Red sea, Exod. xv. 20. and the Targum interprets the whole verse of Moses and Aaron singing at the Red sea, and of Miriam and the women playing with timbrels.

Ver. 26. *Bless ye God in the congregations*, &c.] This was what they said as they sung and played; they called upon the churches, and the members of them, and upon one another, to bless the Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh; not by invoking or bestowing a blessing on him, which cannot be, and of which he has no need; but by proclaiming him to be God over all, blessed for evermore, as he is in himself; and the perfections of his nature, by attributing all the blessings of nature, grace, and glory to him, in whom they are, and from whom they come; and by exercising faith upon him for them particularly, and for pardon, righteousness, supplies of grace, and everlasting salvation; and by giving him the glory of all, and ascribing blessing and honour to him on account of them; which should be done openly and publicly, in the several particular congregated churches of Christ; and this shews the psalm still refers to Gospel times, in which only such churches are. Even *the Lord, from the fountain of Israel*; or, *the Lord*, who is *of the fountain of Israel*[w]; that is, whose natural descent is from Israel, or Jacob, as Christ's was, according to the flesh, Rom. ix. 5. though some take this to be a description of the posterity of Jacob, those that go out from the fountain of Israel, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi; see Isa. xlviii. 1. so the Tigurine version, and others; who are called upon to bless the Lord: but then it must be understood not of the carnal Israelites, they rejected the Messiah, Jesus, and called him accursed; but the spiritual seed of Jacob, whether Jews or Gentiles; Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile. The Targum, and so Jarchi, interpret it of the seed of Israel; compare with this Luke i. 41, 44. the words may be read, *for*, or *because of* the fountain of *Israel*[x]: God, who is the fountain of living waters; Christ, whose blood is the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness; the Spirit, who, in the operations of his grace, is a well or fountain of living water, springing up unto eternal life; and all spiritual blessings, and the abundance of them, which the spiritual Israel of God enjoy, may be designed by this phrase; and so be considered as the reason why God the Lord is to be blessed. Some understand it of the Scriptures, from whence all divine knowledge, blessing, and praise are derived; and others of the heart, and the abundance of it, from whence, and not with the lips only, men should bless and praise the Lord.

Ver. 27. *There is little Benjamin, with their ruler*, &c.] Or who is *their ruler*[y]; that is, in the congregations or churches, where he was a ruler; or in the procession, the triumphal progress of Christ in Judea, and in the Gentile world, by the ministry of the word; where the singers and players of instruments, and damsels with timbrels, went in order: for not the tribe of Benjamin is meant, called *little*, because Benjamin was Jacob's younger son; or because it was greatly weakened and reduced at Gibeah, Judg. xx. 48. and was one of the smallest tribes in Israel; and Saul's family, who was the first king of Israel, the least in that tribe, 1 Sam. ix. 21. though the Targum interprets it of the tribe; and so Jarchi; but the Apostle Paul is here meant, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, Rom. xi. 1. Phil. iii. 5. was a young man when he was converted, Acts vii. 58. as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions have it here; was *little* in stature, as is generally reported of him, and as his name *Paul* may be thought to signify, and might be given him on that account; see 2 Cor. x. 10. and was little in his own eyes, less than the least of all saints, and the chief of sinners; one born out of due time, and unworthy to be called an apostle; as well as he was little and contemptible in the eyes of others; yet he was greatly honoured by Christ, had an authority from him, was a *ruler* in his churches; set in the first place there, made an apostle, and was an apostle of the Gentiles, and not a whit behind the very chief of the apostles; and he was a principal in this progress, and therefore is named first: he was a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ, and carry it into the Gentile world; he travelled and laboured more abundantly than the rest, and preached the Gospel fully from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions render it, *there was Benjamin the younger in an ecstasy*; or trance, as the Apostle Paul was, Acts ix. 9. and xxii. 17. 2 Cor. xii. 2—4. but our version is best. *The princes of Judah, and their council*; or *company*, as Kimchi; their churches, or congregations over which they presided, or were the means of gathering; these were the apostles, some of which were of the tribe of Judah, of which tribe Christ was, and so must be those that are called his brethren, Matt. xiii. 55. Acts i. 14. these were *princes*, not only in common with other Christians, by adoption and regeneration, but by their office, being apostles, and over others in the Lord; and besides the church at Jerusalem, where James presided, there were other churches in Judea, which had spiritual guides and governors over them; see Heb. xiii. 7, 17. and so the Septuagint version, and those that follow it, render the words, *the princes of Judah, their governors*; and so Aben Ezra interprets them, and observes that *regem*, in Zech. vii. 2, so signifies; to which the sense of R. Menachem in Jarchi agrees, who renders it *their purpled ones*; so Coccejus; but Gussetius[z] renders it *their stoning*; who stoned those that preached the Gospel to them; see Matt. xxi. 35.

[w] ממקור ישראל qui est ex fonte Israelis, i. e. natus ex semine Israelis, Tillius & Vitringa apud Michael.

[x] Ob vel propter fontem Israel, Gejerus.

[y] רדם dominans eos, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus; dominator eorum, Musculus; so Tigurine version, Coccejus.

[z] Ebr. Comment. p. 777.

and xxiii. 37. or stoned their enemies, conquered them; or *their stone* [a], the Messiah, that sprung from Judah, Gen. xlix. 24. Psal. cxviii. 22. *The princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali*; the rest of the apostles, who were of Galilee, in which country lay the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali; such as Peter, Andrew, James and John, Philip and Nathaniel, see Matt. iv. 13—21. John i. 44—46.

Ver. 28. *Thy God hath commanded thy strength, &c.*] Which is either an apostrophe or an address to the Messiah, as in Psal. xlv. 7. declaring, that as his God and Father had purposed and promised to send forth, so he had sent forth, the rod of his strength out of Sion, Psal. cx. 1, 2. that is, his Gospel, both into the several cities of Judea, and into the Gentile world, where it was the power of God unto salvation, both to Jew and Gentile: or else these words are spoken to the churches and congregations, in whom the Lord's name was to be blessed; or to the princes, rulers, and governors of them before mentioned, shewing that the Lord has made good his promise to them, that as their day was their strength should be; and it was owing to their being strengthened by him that they walked up and down in his name, doing his work, and preaching his Gospel, both to Jews and Gentiles: to which they reply by petition, *strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us*; which, if understood of the apostles, princes, and rulers, refers to the work of preaching the Gospel, and the success of it, desiring it might be more and more confirmed; and to the settlement of Christianity in the Pagan world, and also to the work of the reformation from Popery in later times; compare with this Rev. iii. 2. if of the churches, and the members thereof, it may respect the carrying on and finishing the work of grace in them. It is rendered *in us* by the Septuagint and others; see Isa. xxvi. 12. for this work sometimes seems to be very low and weak, and needs strengthening, and it is God only that can do it, and he will do it, 1 Pet. v. 10. and this shews that the grace of God is not only necessary at first conversion, but to be continued for the performing of the work of grace until the day of Christ.

Ver. 29. *Because of thy temple at Jerusalem, &c.*] Not the material temple there, which was not in being in David's time, but was built by his son, and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; and though it was rebuilt by Zerubbabel, repaired by Herod, and was the Messiah's temple, into which he entered as the Lord and proprietor of it, Mal. iii. 1. yet was quickly after his time demolished, and will never be rebuilt more; but the Messiah's spiritual temple, of which he is the builder, foundation, and corner-stone; the materials of which are believers in him, and it is for his service, worship, and glory: and *because of Jerusalem* [b], as it may be translated; by which also the church of Christ is meant, which is the heavenly Jerusalem, the Jerusalem which is above, and free, the mother of us all, the city of the great King, the place of divine worship, and well fortified by the power and grace of God. The words may be rendered *above Jerusalem* [c], and connected either with the preceding verse, and so point at the place, heaven, the temple and palace of the Messiah; from whence spiritual health and strength are desired, and may be expected; or with the following words, and the sense be, *from*, or *out of thy temple in Jerusalem*; even out of the material temple, the Gospel should be preached, as it was by the apostles on the day of Pentecost; and so the word of the Lord went out from thence, and from Jerusalem into Judea, and so into the Gentile world, where it is continued, and will be until the kings of the earth shall be converted, as follows. *Shall kings bring presents unto thee*; that is, such as should become Christians, as Constantine, and others, in the earlier ages of Christianity; who brought their riches and wealth to Christ, and into his church, with a design for the good and welfare of it, though it proved otherwise; and as many will in the latter day, who, being converted, will bring presents to the King Messiah, join his churches, and be their nursing fathers; see Psal. lxxii. 10, 11. Isa. xlix. 23. and lx. 3, 11, 16. and who will bring their glory and honour, and that of the nations, into the New-Jerusalem church-state, Rev. xxi. 24, 26. and it will be because of his church and people, and for their good and welfare, as well as for the glory and honour of Christ, that those presents will be brought; and which will not only be theirs, their good things, but themselves, whom they will present to the Lord, as living and acceptable sacrifices, Rom. xii. 1. the Targum is, "out of thy temple thou shalt receive offerings; upon "Jerusalem thy Shechinah dwells; out of their palaces "kings shall bring unto thee sacrifices."

Ver. 30. *Rebuke the company of spear-men, &c.*] Or, *of the reed* [d]; that is, men that use and fight with spears, like to reeds, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it. Aben Ezra says, that spears are so called in the Kedarene or Arabian language; and the Arabians use a sort of reed for a spear, as Mr. Castel out of Avicenna observes [e], and Pliny [f] says they are used for spears: or rather the words should be rendered, *rebuke*, restrain, destroy *the wild beast*, or *beasts of the reed* [g]; as the Syriac, Septuagint, and Vulgate Latin versions, and others, render it: the allusion is to such kind of creatures as lions in the thickets of Jordan; see Jer. xlix. 19. and the note there; and the behemoth, that lies under the covert of reeds, Job xl. 21. or as the crocodile in the river Nile, and other rivers of Egypt, which abounded with flags and reeds, in which such creatures lay; see Isa. xix. 6, 7. and xxxv. 6. and xxxvi. 6. perhaps the hippopotamus, or river-horse, is referred to; so may design an insidious, cruel, and tyrannical prince; such an one as Pharaoh king of Egypt, Isa. xxvii. 1. a type of antichrist, and who seems to be here meant; for as Rome, for its wickedness, cruelty, and idolatry, is spiritually called Egypt, Rev. xi. 8. so the Romish antichrist is the beast ascending out of the bottomless pit; and is an insidious creature, lies in wait to deceive, puts on the mask and vizor of Christianity; has two horns, like a lamb in his ecclesiastic capacity; lies covered with the reeds of the traditions,

[a] Vid. Teelman. Explic. Parabol. p. 312.
[b] על ירושלם propter Jeruschalaima, Junius & Tremellius.
[c] Super Jerusalaim, Pagninus, Montanus, Vatablus.
[d] חית קנה congregationem calami, Pagninus.
[e] Lexic. Polyglott. col. 3376.
[f] Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 36.
[g] Feram cannæ, Montanus; bestiam arundineti, Cocceius; feram vel bestiam arundinis, Gejerus, Michaelis.

inventions, and the doctrines of men; and teaches men to trust in the staff of a broken reed, in their own merits, and the merits of others. Jarchi interprets it of Esau, who is like to a wild boar that dwells among the reeds; and the Talmud[h] interprets it of a beast that dwells among reeds, and the gloss explains it of the nation of Amalek; the Turks, according to some, are meant. *The multitude of bulls;* the secular powers of the beast of Rome; the antichristian states, their kings and princes, comparable to these creatures for their great strength, power, and authority, and for their fierceness and furiousness in persecuting the people of God: these are horned creatures, the ten horns of the beast, in his civil and secular capacity, with which he pushes at the saints, casts them down, and tramples upon them; see Psal. xxii. 13. Ezek. xxxix. 18. compared with Rev. xix. 18. *With the calves of the people;* or the people, comparable to calves for their weakness, folly, and stupidity; these are the common people under the government and influence of the kings and princes of the earth; the people, multitudes, nations, and tongues, over whom the antichristian harlot sits, rules, and reigns: this phrase shews that the whole is to be taken, not in a literal, but figurative, sense. Till every one *submit himself with pieces of silver;* that is, rebuke them by thy word, or by thy providences, until they become sensible of their sins, repent of them, and submit themselves to Christ; and bring with them their wealth and substance, and lay it at his feet for the use of his interest, as a testification of their subjection to him: but as this is not to be expected from the persons before described, at least not from every one of them, the words require another sense, and are to be considered as a continued description of the persons to be rebuked, and may be rendered, even every one *that treads with pieces of silver*[k]; that walks proudly and haughtily, being decorated with gold and silver on their garments; so the Romish antichrist is said to be decked, his popes, cardinals, and bishops, with gold and precious stones, Rev. xvii. 4. or *every one that humbles himself for pieces of silver*[l], as the word is rendered in Prov. vi. 3. that lies down to be trampled upon for the sake of temporal advantage; and so it describes the parasites and flatterers of the man of sin, who crouch unto him, take his mark in their hands or foreheads, that they may be allowed to buy and sell; all these, it is desired, God would rebuke, not in love, but with flames of fire, as he will sooner or later: for when the kings of the earth are become Christians, as in the preceding verse, God will put it into their hearts to hate the whore, and burn her flesh with fire. *Scatter thou the people* that *delight in war;* as antichrist, and the antichristian states, do: they take delight in making war with the saints, and in slaying of them, to whom power has been given so to do: with whose blood they have been made drunk, and have took as much pleasure in the shedding of it as a drunken man does in indulging himself to excess in liquor; but these in God's own time shall be scattered, when Christ the Lamb shall fight against them with the sword of his mouth, and shall utterly destroy them; see Rev. xiii. 7. and xvii. 6, 14. and xix. 15—21.

Ver. 31. *Princes shall come out of Egypt, &c.*] The Vulgate Latin and all the Oriental versions render it *ambassadors*. This verse is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles, under the names of Egypt and Ethiopia; which will be at the same time that the kings of the earth will become Christians, and antichrist will be destroyed. The Gospel is said to be preached in Egypt by Mark the Evangelist; and no doubt but there were conversions there in the first times of the Gospel; but there will be more in the latter day; see Psal. lxxxvii. 3, 4. and the whole 19th chapter of Isaiah. Unless we understand this of kings and princes, that shall leave the communion of the church of Rome, which is spiritually and mystically Egypt, and join themselves with the true churches of Christ; see Rev. xi. 8. and xviii. 4. The conversion of every sinner is a coming out of Egypt; it is a call of them out of darkness and bondage, worse than that of Egypt, into light and liberty, when they are set among princes, even the princes of Christ's people. *Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God;* the Gospel is said to be preached in Ethiopia by the Evangelist Mathew, and also by Matthias, who succeeded Judas in the apostleship; by means of whose ministry there is reason to conclude some were converted: and we have an instance of a famous Ethiopian, that was converted and baptized by Philip, Acts viii. 27. and who very likely carried the Gospel into this country, and spread it: so that this prophecy began to have its fulfilment then, but will have a greater hereafter; see Psal. lxxxvii. 4. All men are like Ethiopians, even God's elect, in a state of nature and unregeneracy: they are black with original sin and actual transgressions; and can no more remove this blackness than the Ethiopian can change his skin, Jer. xiii. 23. They are, like them, idolaters, serving divers lusts and pleasures, the idols of their own hearts; are in a state of distance, afar off from God and Christ, and from his people, word, and ordinances; and are enemies in their minds by wicked works, yea, enmity itself, and stretch out their hands against God; but when they are called and converted, and made sensible of their state, then they stretch out their hands unto God, as a gesture of sorrow, Jer. iv. 31. Lam. i. 17. expressing their sorrow for sin, as committed against God, and because of the evil that is in it; and look to Christ, and stretch out their hands to him, whom they have pierced, and mourn; and as a prayer-gesture, Job xi. 13. For, as soon as a man is converted, he prays and cries to God for pardoning grace and mercy, and to be cleansed from his sin, and to be openly received into his favour, and to enjoy communion with him; and as the gesture of a man in the utmost danger, who stretches out his hand to lay hold on any thing to save him; and so a sinner, sensible of its danger, and seeing Christ and salvation in him, it stretches out its hand, lays hold on him, and will have him and no other to be its Saviour, and receives his righteousness, and grace out of his fulness; and as the gesture of one that is conquered, resigning

[h] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 118. 2.
[k] מתרפס gloriantem se, Montanus, Vatablus; calcantem, Rivet.
[l] Ob fragmina argenti, Gejerus.

up himself into the victor's hands, as a token of submission, peace, and reconciliation[m]; so sinners, in the day of Christ's power upon them, are made willing to submit and give up themselves to him. In the Hebrew text it is, *shall make her hands to run unto God*[n]; that is, with an offering, gold or some treasure, to bring it unto God, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, interpret it, which may very well be understood of the offering of themselves, as well as of the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise. The Targum is, "the sons "of Ham shall come, the great men out of Egypt, to "be made proselytes; the children of Cush (or Ethi-"opia) shall run to stretch out their hands in prayer to "God." Jarchi's note is, "and then when thou shalt "destroy Esau (his posterity), and the King Messiah "shall arise, they shall bring to thee gifts out of Ethi-"opia." And so he owns this to be a prophecy of the Messiah; and so it is applied to the times of the Messiah, and to the nations bringing gifts to him, in the Talmud[o], and other Jewish writings[p].

Ver. 32. *Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth,* &c.] Not only the Egyptian and Ethiopian kingdoms, but all the kingdoms of the world; which will now be converted to Christ, and become his, even all the Papal, Pagan, and Mahometan kingdoms; see Rev. xi. 15. These are called upon to sing songs and hymns of praise to Christ, who is God, for redemption by him, and salvation in him; and for their deliverance from all the darkness and delusions under which they formerly were. *O sing praises unto the Lord. Selah.* The Lord of all, the Lord of lords, the Head of the church, and Saviour of the body; and whom those converted nations will acknowledge to be their Lord and King; and make their homage, and bring their tribute of praise to him, for breaking the antichristian yokes that were upon them, and freeing them from the tyranny and bondage with which they were oppressed: this will be fulfilled in the latter day; see Rev. xi. 15, 16, 17. and xv. 2, 3, 4. and xix. 1, 2.

Ver. 33. *To him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens,* which were *of old,* &c.] Or *eastward*[q]; the first, second, and third heavens, which were created from the beginning of time by Christ himself, Psal. cii. 25. compared with Heb. i. 10. These he rode upon when he ascended on high, even far above all heavens, as the apostle says, Ephes. iv. 10. and so above the heaven of heavens, when he was made higher than they, and both Lord and Christ; and placed his throne in them, and from thence exercises his government over the whole world: and it may be observed, that it was from Mount Olivet, which was to the east of Jerusalem, that Christ ascended, and so to the eastern part of the heavens, Acts i. 12. Zech. xiv. 4. see Rev. vii. 2. *Lo, he doth send out his voice;* which is his Gospel, for that is the voice of Christ; which he utters by his ministers, and which his sheep, his people, hearken unto, and can distinguish from the voice of a stranger. This is a voice of love, grace, and mercy: it speaks of righteousness, peace, pardon, and salvation by him, and is very joyful and comfortable to hear. This he sent out by his apostles into all the earth, after his ascension to heaven; and which he has been, more or less, sending out in one place or another, by his ministers, ever since; and in the latter day will send it out more clearly, fully, and largely, by a set of ministers he will raise up for that purpose. And that *a mighty voice;* or, *a voice of strength*[r]; a strong and powerful voice, such as the Gospel is, when accompanied with the power and spirit of God. It is a soul-shaking and awakening voice; it is an heart-melting and an heartbreaking one; it is a quickening and an enlightening voice; it quickens dead sinners, gives life unto them, and the entrance of it gives light to dark minds: it is a soul-charming and alluring one; it draws to Christ, engages the affections to him, and fills with unspeakable delight and pleasure. The Targum interprets this of the voice of the spirit of prophecy; Aben Ezra understands this voice as saying what follows.

Ver. 34. *Ascribe ye strength unto God,* &c.] The Messiah; by asserting him to be the mighty God, even the Almighty; by attributing works of strength and power to him: such as the creation of all things; upholding all things in their being; the redemption and preservation of his people; the resurrection of the dead, &c. by applying to him, and exercising faith on him for spiritual strength, and giving him the glory of it: so the Targum, "give the glory of strength to "God." Moreover, this may be understood of ascribing dominion and power to him by the kingdoms of the earth, who are here addressed, when they shall be converted to him; and who, upon this enlargement of his kingdom, will be congratulated by his people, for taking to himself his great power and reigning, Rev. xi. 15, 16, 17. *His excellency is over Israel;* the spiritual Israel, such who are Israelites indeed. Over these his glorious Majesty in his kingdom rules; they are subject to him, and acknowledge him for their King; and among them is his Shechinah, or divine Presence. Or over Israel, literally understood; when they shall, as at this time the prophecy refers to, be all called, converted, and saved: they shall seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and he shall be Prince over them. *And his strength is in the clouds;* which are round about him, the chariots in which he rides, and in which he shews his strength; by sending forth from thence the rain of his strength, the terrible lightning and thunder. In these he went up to heaven, and in these he will come again to judgment. They may be mystically understood of the ministers of the Gospel, especially in the latter day, who may be compared to clouds for their numbers, they will then be many; for their swiftness in moving to and fro, and spreading the Gospel; and for their being full of the doctrines of grace, comparable to rain; see Isa. v. 6. And the Lord's strength will be seen in them, who will greatly strengthen them to do their work; his strength will be made perfect in their weakness; the excellency of the power attending their ministrations, to the large

[m] Vid. Cæsar. Comment. de Bello Gallic. l. 7. c. 48. Oremus pacem & dextras tendamus inermes. Virgil. Æneid. 11.
[n] תריץ faciet currere, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis.
[o] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 118. 2.
[p] Shemot Rabba, s. 35. fol. 136. 4.
[q] קדם ab oriente, Pagninus; ad orientem, V. L. so Sept. Eth. Syr. Arab.
[r] קול עז vocem fortitudinis, Pagninus, Montanus.

conversion of sinners, will appear to be of God, and not of man.

Ver. 35. *O God*, thou art *terrible*, &c.] In his judgments and acts of vengeance, on antichrist and the antichristian states; being the Lion of the tribe of Judah, that will break them to pieces as a potter's vessel: or *reverend*[x]; to be feared and worshipped by his saints. *Out of thy holy places;* both out of heaven, the habitation of his holiness, by angels and glorified saints there; and out of all his churches, the several assemblies of them, among whom he is greatly to be feared and adored: the Targum interprets it of the house of the sanctuary. *The God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto* his *people:* his peculiar covenant-people, his Israel he is the God of. These are weak, and encompassed about with infirmities; he has strength in himself for them; he has promised it to them, and he gives it to them as a pure gift and unmerited favour of his. It may be understood of the great degree of strength that will be given them in the latter day; when a small one shall be a strong nation, and the feeble shall be as David, and David as God, as the Angel of the Lord, Isa. lx. 21. Zech. xii. 8. and of the dominion and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven; which will be given to the saints of the most High, Dan. vii. 27. *Blessed* be *God;* the psalm is concluded with an ascription of blessing to the Messiah, who is God blessed for evermore; and who, as Mediator, is the promised seed, in whom all nations were to be blessed, and now will be; see Rev. v. 12, 13.

PSALM LXIX.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, A Psalm *of David.*

Of the word *shoshannim*, see the note upon the title of Psal. xlv. The Targum renders it, "concerning "the removal of the sanhedrim;" which was about the time of Christ's death. The Talmudists[t] say, that forty years before the destruction of the temple, the sanhedrim removed, they removed from the paved chamber, &c. But it can hardly be thought that David prophesied of this affair; nor of the captivity of the people of Israel, as the Targum, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Arama, and R. Obadiah interpret it: and so Jarchi takes the word *shoshannim* to signify lilies, and applies it to the Israelities, who are as a lily among thorns. But not a body of people, but a single person, is spoken of, and in sorrowful and suffering circumstances; and, if the Jews were not blind, they might see that they are the enemies of the person designed, and the evil men from whom he suffered so much. And indeed what is said of him cannot be said of them, nor of any other person whatever but the Messiah: and that the psalm belongs to Christ, and to the times of the Gospel, is abundantly evident from the citations out of it in the New Testament; as ver. 4. in John. xv. 25. ver. 9. in John ii. 17. and Rom. xv. 3. ver. 21. in Matt. xxvii. 34, 38. John xix. 28, 29. ver. 22, 23. in Rom. xi. 9, 10. ver. 25. in Acts i. 16, 20. The inscription of the psalm in the Syriac version is, "*a psalm* of David, according to the "letter, when Shemuah (Sheba), the son of Bichri, blew "a trumpet, and the people ceased from following "after him (David); but the prophecy is said con- "cerning those things which the Messiah suffered, "and concerning the rejection of the Jews." And Aben Ezra interprets the last verse of the days of David, or of the days of the Messiah.

Ver. 1. *Save me, O God*, &c.] The petitioner is Christ; not as a divine Person, as such he is blessed for ever, and stands in no need of help and assistance; but as man, and in distressed and suffering circumstances. As a priest, it was part of his work to intercede, as well as to offer sacrifice; and though he did not offer a sin-offering for himself, yet he offered up supplications, with strong cryings and tears; and, as the surety of his people, he prayed, in point of right and justice, both for himself and them; see John xvii. 4, 5, 24. The person petitioned is God the Father, who was able to save him, and always heard him; and did in this petition, Heb. v. 7. which perfectly agrees with some petitions of Christ, recorded in the New Testament, John xii. 27. Matt. xxvi. 39. These shew the weakness of the human nature, the weight of sin upon him, and his sense of the wrath of God; and which, notwithstanding, were made with limitations and restrictions, and even with a correction. Moreover, this may also design help and assistance from his divine Father, which was promised him, and he expected and had, in the acceptable time, in the day of salvation: and he was so saved in death, as that he abolished that, and destroyed him that had the power of it; and was quickly raised from the grave, and thereby saved out of it. And this he could have done himself, but he would be saved in a legal way, in a way of justice; and as a point of honour, when he had done the work, he, as a surety, engaged to do. The reasons enforcing this petition follow: *for the waters are come in unto* my *soul:* the Messiah represents his case, in these words, and in the following verse, as like to that of a man standing up to his chin in water, and the waters running into his mouth, just suffocating him; and that in a miry place, where he could not set his feet firm, nor get himself out; and even overflowed with the floods, and immersed in the deep waters, and so in the most imminent danger. These overwhelming waters may signify the floods of ungodly men that encompassed him, the assembly of the wicked that enclosed him; and the proud waters that went over his soul, the Gentiles and people of Israel, that were gathered against him to destroy him; and so the Targum interprets it of the camp of sinners, that pressed him on every side, as water: the whole posse of devils may also be designed, for now was the hour and power of darkness; Satan, and his principalities and powers,

[x] נורא venerandus, Michaelis.

[t] T. Bab. Avoda Zara, fol. 8. 2. & Roshhashanah, fol. 31. 1, 2.

came in like a flood upon him, to swallow him up; innumerable evils, the sins of his people, came upon him from every quarter, and pressed him sore; the curses of the law fell upon him, which may be compared to the bitter water of jealousy that caused the curse. These entered into him, when he was made a curse for his people; and the wrath of God went over him, and lay hard upon him, and came about him like water, into his very soul, which made him exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.

Ver. 2. *I sink in deep mire, where* there is *no standing*, &c.] Which signifies not despair of mind, but difficult and distressed circumstances; the Messiah now bearing the filthy sins of his people, and the punishment of them, and so was got into the horrible pit, the mire and clay; see the note on Psal. xl. 2. *I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me*: as afflictions are often compared to waters in Scripture, Christ's sorrows and sufferings are very aptly signified by deep waters and overflowing floods; and therefore rightly called a baptism, as by himself, Luke xii. 50. when he was as one immersed in and overwhelmed with water.

Ver. 3. *I am weary of my crying*, &c.] In his distress; when, bearing the punishment both of loss and sense, he cried unto God; he prayed earnestly, with great intenseness and fervency of spirit; he offered supplications, with strong cryings and tears, insomuch that he calls it a roaring: and whereas there was a seeming delay of answer to his cries, he cried till he was weary of crying; and yet it is remarkable that his last cry was with a loud voice, which surprised the centurion; see Psal. xxii. 1, 2. Matt. xxvii. 46. *My throat is dried*: with crying, so that he was hoarse; or *burnt* [u]; with inward heat of a fever, which usually attended persons crucified; see Psal. xxii. 15. *Mine eyes fail* while *I wait for my God*: God the Father was the God of Christ, as he was man; he prepared a body for him, and anointed his human nature with the Holy Spirit; he supported and upheld him: and as such Christ loved him, believed in him, prayed to him, and waited and looked for help and salvation from him; this being delayed, his eyes failed with intense looking about for it, as well as with grief and tears. Ainsworth observes, that failing of the eyes is one of the curses of the law, Lev. xxvi. 16. Deut. xxviii. 32. and it shews how in every thing Christ was made a curse for his people.

Ver. 4. *They that hate me without a cause*, &c.] As the Jews did; see John John xv. 18—25. for he did no injury to the persons or properties of men; but went about continually doing good, both to their souls and bodies; so that he merited their highest esteem and love, and not their hatred; and yet they were his implacable enemies; see Luke xix. 14, 27. *Are more than the hairs of mine head*: they were a multitude that came to take him in the garden; and it was the multitude that the priests and Pharisees instigated to ask for the release of Barabbas, and the crucifixion of Jesus; and a vast number of people followed him to the cross, and insulted him on it; the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together against him. *They that would destroy me*; as the Jews sought to do often before his time was come. Being *mine enemies wrongfully*; without cause, as before; or through lies and falsehoods told of him, and spread about concerning him: *Are mighty*; lively and strong, as David's enemies were, Psal. xxxviii. 19. The great men of the earth, kings and princes, as Herod and Pontius Pilate, and also the infernal principalities and powers, who were concerned in contriving those lies, and putting them into the minds of men; for Satan is the father of lies and falsehood. *Then I restored that which I took not away*: by rapine, force, and violence, as the word [w] signifies; and which was done by others. Thus, for instance, Christ restored the glory of God, of which he was robbed, and which was taken away by the sin of man; by veiling his own glory, not seeking that, but his father's; and by working out the salvation of his people, in such a manner as that all the divine perfections were glorified by it; hence, *glory to God in the highest*, Luke ii. 14. He satisfied justice he had never injured, though others had; he fulfilled a law, and bore the penalty of it, which he never broke; and made satisfaction for sins he never committed; and brought in a righteousness he had not taken away; and provided a better inheritance than what was lost by Adam: and all this was done at the time of his sufferings and death, and by the means of them.

Ver. 5. *O God, thou knowest my foolishness*, &c.] Not that there was real foolishness in him, who, as man, from his infancy was filled with wisdom, and increased in it; and, as Mediator, had the spirit of wisdom on him, and the treasures of wisdom in him; and, as a divine Person, he is the Wisdom of God, and the only wise God; and, as in our nature, there was no foolishness in his heart, nor in his words, nor in his actions: but this is to be understood either of what was accounted so by others; he and his followers were reckoned foolish and illiterate men, and the Gospel preached by him and his apostles was foolishness to them that perished; or of what he was charged with by his enemies; even with immorality, heresy, blasphemy, and sedition; of all which he was innocent, and therefore could appeal to his divine Father, who knows all things, that he was clear of all such folly; for it may be rendered, *thou knowest as to my foolishness* [x], with respect to what he was charged with, that there was none in him; or esle it regards the foolishness of his people imputed to him, the sin of Adam, that folly of follies, together with all the foolishness in the heart, lip, and lives of his people, before and after conversion; these were all reckoned to him, and reckoned by him, as his own in some sense; and which is confirmed by what follows: *and my sins are not hid from thee*; meaning not any committed by him; for then he could not have said what he does in the preceding verse; but the sins of his people imputed to him, which he calls his own, as he does in Psal. xl. 12. see the note there: these must be known to his divine Father, since he is God omniscient, and since he laid them upon him, and he made satisfaction for them to

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[u] נחר adustum, Montanus, Gejerus, Michaelis; so Ainsworth.

[w] גזלתי rapui, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[x] לאולתי tu nosti ut res se habeat quoad stultitiam meam, Gussetius, p. 312.

him; and which he observes to enforce his petition, ver. 1. with this compare Isa. liii. 11, 12.

Ver. 6. *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake*, &c.] Of their expectation of redemption and salvation by the Messiah, they have been waiting upon the Lord for; when they shall see him in suffering circumstances, and even dead and laid in the grave, without any hope of his rising again; which was the case of the two disciples travelling to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 19, 20, 21. whose trust in him, and expectation of him, as the Redeemer of Israel, were almost gone. The people of God, and believers in Christ, are described by such that *wait on the Lord*: for the coming of Christ, and salvation by him; who would be in danger of being put to shame and in confusion, when they should see him under the power of death and the grave: wherefore in this petition Christ addresses his divine Father as *the Lord God of hosts*, of armies above and below, as God omnipotent; partly to encourage their trust and confidence in him, and partly to encourage his own faith as man, that this petition would be answered. *Let not those that seek thee*: in the word and ordinances, by prayer and supplication, with all their hearts, in Christ, in whom the Lord is only to be found, and for life and happiness: *be confounded for my sake*; that is, through his sufferings and death, as before: *O God of Israel*; the covenant-God of the spiritual Israel, whom he has chosen, the Messiah redeems, and the Spirit makes Israelites indeed.

Ver. 7. *Because for thy sake I have borne reproach*, &c.] Being reckoned a sinner, called a deceiver, said to be a Samaritan, and to have a devil; with many other reproaches, which he bore patiently for the sake of the word and worship of God, and for the sake of the glory of God, which he all along sought; and to repair the loss of it, which was sustained through the sin of man. *Shame hath covered my face*: when he was spit upon by some, and smote by others with a rod upon his cheek; and when he was blindfolded, and bid to prophesy who smote him; see Isa. l. 6.

Ver. 8. *I am become a stranger unto my brethren*, &c.] Not only to the Jews in general, who were his own people and nation, to whom he came, and of whom he came; who received him not, hid as it were their faces from him, and rejected him as the Messiah; but also to such who were still nearer akin to him, according to the flesh, who did not believe in him, John vii. 5. and even in some sense to his disciples and followers; some of which having heard some doctrines delivered by him not agreeable to them, withdrew from him, and walked no more with him, John vi. 60, 66. yea, to his apostles, whom he often called his brethren: one of these betrayed him, another denied him with oaths and cursing, and all of them forsook him and fled, when he was taken by his enemies, and about to suffer death. *And an alien unto my mother's children*; which is the same as before, in other words. The Targum is, "as the son of the Gentiles to my mother's children;" that is, as an Heathen to them; see Matt. xviii. 17.

Ver. 9. *For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up*, &c.] Of the house of the sanctuary, as the Targum; that is, the temple, which was Christ's Father's house, where he was worshipped and dwelt; and zeal for his Father, and his glory in it, and indignation against those that made it an house of merchandise, inflamed him; put him upon driving out the buyers and sellers in it, whereby this passage had its accomplishment, John ii. 14, 17. and this may be applied to the church of God, which is the house of God, of his building, and where he dwells; and zeal may design the fervent affection of Christ for it, for the doctrine, discipline, and salvation of it. His zeal for the Gospel appeared in his warm and lively preaching it, in his assiduity and constancy in it; in the wearisome journeys he took to spread it, in the risks he run, and dangers he exposed himself to, for the sake of it; in the miracles he wrought to confirm it, and in the care he took to free it from calumny and reproach: his zeal for the worship and discipline of God's house was shewn by his asserting the purity of worship in spirit and truth; by his severe inveighing against the traditions, superstition, and will-worship of men, and against the vices and corruptions of professors of religion, the Scribes and Pharisees: his zeal for the salvation of his people is easily seen in his suretyship-engagements for them; in coming into this world to do the will of him that sent him; in his early regards unto it, and vehement desire, even of suffering death, in order to accomplish it, and in his voluntary and cheerful submission and obedience, even to the death of the cross: this zeal of his was according to knowledge, and was cordial, hearty, and unfeigned; and this *eat* him *up*; inflamed like fire his spirit and affections; consumed his time and strength, and even life itself. *And the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me*; the same persons that reproached the one reproached the other; and the reproaches of his divine Father were as cutting to him as if cast on himself; it went to his heart that his Father's house should be made an house of merchandise; that his doctrine should be despised, his worship neglected, and his glory lessened; to have the name of God, his ways and truth, evil spoken of, were not pleasing to him; he took all reproach of this kind to himself, and bore it becomingly; and yet shewed zeal for his Father's glory, and indignation against those that reproached him; see Rom. xv. 1—3.

Ver. 10. *When I wept*, &c.] Because of the sins of his people imputed to him; the hardness and unbelief of the Jews that rejected him; their impiety and profaneness in polluting the temple with their merchandise: he wept at the grave of Lazarus, and over the city of Jerusalem, on account of the blindness of its inhabitants, and the ruin coming upon them; and in his prayers at different times, especially in the garden and on the cross, which were offered up with strong crying and tears; see John xi. 35. Luke xix. 41. Heb. v. 7. And chastened *my soul with fasting*; or *my soul* being *in fasting* [y]. The Targum renders it, *in the fasting of my soul*; the word *chastened* is supplied from Psal. xxxv. 13. and *soul* is put for the body, or for the whole person. Christ fasted forty days and nights in the wilderness; and often, through neglect of himself,

[y] בצום נפשי cum esset in jejunio anima mea, Musculus, Cocceius, Gejerus, De Dieu.

and multiplicity of business, in preaching, and in healing diseases, was without food for some time: he seems to have been fasting the day that he suffered, when he made atonement for sin; and so answered the type on the day of atonement, when every man was to afflict his soul with fasting, Lev. xvi. 29. hence the Jews taunting at him gave him gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink, ver. 21. and it follows, *that was to my reproach*; if he ate and drank, he was charged with being a glutton and a wine-bibber; and if he wept and fasted, as John his forerunner did, they reproached him with madness, and having a devil, Matt. xi. 18, 19. Mark iii. 20, 21. and, as may be reasonably supposed, after this manner; "can this poor "creature, that weeps, and mourns, and fasts, be "thought to be the Son of God, a divine Person, as "he makes himself to be, and his followers believe "he is?" and so the blind Jews reason to this day.

Ver. 11. *I made sackcloth also my garment*, &c.] Though we nowhere read that Jesus put on sackcloth upon any occasion, yet it is not improbable that he did; besides, the phrase may only intend that he mourned and sorrowed at certain times, as persons do when they put on sackcloth: moreover, as the common garb of his forerunner was raiment of camels' hair, with a leathern girdle; so it is very likely his own was very mean, suitable to his condition; who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor. *And I became a proverb to them*; a by-word; so that when they saw any person in sackcloth, or in vile raiment, behold such an one looks like Jesus of Nazareth.

Ver. 12. *They that sit in the gate speak against me*, &c.] The princes, magistrates, and judges, who sat in the gates of cities, heard and tried causes, and executed judgment there; the elders of the city; see Ruth iv. 1. Lam. v. 14. Zech. viii. 16. the civil rulers among the Jews are meant; and also their ecclesiastical ones, the Scribes and Pharisees that sat in Moses's seat; though some think men of lower characters are designed, idle persons that saunter about, and sit in gateways, and corners of streets, and in market-places; spending their time, like the Athenians, in hearing and telling of news, and prating about this and the other person, and their affairs; but the former sense seems best, since these are rather intended in the next clause: now such men of rank and figure spoke against Christ; against his person as the son of God, against his office as the Messiah, against his doctrines and ordinances, and against his people and followers: or they spake together *of him* [z]; they confabulated and consulted together how to seize him, and take away his life, as the chief priests and elders frequently did; and when they had taken him they gave their voice against him, and unanimously condemned him, when they sat in judgment upon him. *And I was the song of the drunkards*; or *of them that drink strong drink* [a]; be it made of what it will; that is, to excess: these, whilst they played on their instruments of music, as the word [b] here used signifies, sung songs, and Christ was the subject of them; as Job complains was his case, Job xxx. 8, 9. very probably the common people that were employed in taking of Jesus might have plenty of liquor given them by the priests and elders, to encourage them; and this being a festival-time too, might come at it more easily than usual, and drink more freely; and this might be the case of the Roman soldiers, when they made Christ the subject of their mirth and diversion in Pilate's hall.

Ver. 13. *But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord*, &c.] Christ betook himself to prayer in these circumstances, and not to railing and reviling again; he applied to his divine Father, and committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, and prayed both for himself and for his enemies too: and this he did in *an acceptable time*; or *a time of good will* [c]; which was the time of his sufferings and death; so called, because the good will and pleasure of God was seen therein; in not sparing his Son, his own and only-begotten Son, his beloved Son, and delivering him up to justice and death for the worst of sinners; and because at this time the good will of God was done: Christ laid down his life by the commandment of his Father, offered himself a sacrifice by the will of God, and hereby the law of God was fulfilled, justice satisfied, and the work of man's redemption finished; which was the pleasure of the Lord; that prospered in his hands; and therefore this must be an acceptable time to God. The sufferings of Christ were well-pleasing to him; the sacrifice of Christ was for a sweet-smelling savour; the righteousness of Christ was acceptable to him, the law being magnified and made honourable by it: peace was now made by the blood of his cross; the perfections of God were glorified, his purposes executed, his promises fulfilled, his covenant confirmed, and his people saved; and so a proper time for the Mediator to offer up his supplications and prayers, in which he was heard, as appears from Isa. xlix. 8. *O God, in the multitude of thy mercy*: these words, according to the accents in the Hebrew text, should be rendered in connexion with the preceding words, thus: *in the time of good will, O God*; or *in the time of the good will of God, through the multitude of thy mercy*; and then the sense is, that the acceptable time was owing to the greatness of divine mercy; it was from hence that the day-spring from on high visited men; or Christ came in the flesh, and suffered in the room and stead of sinners; in which there was a wonderful display of the abundant mercy of God to men; for otherwise there was none shewn to the surety and Saviour; he was not spared, but delivered up; and then it follows, *hear me, in the truth of thy salvation*; or *because of*, or *by thy true salvation* [d]; that which God contrived in council, and secured in covenant, and sent his son to effect, and which he is become the author of, is a true and real salvation; not figurative and shadowy, as the salvation of Israel out of Egypt and Babylon were: or because of the truth and faithfulness of God, who had promised salvation to the Messiah, that he should be carried through his sufferings, be raised from the dead, and be crowned

[z] בי de me, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

[a] שכר sechar, Montanus; siceram, Tigurine version, Cocceius; potum inebriantem, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Michaelis.

[b] נגינות cantiones ad instrumenta musica, Vatablus; pulsationes, Gejerus.

[c] עת רצון tempus beneplaciti, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, &c.

[d] באמת ישעך per salutem tuam veram, Gejerus.

with glory and honour; and therefore he prays he might be heard on this account, and his prayer follows, and the several petitions in it.

Ver. 14. *Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink*, &c.] In which he was sinking, ver. 2. and accordingly he was delivered out of it, Psal. xl. 2. even out of all the mire of sin, the sins of his people that were upon him, from which he was justified when raised from the dead; and so will appear without sin, when he comes a second time: *let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters*; these phrases design the same, even the enemies of Christ; such that hated him, compared to deep waters: these are the floods of the ungodly, and the many waters out of which he was drawn and delivered, Psal. xviii. 4, 16, 17.

Ver. 15. *Let not the water-flood overflow me*, &c.] The enemy, Satan, that came in like a flood upon him, with his whole posse of devils; or the wrath of God, which came upon him like a flood overwhelming him: *neither let the deep swallow me up*: as Jonah by the whale, and Dathan and Abiram in the earth: *and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me*: either the pit of hell; so the Targum interprets it: for Christ, when he endured the curses of the law, and the wrath of God, suffered the same for kind as the damned in hell; only the mouth of this pit could not be shut upon him, or he be continued under such wrath and curse: or else the pit of the grave, where his divine Father left him not, or suffered him to be so long in it as to see corruption; this pit was not shut upon him, but he was delivered out of it, and will die no more.

Ver. 16. *Hear me, O Lord; for thy loving-kindness is good*, &c.] His loving-kindness to him, not only as his Son, but as Mediator; and which is a love of complacency and delight, and was from eternity, and will be to eternity; and this is *good*, as appears by the effects and evidences of it; such as putting all things into his hands, shewing him all that he does, concealing and keeping nothing from him, appointing him to be the Saviour of his people, the Head of the church, and the Judge of the world; and this loving-kindness shewn to him is a reason why he might expect to be heard by his God and Father; see John xvii. 24. and the loving-kindness of God to his people, and the members of Christ, is also good: it arises from the good will and pleasure of God; it is pleasantly and delightfully good to the saints, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have had his love shed abroad in their hearts; it is profitably good unto them; it has prepared and laid up good things for them, both for time and eternity, even all the blessings of grace and goodness: it has promised good things unto them in covenant, and it gives Christ, and all good things along with him; it has a good influence on the graces of the spirit, faith, hope, and love, to encourage them; and engages believers to a cheerful obedience to all the divine commands; to which may be added the duration of it, it lasts for ever: and it is so good, that it is better than any temporal good thing without it; it is better than life, and all the comforts of it, Psal. lxiii. 3. *Turn unto me, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies*; his divine Father had turned away his face from him, and turned his fury upon him; he had awoke his sword of justice against him, pointed it at him, and thrust it into him; and now, satisfaction being made, he desires he would turn unto him in a way of grace and favour; that he would have respect unto him, and look upon him with his paternal countenance, and in a kind and tender manner, as well-pleased with him, and with his righteousness and sacrifice. Of the phrase, *according to the multitude of thy tender mercies*, see the note on Psal. li. 1.

Ver. 17. *And hide not thy face from thy servant*, &c.] This is a character that is frequently given to Christ as Mediator; he is a servant of God's choosing, calling, and appointing; of his sending, bringing forth, and supporting; who is an obedient, diligent, righteous, and prudent one; who always reverenced and honoured him whose servant he was, Isa. xlii. 1. and xliii. 10. and xlix. 1, 3. and lii. 13. and liii. 11. Zech. iii. 8. now, when he was on the cross, suffering in the room and stead of his people, his father hid his face from him; which he here deprecates, and desires he would not continue to do, seeing he was his servant, now doing his service, and about to finish it, even the great work of man's redemption; and for a reason following. *For I am in trouble*; in straits and difficulties; pressed on every side, enclosed with the assembly of the wicked, who were mocking of him, and with the whole posse of devils, who were throwing their fiery darts at him; having the sins of his people and the curses of a righteous law on him, and the wrath of God in him; and what increased his trouble was, he was forsaken by him. *Hear me speedily*; or *make haste to hear**; and answer me; his case required haste; see Psal. xxii. 19.

Ver. 18. *Draw nigh unto my soul*, &c.] God his father, whilst he was suffering, stood afar off from him; wherefore he desires that he would draw nigh to him in the manifestations of his love and favour to him; which he did, when he made known to him the way of life, and made him full of joy with his countenance. And *redeem it*: that is, from the power of the grave; not leave it there, but raise him from the dead, and give him glory, as he did. *Deliver me, because of mine enemies*; that they might not triumph over him, as if, being dead, he should rise no more; and so the Targum, "that mine enemies might not "lift up themselves against me." Or the meaning is, deliver me from the grave, raise me from the dead, that I may requite mine enemies, and take vengeance on them; see Psal. xli. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Ver. 19. *Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour*, &c.] A heap of words to express the greatness of the contempt that was cast upon him, and the injury that was done to his person and character; which was all known to God: as how he was vilified by wicked words and blasphemous speeches; how he was exposed to shame and dishonour by deeds; by spitting upon him, buffeting him, veiling his face, stripping him of his garments, and scourging and crucifying him naked. *Mine adversaries are all before thee*; in his sight: he knew their persons, the

* מהר ענני festina exaudire me, Vatablus.

malice and wickedness that were in their hearts; and all the evil words that were spoken, and the evil actions that were done by them. Or, *are all against thee*[f]; for they that were against Christ were against his Father.

Ver. 20. *Reproach hath broken my heart*, &c.] This was his case when his soul was exceeding sorrowful unto death, and his heart like wax melted in the midst of his bowels, Matt. xxvi. 38. Psal. xxii. 14. *And I am full of heaviness;* as he was in the garden, Mark xiv. 33. or, *very sick*, yea, *incurably sick*, as the word[g] signifies; see 2 Sam. xii. 15. Jer. xxx. 12, 15. For what cure is there for a broken heart? *And I looked for some to take pity, but there was none: and for comforters, but I found none:* his disciples forsook him and fled; the priests, scribes, and common people, that attended him at the cross, mocking him; the thieves that were crucified with him reviled him; and his father hid his face from him; only a few women stood afar off and lamented.

Ver. 21. *They gave me also gall for my meat*, &c.] Either some bitter herb mentioned with wormwood and hemlock, Deut. xxix. 18. Lam. iii. 19. Amos vi. 12. or the gall of some animal. The Targum renders it, "the gall of the heads of serpents:" the poison of some serpents is in their heads, and the word that is here used signifies the head; see Deut. xxxii. 33. Job xx. 14. This was literally fulfilled in Christ, Matt. xxvii. 34. and shewed that he bore the curse of the law; that being given to him for food, which was not fit to be eaten; thereby intimating, that he deserved not to have the common food and necessaries of life; which is the case of those in whose place and stead he suffered: and this may be a rebuke to such who, through fulness and affluence, are apt to slight and contemn some of the good creatures of God, which ought to be received with thanksgiving; let them remember the gall that was given Christ for meat. And this may serve to reconcile poor Christians to that mean fare and low way of living they are obliged to; though they have but a dinner of herbs, or bread and water, it is better fare than their Lord's; it is not gall. *And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink;* Christ, when on the cross, was athirst, which was occasioned by a fever that usually attended persons in his circumstances; see Psal. xxii. 15. and, that this Scripture might be fulfilled, he signified it, saying, *I thirst;* upon which vinegar was given to him, as all the evangelists relate; Matt. xxvii. 48. Mark xv. 36. Luke xxiii. 36. John xix. 28, 29. This shews the truth of Christ's human nature; that it was a true and real body that he assumed, which was subject to hunger and thirst, and was supported by food and drink, as our bodies are; also the truth of divine revelation; since such a minute circumstance as this, predicted so many hundred years ago, should, after so long a time, be exactly fulfilled; and likewise the truth of the Messiahship of Jesus, in whom this, and every thing else said of the Messiah, in the Law, the Prophets, and the book of Psalms, were fully accomplished; and therefore it may be strongly concluded that this is he of whom they spoke. Moreover, this expresses the inhumanity of the enemies of Christ, to use him in this manner, when he was suffering and dying; see Prov. xxxi. 6, 7.

Ver. 22. *Let their table become a snare before them*, &c.] This and the following imprecations were not the effects of a spirit of private revenge; of which there was no appearance in Christ, but all the reverse; who prayed for his enemies, while they were using him as above related: but they are prophecies of what should be, being delivered out under the inspiration of the spirit of God, Acts i. 16, 20. Wherefore some versions render the words, *their table shall become a snare*[h]; and therefore are not to be drawn into an example by us, to favour and encourage a revengeful spirit: and they are very just and righteous, according to *lex talionis*, the law of retaliation; since, inasmuch as they gave Christ gall for his meat, and vinegar for his drink, it was but right that the same measure should be meted out to them again; and their table-mercies and blessings be cursed; that they should have them not in love, but in bitter wrath. Or that they should be left to be overcharged with them, and surfeit upon them; and so the day of their destruction come upon them as a snare: or that they should want the common necessaries of life, and be tempted to eat what was not lawful; and even their own children, as some did; see Mal. ii. 2. Luke xxi. 34, 35. Lam. iv. 10. The Targum gives the sense of the words thus; "let "their table, which they prepared before me, that I "might eat before them, be for a snare;" meaning a table spread with vinegar and gall. Of the figurative sense of these words, see my note on Rom. xi. 9. where the apostle cites this passage, and applies it to the Jews, the enemies of Christ. *And* that which should have been *for* their *welfare*, let it become *a trap:* the word translated, *for* their *welfare*, comes from שלם, which signifies both *to be at peace*, and *to recompence;* and so is differently interpreted. Some think the *shelamim*, or peace-offerings, are meant; see Exod. xxiv. 5. and so the Targum, "let their sacrifices be for a "trap, or stumbling-block;" as they were, they trusting in them for the atonement of sin; and so neglected the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and his righteousness; which was the stumbling-block at which they stumbled, and the trap into which they fell, and was their ruin. And it is observable, that whilst they were eating the sacrifice of the passover, they were surrounded by the Roman army, and taken as birds in a net, and as beasts in a trap. Others render the words, *to them that are at peace*[i], let their table be *for a trap;* whilst they are living in security, and crying, Peace, peace, let sudden destruction come upon them; as it did. But the apostle has taught us how to render the word *for a recompence*, Rom. xi. 9. as the word, differently pointed, is in Isa. xxxiv. 8. The true rendering and meaning of the whole seem to be this, *let their table become a snare before them;* and let their table be *for recompences* unto them, or in just retaliation; let the same food, or

[f] נגדך coram te, vel contra te, Cocceius.

[g] ואנושה adeo ut afficiar ægritudine, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; dolui vel ægritudine affectus sum, Gejerus.

[h] יהי erit, Pagninus, Montanus; fiet vel fiat, Gejerus.

[i] לשלומים tranquilli, Gejerus; so some in Michaelis.

the like unto it, be set upon their tables, they gave to Christ, and let their table *become a trap*; for all relate to their table.

Ver. 23. *Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not*, &c.] Not literally, the eyes of their bodies; but figuratively, the eyes of their understanding; which were so darkened, and they given up to such judicial blindness, that they could not discern the signs of the times that the Messiah must be come, Daniel's weeks being up; could not see any glory, excellency, and comeliness in Christ; could not see the evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus in the miracles he wrought; nor in the prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled in him: that book was a sealed book unto them; the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, were hid from them, even from the wise and prudent among them; yea, also those things which belonged to their temporal peace; they were so blinded and infatuated, they could not see what was for their outward good and happiness: and, in proof of this their blindness, the words are cited by the apostle in Rom. xi. 7, 10, 25. see Matt. xvi. 3. and xi. 25. and xiii. 11, 13. Luke xix. 42. *And make their loins continually to shake*; weaken their loins, in which a man's strength lies, that they may not be able to rise up against their enemies; and that they might not be able to flee and escape from them; see Deut. xxxiii. 11. or fill them with horror, dread, and trembling, as they will be when Christ shall come in the clouds of heaven; and they shall see him whom they have pierced, Rev. i. 7. The apostle renders the words in Rom. xi. 10. *bow down their back alway*; see the note there.

Ver. 24. *Pour out thine indignation upon them*, &c.] Not a few drops of it only, but a flood of it, sweeping away and bearing down all before it; which was done when wrath came upon them to the uttermost, in the destruction of their city, temple, and nation, 1 Thess. ii. 16. *Let thy wrathful anger take hold of them*; follow after them, overtake them, seize upon them, and hold them fast, that they may not escape. It denotes the severity of God towards them; the fierceness and fury of his wrath upon them; and that their destruction would be inevitable, and an entire and utter one.

Ver. 25. *Let their habitation be desolate*, &c.] Which is applied to Judas, Acts i. 20. but not to the exclusion of others; for it must be understood of the habitations of others; even of their princes and nobles, their chief magistrates, high-priest and other priests, scribes, and doctors of the law: for the word may be rendered, *their palace* or *castle*[k], as it is by some; and so may denote the houses of their principal men, the members of their sanhedrim; their houses great and fair, of which there were many in Jerusalem when it was destroyed; see Isa. v. 9. as well as the habitations of the meaner sort of people, which all became desolate at that time; and particularly their house, the temple, which was like a palace or castle, built upon a mountain. This was left desolate, as our Lord foretold it would, Matt. xxiii. 38. And *let none dwell in their tents*; the city of Jerusalem was wholly destroyed, and not a house left standing in it, nor an inhabitant of it; it was laid even with the ground, ploughed up, and not one stone left upon another, Luke xix. 44.

Ver. 26. *For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten*, &c.] Meaning the Messiah, who was not only smitten and scourged by men, but was stricken and smitten of God; according to his determinate counsel and fore-knowledge, and agreeably to his will and pleasure; with the rod of his justice for the satisfaction of it; for the sins of his people, whose surety he was. Him the Jews followed with reproaches and calumnies; pursued after his life, and persecuted him unto death; and which was the cause of their ruin and destruction; see 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. *And they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded*; or, *of thy wounded ones*[l]; not wounded by him, but wounded for his sake, on his account, and for their profession of faith in his son Jesus Christ. These, as they were led to the slaughter, had trial of cruel mockings, which aggravated their sufferings, and were very grieving to them; especially such talk as reflected upon their dear Redeemer, for whose sake they were put to death.

Ver. 27. *Add iniquity to their iniquity*, &c.] Let them alone in sin; suffer them to go on in it; lay no restraints upon them; put no stop in providence in their way; let them proceed from one evil to another, till they fall into ruin: to their natural and acquired hardness of heart, give them up to a judicial hardness; that they may do things that are not convenient, and be damned. Suffer them not to stop at the crucifixion of the Messiah; let them go on to persecute his apostles and followers; to shew the utmost spite and malice against the Christian religion; to embrace false Christs, and blaspheme the true one; to believe the greatest lies and absurdities, and commit the foulest of actions; as seditions, rapines, murders, *&c.* as they did whilst Jerusalem was besieged; that they may fill up the measure of their sins, and wrath may come upon them to the uttermost, 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. The word עון, rendered *iniquity*, sometimes signifies *punishment*, as in Gen. iv. 13. and, according to this sense of it, the words may be differently rendered, and admit a different meaning; either, *give punishment for their iniquity*[m]; so Kimchi; that is, punish them according to their deserts, as their sins and iniquities require: or, *add punishment to their punishment*[n]; to their present temporal punishment before imprecated, relating to their table-mercies, their persons, and their habitations, add future and everlasting punishment; let them be punished with everlasting destruction, soul and body, in hell. *And let them not come into thy righteousness*; meaning, not his strict justice or righteous judgment; into that they would certainly come; nor was it the will of the Messiah they should escape it: but either the goodness, grace, and mercy of God, which is sometimes designed by righteousness, as in Psal. xxxi. 1. and li. 14. and the sense is, let them

[k] טירתם palatium eorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Michaelis; castella eorum, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; palatium vel castellum eorum, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

[l] חלליך vulneratorum tuorum, Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Musculus; so Ainsworth.

[m] תנה עון על עונם da punitionem iniquitatis, Pagninus; appone illis pœnam pro iniquitate, Muis.

[n] So Junius & Tremellius.

have no share in pardoning grace now, nor obtain mercy in the last day; but be condemned when they are judged, Psal. cix. 7. Or rather, the righteousness of Christ, which is called the righteousness of God, that is, the Father; because he approves and accepts of it, and imputes it to his people without works: and seeing the Jews sought for justification by their own works, and went about to establish their own righteousness, and submitted not to Christ's, but despised and rejected it; it was but just that they should be excluded from all benefit and advantage by it, as is here imprecated. The Targum is, "and let them not "be worthy to come into the congregation of thy "righteous ones;" neither here, nor at the last judgment; see Psal. i. 5.

Ver. 28. *Let them be blotted out of the book of life,* &c.] Which some understand of this animal life, or of the catalogue of living saints; of their being not written among the living in Jerusalem, or in the writing of the house of Israel, Isa. iv. 3. Ezek. xiii. 9. The Targum is, "let them be blotted out of the book of "the memory of the living." Let their names rot and perish, being buried in everlasting oblivion. Aben Ezra interprets this book of the heavens; where, he says, all things that should come to pass were written, at the time they were created; see Luke x. 20. Heb. xii. 23. But this is the book of divine predestination or election, often in the New Testament called the book of life; in which the names of some persons are written, and others not, Phil. iv. 3. Rev. iii. 5. and xiii. 8. and xvii. 8. and xx. 12, 15. and xxi. 27. so called, not with respect to the present life, and the affairs of it, which belong to the book of Providence: but with respect to the life of the world to come, or eternal life, as Kimchi explains it. It is no other than God's ordination or fore-appointment of men to eternal life; which being called a book, and names written in it, shew that election is personal or particular; the exact knowledge God has of his chosen ones; his great care of them, and value for them; his constant remembrance of them, and the certainty of their salvation; for such whose names are written here in reality can never be blotted out: this would be contrary to the unchangeableness of God, the firmness of his purposes, and the safety of his people. Wherefore the design of this imprecation is, that those persons who had, in their own conceits, and in the apprehensions of others, a name in this book; that it might appear, both to themselves and others, they had none, by the awful ruin and destruction that should be brought upon them. *And not be written with the righteous;* neither in the book of life with them; by which it appears, that to be blotted out, and not be written, are the same: nor in a Gospel church-state; so they were the branches broken off: nor be among them at the resurrection of the just, and in the judgment-day. Kimchi observes, that it is the same thing in different words; to be blotted out is the same as not to be written.

Ver. 29. *But I am poor and sorrowful,* &c.] The Messiah was poor in a literal sense, as it was foretold he should, Zech. ix. 9. so he was in his private life; born of poor parents, and brought up in a mean way; and in his public life, having no certain dwelling-place, and ministered to by others; and when on the cross, being stripped of his garments; and nothing to eat and drink but gall and vinegar; and nothing to leave to his mother, but commits her to the care of his beloved disciple. Though this phrase in general may denote the low estate of Christ in his humiliation, being in the form of a servant, humbled and obedient to death; and the character of *sorrowful* well agrees with him, who was a man of sorrows all his days; and in the garden his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and when on the cross he had sorrow enough; what with the sins of his people on him, the flouts and jeers of his enemies at him; the pains of body he endured, the wrath of God, the hidings of his face, and the curses of his righteous law. After this declaration of his low and distressed state, a petition follows: *let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high;* meaning either the salvation of the Lord's people, so called, because concerted and appointed of God, and is what he sent his Son to effect, and he approves of; this being wrought out was the way and means of the exaltation of Christ; both by his divine Father, who on this account exalted him at his right hand; and by his people, who exalt him in their hearts, and with their tongues, and give him all the glory of their salvation. Or else this means the salvation of Christ out of the hands of all his enemies, whom he conquered on the cross; and particularly death, from which he was saved by his resurrection, and was the first step to his exaltation and glory; after which he ascended on high, and sat down at the right hand of God; where no mere creature, angels or men, were ever admitted; and where angels, principalities, and powers, are subject to him. The whole may be rendered thus; *though I am poor and sorrowful, thy salvation, O God, will set me up on high* *; and so is expressive of the Messiah's faith in his resurrection and exaltation, notwithstanding his sorrows and sufferings; on account of which he determines to praise the Lord, as follows.

Ver. 30. *I will praise the name of God with a song,* &c.] The *name* of God is himself, his perfections and attributes; which are to be *praised* by all his creatures, and especially his saints; and here by the Messiah, who sung the praise of God with his disciples at the supper, a little before his death; and in the great congregation in heaven, upon his ascension thither, having finished the great work of man's redemption. For as it was no lessening of his glory, as Mediator, to pray to God when on earth, it is no diminution of it to praise him in our nature in heaven; see Psal. xxii. 22. This being said to be done with a song agrees with Heb. ii. 12. and is an instance of praising God this way, and which could not be prayer-wise; as well as is a confirmation of the practice of New-Testament churches, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, by the example of our Lord. *And will magnify him with thanksgiving:* to *magnify* is to make great; but God cannot be greater than he is. He is great above all gods; he is greater than all. But he is magnified when his greatness is owned and declared, and that is

* תשגבני elevabit me, Pagninus, Montanus; so Gejerus, Michaelis.

ascribed unto him; and particularly when *thanks* are *given* to him for favours; for then is he acknowledged by men to be the Father of mercies, the author and giver of them; and that they are unworthy of them, and that all the glory belongs to him. Christ, as man, not only prayed, but gave thanks to his Father when on earth, Matt. xi. 25, 26. John xi. 41. nor is it unsuitable to him, as such now in heaven, to give thanks and praise for being heard and helped in a day of salvation; or at the time when he wrought out the salvation of his people, and glorified all the divine perfections.

Ver. 31. This *also shall please the Lord*, &c.] That is, this song of praise and thanksgiving. The Targum has it, "my prayers;" as if it referred to ver. 29. but what is expressed in ver. 30 seems to be the proper antecedent to this, and which is a sacrifice; see Psal. l. 14. Heb. xiii. 15. and more acceptable to God than any of the legal sacrifices, even when they were in force; and much more, now they are abrogated; and especially as offered up by the Messiah himself, all whose offerings are well-pleasing to God; particularly the offering up of himself, which was for a sweet-smelling savour to him, and in virtue of which all spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise become acceptable unto God. *Better than an ox* or *bullock that hath horns and hoofs*; that is, than the best of legal sacrifices; as an ox or bullock was, whose horns and hoofs were grown; one of three years old, as Jarchi and Kimchi observe: the words may be literally rendered, *than an ox, than a bullock, than horns, than hoofs*; not only better than an ox or a bullock, but than any creature that has horns and hoofs; that is, than the lawful sacrifice of any animal whatever, as Junius renders and explains it.

Ver. 32. *The humble shall see* this, and *be glad*, &c.] The resurrection and exaltation of Christ, ver. 29. the meek and humble followers of Christ, as his disciples were, saw him risen from the dead, saw him alive, to whom he shewed himself forty days after his resurrection; they saw his hands, and feet, and side, and the prints of the nails and spear in them; they saw him go up to heaven, to be set on high at the right hand of God; and humble believers now see him by faith, crowned with glory and honour; and as the disciples were glad, and rejoiced when they saw him again, and when he was parted from them, and went up to heaven, John xx. 20. Luke xxiv. 51, 52, 53. so true believers in Christ, who have a spiritual sight of a risen, ascended, and exalted Saviour, are glad, and rejoice in him with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8. they rejoice in the righteousness he has brought in, in the atonement that he has made, and in the salvation he has wrought out, which is so suitable for them; and because they do or will share in all the blessings of his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation; such as regeneration, justification, every supply of grace, and perseverance in it, the resurrection of their bodies, and eternal glorification: and *humble* ones are such as are humbled under a sense of sin, and the exceeding sinfulness of it, in a view of their own righteousness, and its insufficiency to justify them before God: they ascribe all they have and are to the free grace of God; and all boasting is excluded from them, save in Christ; they are such that learn of him, who is meek and lowly; and behave humbly before men, esteem others better than themselves; and are in their own account the chief of sinners, and the least of saints: and as they are, for the most part, *afflicted*, and so some render the word [p] here; they are humble under the mighty hand of God, and patiently bear it. *And your heart shall live that seek God*; that seek his face and favour, his gracious presence, and communion with him; that seek, by prayer and supplications, blessings from him; that seek him in Christ, where he is to be found; that seek Christ, and righteousness and salvation by him, and that early, earnestly, and diligently; that seek the things of Christ, the honour of his name, and the good of his interest; and who, in a word, are the true and spiritual worshippers of God; these seek him, and he seeks them. The Targum is, "that seek doctrine "from before God;" and the hearts of those revived, who were as dead men before, as were the two disciples travelling to Emmaus, when they found that Christ was risen, Luke xxiv. 17—35. just as the spirit of old Jacob revived, when he understood that his son Joseph was alive, Gen. xlv. 27. see Psal. xxii. 26. John xvi. 22.

Ver. 33. *For the Lord heareth the poor*, &c.] The prayer of the poor, as the Targum; of the poor disciples of Christ, who were together mourning, weeping, and praying, when their Lord was dead, and laid in the sepulchre, Mark xvi. 10. Luke xxiv. 10, 33. this epithet agrees with all the followers of Christ, who for the most part are literally poor, and are all of them so in a spiritual sense; they are poor in spirit, and are sensible of it; they are full of wants, and these daily return upon them; wherefore they constantly apply to the throne of grace for help in time of need; and the Lord regards them, his eye is upon them, his heart is towards them, his thoughts are about them, his ears are open to their cries, and his hand is ready to supply their wants. *And despiseth not his prisoners*; the same disciples of Christ; who being assembled together, the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, John xx. 19. it may be applied to such who are the Lord's prisoners; that is, for his sake, in a literal sense, as the Apostle Paul is called the prisoner of the Lord, Ephes. iii. 1. and iv. 1. and there were many, both under the Old and under the New Testament, that suffered imprisonment for their profession of religion; and these the Lord despises not, though men may, but highly esteems and honours; and it may be understood mystically and spiritually of such as are, in their nature-state, prisoners of sin and Satan, and the law, and, when called, are prisoners of hope; these the Lord has a regard unto, and opens the prison-doors and sets them at liberty, and directs them to the strong hold, Isa. xlix. 9. and lxi. 1. Zech. ix. 11, 12.

Ver. 34. *Let the heaven and earth praise him*, &c.] As those, by a prosopopœia, are often called upon to do, to express the greatness of the favour enjoyed, and to excite those that are possessed of it to greater joy and thankfulness; see Psal. xcvi. 11—13. Isa. xliv. 23. and

[p] ענוים afflicti, Vatablus, Musculus; miseri, Gejerus; mansueti ac miseri, Michaelis.

xlix. 13. or the inhabitants of the heavens and earth may be meant, as the angels of heaven; and so the Targum interprets it; who, as they praised the Lord at the incarnation of Christ, Luke ii. 14. so doubtless they did at his ascension, when he was seen and accompanied by them, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. Acts i. 11. and also the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven, who were there when Christ was received into it; and the inhabitants of the earth, as the Targum also paraphrases it; of the continent, particularly the Roman empire, when the Gospel was sent thither, which brought the good news of an incarnate, suffering, risen, ascended, and exalted Saviour. *The seas, and every thing that moveth therein*; the inhabitants of the isles in the seas, such as ours of Great Britain and Ireland, who waited for the doctrine of the Messiah, and to whom he calls to listen to what he says; and which is a sufficient reason for praise and thanksgiving in them; even in as many as have spiritual life and motion, who are quickened, influenced, and moved by the spirit of God; see Isa. xlii. 4. and xlix. 1.

Ver. 35. *For God will save Zion*, &c.] The church of Christ, as it is often called; see the note on Psal. ii. 6. this is to be understood not so much of the salvation of the people of God, by Christ, from sin and Satan, and the world, law, hell, and death, as of the preservation and continuance of the Gospel church-state, notwithstanding all the opposition and persecution of the Jews and Gentiles; and especially of the deliverance of the Lord's people, in the latter day, from the cruelty, captivity, and bondage of antichrist, by the destruction of him; which will occasion joy and praise, Rev. xviii. 4, 20. and xix. 1, 2. *And will build the cities of Judah*: erect Gospel churches in the Roman empire, and in the several parts of the world; as were in the first times of the Gospel, and will be in the latter day, when the cities of God shall be yet spread abroad through prosperity, Zech. i. 17. of which the saints are citizens, and enjoy in them many privileges and immunities: these may be said to be *built*, when they are built upon Christ, and on their most holy faith; when the members of them are edified and multiplied; when purity of faith, discipline, and worship, prevails among them; and though this is usually by the ministers of the Gospel, as instruments, yet the Lord is the chief builder; for, unless he builds, in vain do the builders build, Psal. cxxvii. 1. *That they may dwell there, and have it in possession*: the men of Judah, such as confess the name of Christ, as the word *Judah* signifies; who profess to believe in him with their hearts; these have a name and a place, and an inheritance in the churches, and an abiding one; they shall never go out, but dwell in the house of God for ever; Gospel churches being erected and built up for their sakes, and for such ends and purposes.

Ver. 36. *The seed also of his servants shall inherit it*, &c.] Not their natural, but spiritual seed, or a succession of converts in the churches; see Psal. xlv. 16. Isa. lix. 21. who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; not of corruptible, but incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which lives and abides for ever, John i. 13. 1 Pet. i. 23. these are the proper and rightful inheritors of the Gospel church-state, and all its privileges, in all successive generations, quite down to the New-Jerusalem church-state, wherein will dwell only righteous persons, and whose names are in the Lamb's book of life. Aben Ezra's note upon it is, "they shall inherit "it, they and their children, in the days of David, or in "the days of the Messiah." *And they that love his name shall dwell therein*; that love the person, Gospel, truths and ordinances of Christ; see Cant. i. 3. these shall have an abiding place in Zion, the church of God; in the cities of Judah, particular congregational churches; and in the city of the New Jerusalem, where will be the tabernacle of God among men, and he shall dwell among them, and they with him.

PSALM LXX.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm *of David, to bring to remembrance.*

THIS psalm, according to Kimchi, was composed by David when he fled from Saul, or from Absalom; so Theodoret; but if at either of those times, it is most likely to be the latter, since the following psalm, it is certain, was penned when he was an old man, ver. 9. the word translated *to bring to remembrance* is thought, by Aben Ezra, to be the first word of some pleasant song; see Psal. xxxviii. The Targum paraphrases it, "to remember the use of the frankincense;" alluding to Lev. ii. 2. Jarchi says it signifies prayer, and refers to Psal. xx. 7. 1 Chron. xvi. 4. as instances of the use of the word in such a sense; and so this psalm is composed by the psalmist in a petitionary way, to put the Lord in remembrance of his afflictions, and of his promises of help and deliverance, which he prays for; see Psal. cxxxii. 1. Isa. xliii. 26. and that he would avenge him on his enemies, and shew respect to his friends; or it was written to refresh his own memory with his present state, and to put him in mind from whence he might expect help and salvation. The title of the psalm in the Arabic version is, and so in the Vulgate Latin, following the Septuagint, "a remem-"brance that the Lord had saved him:" and in the Syriac version, "a psalm of David as to the letter, "when he sent Joab to take Shemuah (Sheba), who "rebelled; also a supplication of the righteous, and "even of Christ himself." And seeing this follows upon the preceding, and may be reckoned an appendix to it, and there are some things in it which manifestly refer to the latter part of that, and the whole is detached from the xlth psalm, with which it agrees, a few words only excepted, which manifestly belongs to the Messiah; it is right to understand this of him; see the note on Psal. xl. 13, 14—17.

Ver. 1. Make haste, *O God, to deliver me*, &c.] The phrase, *make haste*, is supplied from the following clause in Psal. xl. 13. it is, *be pleased, O Lord*, or *Jehovah*. The Targum renders it, *to deliver us*; very

wrongly. *Make haste to help me, O Lord*: see the note on Psal. xxii. 19.

Ver. 2. *Let them be ashamed and confounded*, &c.] In Psal. xl. 14. it is added, *together*; see the note there. *That seek after my soul*; or *life*, in Psal. xl. 14. it is added, *to destroy it*: for that was the end of their seeking after it. *Let them be turned backward*, &c. see the note on Psal. xl. 14.

Ver. 3. *Let them be turned back for a reward of their shame*, &c.] In Psal. xl. 15. it is, *let them be desolate*: which seems to respect their land and houses, here their persons; see the note there. *That say*: in the said psalm it is added, *to me*; not to his people, but himself, *Aha, aha*: rejoicing at his calamity and distress. The Targum is, "we are glad, we are glad;" see the note as before, and compare with this Ezek. xxv. 3.

Ver. 4. *Let all those that seek thee*, &c.] The Targum is, "that seek doctrine (or instruction) from thee." *Rejoice and be glad in thee*; the Targum paraphrases it, "rejoice and be glad in thy word." *And let such as love thy salvation say continually, let God be magnified*; the Targum is, "let the glory of the Lord be increased;" and in Psal. xl. 16. instead of *God*, it is *the Lord*, or *Jehovah*: see the note there.

Ver. 5. *But I am poor and needy*, &c.] In Psal. xl. 17. it follows, yet *the Lord thinketh on me*; instead of which it is here, *make haste unto me, O God*: which repeats for sense the same petition as in ver. 1. *Thou art my help and my deliverer; O Lord, make no tarrying*; in Psal. xl. 17. it is, *O my God*.

PSALM LXXI.

THIS psalm is without a title, but is thought to be David's: the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, and all the Oriental ones, ascribe it to him; and both the subject and style shew it to be his. According to the title of the Syriac version, it was composed by him when Saul made war against the house of David; but this is not likely, since it was written by him in his old age, ver. 9, 18. rather, according to Kimchi and Arama, it was penned when he fled from his son Absalom: there are several things in it which incline to this. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions call it "A "Psalm of David, of the sons of Jonadab, and of the "first that were carried captive;" and so the Ethiopic and Arabic versions. Apollinarius says the sons of Jonadab composed it; but without any foundation for it; and the Syriac version is, it is a prophecy concerning the sufferings and resurrection of the Messiah; and so Jerom and others interpret it. The literal meaning respecting David seems best, though it may be applied to the church, and to any believer in distress. Theodoret thinks it was written by David in the person of the captives in Babylon.

Ver. 1. *In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust*, &c.] The Targum is, "in thy Word;" see the note on Psal. xxxi. 1. *Let me never be put to confusion*; or *be ashamed*; see the note as before.

Ver. 2. *Deliver me in thy righteousness*, &c.] *By it*, or *for the sake of* it[s]; see the note on Psal. xxxi. 1. *And cause me to escape*; present danger, and out of the hands of enemies, as well as wrath to come, and eternal death; which nothing but the righteousness of God can deliver from, or cause to escape. *Incline thine ear unto me*; or *bow it*; see the note on Psal. xxxi. 2. *And save me*; out of all troubles and afflictions, and from wicked and unreasonable men.

Ver. 3. *Be thou my strong habitation*, &c.] This is very appositely said, when David was driven out of his dwelling-place, and palace at Jerusalem, by his son, as Kimchi observes. When God's people have no certain dwelling-place, which is sometimes their case, they always find one in the Lord; particularly in his heart's love; for he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, 1 John iv. 16. and a strong habitation he is: wherefore he is called a strong rock, a strong hold, a strong tower; he is as a wall of fire around his people, a munition of rocks; his salvation is as walls and bulwarks, and his power as a garrison in which they are kept. The psalmist adds, *whereunto I may continually resort*; or *may go into daily*[t], in times of danger and distress, for safety; the name of the Lord being a strong tower, whither the righteous run, and are safe, Prov. xviii. 10. and his perfections, his power, faithfulness, lovingkindness, and unchangeableness, being as so many secret chambers, where they may enter into, and hide themselves, till calamities are over, Psal. lvii. 1. Isa. xxvi. 20. and every day indeed for food, for comfort, for refreshment and pleasure, through communion with him; and God in Christ is always to be come at: Christ is the way of access and acceptance; and through his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, the believer has boldness to enter into the holiest of all, and go up to the seat of God, the throne of his grace; and even to enter into him himself, who has been the dwelling-place of his people in all generations, Psal. xc. 1. *Thou hast given commandment to save me*; either to the ministering angels, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret it, comparing it with Psal. xci. 11. or rather to his son, in the council and covenant of grace and peace; when he enjoined him the salvation of his people, which he readily agreed to, and with which David was acquainted, Psal. xl. 7, 8. of this command our Lord speaks, John x. 18. and xiv. 31. and to which he was obedient, Phil. ii. 8. it may respect David's salvation from present trouble, and his assurance of it, believing that the Lord had determined it, and by his mighty power would effect it; see Psal. xliv. 4. *For thou art my rock and my fortress*; see Psal. xviii. 2. and xxxi. 3.

Ver. 4. *Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked*, &c.] Meaning Absalom his son, as Arama, who had risen up in rebellion against him; and he may

[s] בצדקתך propter justitiam tuam, Pagninus, Piscator; so Schmidt.

[t] לבוא תמיד ut ingrediar jugiter, Pagninus; so Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

not only intend him, but all those wicked men that had joined with him: it was David's mercy he had a covenant-God to go to, and could claim his interest in him, who had power to deliver him, and from whom he might expect it. *Out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man*; or *leavened* [s]; a sour ill-natured man; one leavened with malice and wickedness: perhaps Ahithophel is intended. It may be applied to any wicked, lawless, and tyrannical persecutor of God's people; and particularly to the lawless and wicked one, the man of sin, the son of perdition, antichrist, 2 Thess. ii. 4, 8.

Ver. 5. *For thou art my hope, O Lord God*, &c.] The object, ground, and foundation of it, even of present deliverance, and of future and eternal salvation. Thou art *my trust from my youth*; in whom he trusted in his youthful days, of which there is an eminent instance in 1 Sam. xvii. 33—45.

Ver. 6. *By thee have I been holden up from the womb*, &c.] Supported in being, upheld in life, and sustained with food and raiment, and followed with the mercies and blessings of life from thence to this present moment; which the psalmist takes notice of, as he does of what goes before and follows after, to encourage his faith and hope in God as to present deliverance. *Thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels*; see the note on Psal. xxii. 9. the Syriac version is, *thou art my hope from my mother's bowels*; the Arabic version, *thou art my helper*; and the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, *thou art my protector*: the word is only used here, and in Psal. xc. 10. and is there rendered *cut off*; the Lord was, as it were, his *cutter off* [t]; that cut the navel-string, and loosed him from his mother, and safely brought him into the world, and preserved him ever since: wherefore he adds, *my praise* shall be *continually of thee*; as the God of nature and providence; and also as the God of grace, who had blessed him both with temporal and spiritual blessings; and these being continued with him, he determines that God should be the subject of his praise always. The Targum is, "in thy Word my praise is "continually."

Ver. 7. *I am as a wonder unto many*, &c.] To the multitude, to the populace, or *to the great* [u] and mighty; and indeed to both: which respects not his wonderful preservation from the womb, he had before observed; nor his being in a wonderful manner raised to the throne of Israel; nor the wonderful things and amazing exploits done by him, and victories he obtained; nor the wonderful instances of divine grace and goodness to him; but rather the forlorn and distressed state and condition he was now in, being obliged to quit his palace, and flee from the face of his son, accompanied only with a few of his servants; and so was a shocking sight, a spectacle, as the apostle says of himself, to others, to the world, to angels, and to men, 1 Cor. iv. 9. so the Messiah and his children are said to be set for signs and wonders, Isa. viii. 18. and Joshua and his fellows to be men wondered at, Zech. iii. 8. as the saints are by themselves, that they should partake of such favours; and by the angels, that they should be the objects of electing, redeeming, calling, adopting, justifying, and pardoning grace; and by the world, that they should choose to suffer affliction and reproach for Christ, bear it with so much patience, and be supported, and thrive under it; see 2 Cor. vi. 8—10. *But thou art my strong refuge*; or *my refuge of strength* [w]; his refuge and strength, as in Psal. xlvi. 1. his refuge, to which he betook himself, when refuge failed him, and no man cared for him, and which he found to be a strong one, and in it safety.

Ver. 8. *Let my mouth be filled with thy praise*, &c.] Or *thy praise shall fill my mouth* [x]; which shews that his heart was affected with the goodness of God to him, and that he had a deep impression and sense of it upon him; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks; and for the mouth to be filled with the praise of God, is to speak largely, publicly, and with great delight, in the praise of God, his divine perfections and benefits. And with *thy honour all the day*; the excellency of his nature, the glory of his majesty, the honour due unto him, on account of his being, attributes, and blessings of providence and grace; a work to be employed in all the day, evening, morning, and at noon; as often as prayer is made to God, praise, honour, and glory, should be given him; since his mercies are new every morning, and they continue all the day long; his goodness endures for ever.

Ver. 9. *Cast me not off in the time of old age*, &c.] The Lord never casts off nor casts away his people, whom he foreknew; they are near unto him; they are on his heart, and are engraven on the palms of his hands; and they shall never be removed from his heart's love, nor out of his arms, nor out of his covenant, and shall always be the objects of his care: he bears and carries them to old age, and even to hoary hairs: the Lord had been the guide of David's youth, and his trust then, ver. 5, and now he desires he would be the staff of his old age; at which age he was when Absalom rebelled against him. *Forsake me not when my strength faileth*; as it does when old age comes on; then the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves, and especially at death, when flesh and heart fail; but God will never forsake his people, neither in youth nor in old age, neither in life nor at death.

Ver. 10. *For mine enemies speak against me*, &c.] Or *say unto me* [y] what is expressed in the following verse, *God hath forsaken him*; and so these words are a reason of the above petitions: or *mine enemies speak to me*; or *of me* [z]; not good, but evil, and so the Targum paraphrases it, "for mine enemies speak evil "against me;" or concerning me. David had his enemies, and many, as Ahithophel, and others, who spake against him to the people, and thereby drew many with them into rebellion against him; and particularly Shimei spoke against him, and cursed him, calling him a bloody man, a man of Belial, 2 Sam. xvi.

[s] חומץ malitiæ fermento prorsus corrupti, Michaelis, secundum Gejerum & Gussetium; so Ainsworth.
[t] גוזי excisor meus, Gejerus
[u] לרבים multis vel magnis, Piscator; so Ainsworth.
[w] מחסי עז refugium meum roboris, Gejerus.

[x] ימלא פי תהלתך
[y] אמרו לי dixerunt mihi, Montanus.
[z] De me loquuti sunt, vel loquuntur, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Gejerus, Michaelis.

7. *And they that lay wait for my soul*; or *life*; that laid snares for him; or lay in ambush, and sought for an opportunity to take away his life: or *they that keep my soul*, or *life*[a]; that were his lifeguards that were about his person for the preservation of him; and so the Targum seems to understand it. *Take counsel together*; lay schemes and form plots how to destroy him, as Ahithophel did, 2 Sam. xvi. 20—23. and xvii. 1—4.

Ver. 11. *Saying, God hath forsaken him*, &c.] Good men may seem to others to be forsaken of God; and they themselves may sometimes think they are; and they may be forsaken for a small moment, when God withdraws his gracious presence, or does not afford immediate help; but never finally and totally. This David's enemies concluded, from the distressed condition he was in, being obliged to leave his family and court, and flee from his son, and wander up and down with a small retinue; and this they said to one another, to encourage themselves to lay violent hands upon him, which they thought they might do with ease and impunity; wherefore it follows, *persecute and take him*; pursue after him eagerly and diligently; lose no time; and, when come up to him, seize upon him, without any fear of God or man. *For there is none to deliver him*; out of our hands. God will not, for he has forsaken him; and men cannot, for he has not an army sufficient to defend him or recover him.

Ver. 12. *O God, be not far from me*, &c.] God is everywhere, at hand and afar off, with regard to his being, power, and providence; his glorious presence is in heaven, his gracious presence is with his people; but, when he hides his face, he seems to be at a distance; and this they cannot bear, and therefore deprecate it; see Psal. x. 1. *O my God, make haste for my help*; he knew that his help was in God, and that there was none for him elsewhere; and that he could help him when none else could, and was a present help in time of trouble; and it being such a time with him, and his case desperate, he desires the Lord that he would make haste; and he addresses him as his own God, the consideration of which encouraged his faith and hope in him, and carried in it an argument to help him; see Psal. cxix. 94.

Ver. 13. *Let them be confounded*, &c.] See Psal. lxx. 2. And *consumed*; like smoke; see Psal. xxxvii. 20. as antichrist will be with the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming, 2 Thess. ii. 8. *That are adversaries to my soul*; that hated him with a diabolical hatred, as the devil hates the souls of men, and who has his name *Satan* from the word here used; all wicked men are Satans, full of enmity against God, and all good men; and such were David's enemies, spiteful and malicious, and nothing would satisfy them but his life. *Let them be covered with reproach and dishonour*; as with a garment: *that seek my hurt*; see Psal. xxxv. 26. and cix. 18, 19. as Absalom and his company; so Arama.

Ver. 14. *But I will hope continually*, &c.] For deliverance and salvation from present outward troubles, for more grace here and glory hereafter: it is the excellency of the grace of hope to be exercised in times of affliction and distress, and with Abraham to believe in hope against hope; and then it is that this grace is eminently and remarkably useful: it is an anchor to the soul when in distress, which keeps it firm and steadfast; and an helmet, which covers the head in the day of battle; in the exercise of which the believer glories in tribulation: it is an abiding grace, and should be continually exercised by those that have it, which is to abound in it; but this must be through the power of the Holy Ghost, Rom. xv. 13. *And will yet praise thee more and more*; or *will add to all thy praise*[b]; to former praises and thanksgivings, fresh ones, as his mercies were renewed to him, and he was daily loaded with benefits.

Ver. 15. *My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness*, &c.] Both his punitive justice in taking vengeance on his enemies, agreeably to the above imprecations; and his faithfulness in the performance of promises of good things unto him; as also his essential righteousness displayed and glorified in the redemption that is by Christ; and particularly the righteousness of Christ, accepted of God, and imputed by him; which the psalmist with his mouth declared his faith in, expressed his joy at, and set forth in a strong manner the glory and excellency of it, and determined to make mention of it, and of that only, as in the following verse. And *thy salvation all the day*; both temporal and eternal; the glory of both, and praise for the same. *For I know not the numbers thereof*; of that righteousness and salvation, the numerous blessings which are contained in them; see Psal. xl. 5. or *though I know not the numbers* of them[c]; though he could not fully declare the glories and excellencies of the righteousness and salvation of God, and the numerous mercies and rich grace included in them; yet he would attempt to set them forth in the best way he could, though in a feeble and imperfect manner.

Ver. 16. *I will go in the strength of the Lord God*, &c.] Go on praising him, as he had determined to do in the preceding verses; not in his own strength, knowing that his heart was not always disposed aright or prepared and fit for such service; and that though the daily continuance of favours required constant praise, yet he needed always the aids of divine grace to raise his affection and song: or *I will go into the strengths of the Lord God*[d]; the power of God is expressed in the plural number, to shew the greatness of it, which is as a garrison to the believer; see 1 Pet. i. 5. a strong hold, a strong tower, a strong habitation, as in ver. 3. into which he goes by faith, and is there safe, in all times of distress and danger: or the sense is, that he would go into the house of God, the temple and sanctuary, and in his strength perform the duties of public worship there; and it may include all religious actions, private and public, and every spiritual undertaking; which ought to be attempted and performed, not in our own strength, but in the strength of the Lord: man is become, through sin, a weak and

[a] שמרי נפשי custodientes animam meam, Pagninus, Montanus; custodiebant, V. L.

[b] והוספתי על כל תהלתך omnibus laudibus tuis adjiciam, Tigurine version.

[c] כי quamvis, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Gejerus; so Ainsworth.

[d] בגברות in fortitudines, Montanus; in potentias, V. L. Vatablus.

impotent creature; though he is very hard to be brought to a sense and acknowledgment of his weakness; true believers are sensible of it, and own it; and such, knowing that there is a sufficiency of strength in Christ for them, look and go to him for it; to do otherwise, to attempt to do any thing in our own strength, betrays our weakness, folly, and vanity, and is dangerous, attended with bad consequences, and never succeeds well: the Apostle Peter is an instance of this, Matt. xxvi. 33, 35, 70. *I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only*; and that before the Lord himself: not his own righteousness, which he knew would not justify him in his sight, nor render him acceptable to him; nor furnish out a plea or argument why he should receive any favour from him; and therefore resolves not to mention it; but the righteousness of Christ, which is the righteousness of God, which he approves of, accepts, and imputes. This is a pure, perfect, and spotless righteousness, which God is well pleased with; honours his law, satisfies his justice, and so justifies in his sight; and renders person and service acceptable to him; and therefore with great propriety, pleasure and boldness, may be mentioned unto him; as it should be to Christ himself also; by ascribing it to him, as the author of it; by expressing a desire to be found in it; to have faith of interest in it, and joy on account of it; and by owning him openly and freely as the Lord our righteousness: and we should make mention of it to others, in praise of it; extolling it as the righteousness of God, and not a creature; and so sufficient to justify many, even all the seed of Israel; as the best robe of righteousness, better than the best of man's, better than Adam's in innocence, or than the angels' in heaven; as a law-honouring and justice-satisfying one, and as an everlasting one. And we should put ourselves in mind of it, and, by repeated acts of faith, put it on as our justifying righteousness; since much of our joy, peace, and comfort, depend upon it. And this, and this only, is to be made mention of; it is only in the Lord that there is righteousness: as there is salvation in him, and in no other, so there is righteousness in him, and in no other; wherefore no other is to be mentioned along with it: justification is not partly by Christ's righteousness, and partly by our own; but only by his, and through faith in it; see Rom. ix. 32.

Ver. 17. *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, &c.*] The corruption of human nature; the weakness and impotence of it, to every thing that is spiritually good; and the need of continual strength and grace from Christ, to go to him for righteousness and strength, life and salvation, and to walk by faith on him; the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, and the insufficiency of his own; the will, ways, and worship of God; and all the duties of religion, prayer, praise, *&c.* and whoever were the instruments, or whatever were the means, of teaching David these things, he ascribes it to God. Whether his parents, or the priests and Levites, taught him the sacrifices and ordinances of the law, it was the Lord that blessed instructions to him; and that taught him by providences and precepts, and by his Holy Spirit. And a wonderful blessing it is to be taught of God, and not of men, things relating both to doctrine and practice; and it is an addition to it to be taught these things early, as David was from his youth; and therefore the Lord was so soon the object of his faith and trust, ver. 5. and, as Timothy, from a child, was acquainted with the holy Scriptures, and the things contained in them, which are able to make wise unto salvation, Isa. xxix. 13. and liv. 13. 2 Tim. iii. 15. *And hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works*: not only of nature and providence, but of grace; the treasuring up of all grace, and the blessings of it in Christ; the work of redemption by him; the work of regeneration and conversion by his spirit; and the perseverance of the saints by his grace and strength; which are all wonderful and amazing. And as the psalmist saw his interest in these things, and had an experience of them, he declared them to others for their encouragement, and to the glory of all the three Persons; see Psal. lxvi. 16. Mark v. 19.

Ver. 18. *Now also, when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, &c.*] A repetition of his request, ver. 9. with a reason annexed to it, suggested in the following words: *until I have shewed thy strength unto* this *generation*; or, *thine arm*[e]; which sometimes designs the Messiah, Isa. liii. 1. who is the power of God, by whom he made the worlds, and in whom all things consist; and who has wrought out the salvation of his people; and is the arm on which they lean, and by which they are upheld. And the psalmist may be thought to desire that he might be continued a little longer, and be favoured with the presence of God, and the influences of his spirit and grace; that he might shew forth in prophecy, both by word and writing, to the men of the then present age, more things concerning the person, office, and grace of Christ; his sufferings, death, resurrection from the dead, and session at the right hand of God; things which are spoken of in the book of Psalms. Sometimes the arm of the Lord denotes his power and strength, Psal. xliv. 3. and so it may be taken here; and the next clause seems to be an explanation of it: and *thy power*; or even *thy power, to every one* that *is to come*; that is, to come into the world, that is to be born into it; namely, the power of God, not only in creating all things out of nothing, and supporting what is made; but in the redemption of men, in the conversion of sinners, and in the preservation of the saints, and in enabling them to hold on and out unto the end: and which is shewn forth by the psalmist in what he has committed to writing; and which continue, and will continue, to the end of the world, for the instruction of those that come into it; see Psal. xxii. 31.

Ver. 19. *Thy righteousness also, O God,* is *very high, &c.*] Or, *unto* the place *on high*[f]; it reaches unto heaven, as the mercy, truth, and faithfulness of God, are said to do, Psal. xxxvi. 5. and lvii. 10. The righteousness of Christ is accepted of with God the Father in heaven; it is in Christ, who is there at the right hand of God; and it is higher and infinitely above

[e] זרועך brachium tuum, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, &c.

[f] עד מרום usque in excelsum, Pagninus, Montanus, Gejerus; in altum usque, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.

any righteousness of a creature, angel's or man's. *Who hast done great things;* in nature, in forming the world out of nothing, and in upholding all creatures in their beings; in providence, in governing the world, and ordering all things in it for the best, and to answer the wisest purposes; in grace, in the salvation of lost sinners by Christ; in the justification of them by his righteousness; and in the atonement and pardon of their sins, through his blood and sacrifice; in the regeneration of them by his grace; in making and performing exceeding great and precious promises, and in giving them eternal life. *O God, who is like unto thee?* either for greatness or goodness; for power or for mercy; for justice, truth, and faithfulness; for the perfections of his nature, or the works of his hands; and to be praised, reverenced and adored, as he is; see Psal. lxxxix. 6, 7.

Ver. 20. Thou, *which hast shewed me great and sore troubles,* &c.] Or, *made* him *to see*[x]; that is, to experience. David had his troubles, and these were *great,* both as to quantity and quality; and very grievous and hard to be borne, and were very trying and afflictive: some outward, such as he endured when persecuted by Saul; and afterwards in his own family, through the incest of Amnon, the murder of him by Absalom, and Absalom's rebellion against him; the curses of Shimei, and the bickerings of the sons of Zeruiah; with many others: and some inward, arising from the corruptions of his heart, the hidings of God's face, and the temptations of Satan. His experience of all which he ascribes, not to instruments or second causes, but to God himself; who had either laid them upon him, or suffered them to befall him, for wise ends of his glory, and his servant's good. There is in this clause and the following, a Keri and a Cetib; according to the Cetib, or writing in the text, it is, *who hast shewed us;* and so the Targum renders it: but according to the Keri in the margin, and the points, it is as we read; so it is in the Septuagint and Oriental versions, and both may be retained; for David's troubles, and those of other saints, are much the same. *Shalt quicken me again;* either raise him from so great a death of afflictions, in which he seemed to be as a dead man, both by himself and others, to a more comfortable and happy state and condition, in which he might live more free from vexation and trouble: or, in a spiritual sense, quicken him, being dead and lifeless, in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; which is usually done by the word and ordinances, and to purpose, by the discoveries of the love of God, which excite grace, and animate to duty. And this is God's work, and may be called a quickening *again,* in distinction from the first quickening, when dead in trespasses and sins. *And shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth;* expressive of a very low estate, either of body or mind, into which he had been brought; see Psal. cxxx. 1. and lxxxviii. 6. Could the psalm be understood of Christ, this and the preceding clause might be applied to his resurrection from the dead; see Ephes. iv. 9. and to the resurrection of the saints; on which the faith of Christ and his people is exercised.

Ver. 21. *Thou shalt increase my greatness,* &c.] His temporal greatness, as he did, by crushing the rebellion of his son; returning him to his palace and family; and giving him rest from his enemies all around: and his spiritual greatness, by favouring him with his presence; by shedding abroad his love in his heart; by enlarging his experience, increasing his faith, causing his love to abound, and him to grow in every grace, and in the knowledge of Christ. *And comfort me on every side;* by his spirit, word, and ordinances; by his truths and promises; with his rod and staff; and with mercy, grace, and loving-kindness. The phrase denotes the abundance of comfort, which should come as it were from every quarter, and encompass him about.

Ver. 22. *I will also praise thee with the psaltery,* &c.] An instrument of music; see the note on Psal. xxxiii. 2. *Even thy truth, O my God;* that is, his faithfulness in fulfilling his promises, which is never suffered to fail. *Unto thee will I sing with the harp;* another instrument of music; and both typical of the spiritual melody in the heart, which believers make in praising the Lord, when they sing the Lamb's new song; see Rev. xiv. 2, 3. *O thou holy One of Israel;* the God of Israel, that dwells among them, and sanctifies them; and who is essentially and perfectly holy in himself, and in all his ways and works; the remembrance of which occasions praise and thankfulness, Psal. xcvii. 12.

Ver. 23. *My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee,* &c.] Both with vocal and instrumental music; this is praising the Lord with joyful lips, Psal. lxiii. 5. *And my soul, which thou hast redeemed;* signifying that it would not be lip-labour, or bodily service, only that he should perform; but that his heart would go along with his lips in praise; and that under a sense of redeeming love, than which nothing can more strongly engage in such work, Psal. ciii. 1, 2, 3. For the redemption of the soul is exceeding precious; being the contrivance of infinite wisdom, the fruit of divine grace, and owing to the blood and sacrifice of Christ.

Ver. 24. *My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long,* &c.] See the note on ver. 16. *For they are confounded;* his adversaries, for whose confusion he prayed, ver. 13. *For they are brought unto shame that seek my hurt;* as Absalom and Ahithophel, being both brought to a shameful end.

[x] הראיתני fecisti me videre, Vatablus, Cocceius, Gejerus; videre & experiri fecisti nos, Michaelis.

PSALM LXXII.

A Psalm *for Solomon.*

THE title of this psalm is by some rendered, *a psalm of Solomon*[h]; as a psalm לדוד, *for David,* is often rendered *a psalm of David*; and so make Solomon to be the writer of it: to which the Targum inclines, which paraphrases it, "by the hand of Solomon, said in prophecy." But, though Solomon had a gift of divine poetry, as appears by the Song of Songs, composed by him; and the Thousand and Five, he was the author of; and perhaps wrote the 127th Psalm: yet by the first and last verses of this psalm it may be concluded it was not wrote by him, but by David; and very likely at the close of his days, when he ordered Solomon to be anointed king, and expressed his satisfaction in it; his prayers and wishes then being ended with regard to that affair; see 1 Kings xxxiv. 48. And so the title in the Syriac version is, "a psalm of David, when he made Solomon king:" the same Kimchi observes; it was written *for* him, and on his account: and it might be sent to him, and delivered into his hands, to be laid up and kept by him, and be referred to for his use at proper times. For it may be rendered, as in the Arabic version, *to Solomon;* which adds, the son of David: or else it may denote the subject of the psalm, and be read, *concerning Solomon*[i]; the Messiah, the antitypical Solomon; who is often called by this name in the Song of Songs; see Cant. iii. 7, 9, 11. and viii. 11. Solomon being a type of him in his wisdom and riches, and in the peaceableness and extent of his kingdom; to which reference is had in this psalm. But a greater than Solomon is here; that the Messiah is the subject of it is manifest from the largeness of his kingdom, it reaching to the ends of the earth; which was not true of Solomon, ver. 8. and from the duration of it, it being as long as the sun and moon endure, ver. 5, 7, 17. and from the abundance of peace and prosperity in it, which equally last, ver. 3, 7. and from the subjection of kings and nations to him, even all of them, ver. 9, 10, 11. and from the happiness of his subjects; they having protection, deliverance, and salvation by him, and all spiritual blessings in him; which shews him to be the promised seed, in whom all nations should be blessed, ver. 2, 4, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17. and from the honour, praise, glory, and blessedness, ascribed to him, ver. 15, 17, 18, 19. So Tertullian[k], long ago, observed, that this psalm belongs to Christ, and not to Solomon. And that the Messiah is intended, many of the Jewish writers, both ancient and modern, acknowledge, as appears from the Targum, Talmud, Midrash, and other writings, which will be observed in the exposition of it. Jarchi, though he interprets it of Solomon, yet owns that their Rabbins expound the whole psalm of the Messiah: and Kimchi, who explains it hyperbolically of Solomon, acknowledges that, in the proper and literal sense, it is to be understood of the Messiah; and which is the sense given by his father, R. Joseph Kimchi. Aben Ezra says, this psalm is either concerning Solomon, or concerning the Messiah; but Abarbinel[l] makes no doubt that it is said concerning him. R. Obadiah says, it is concerning the coming of the Messiah; and to this agrees the title in the Syriac version, "and a prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah, and the calling of the Gentiles."

Ver. 1. *Give the King thy judgments, O God,* &c.] A prayer of David, or of the church he personates, to God the Father concerning Christ; for he is *the King* meant; which is the sense of the old Jewish synagogue: the Targum is, "give the constitutions of thy judgments to the King Messiah;" and so their Midrash[m] interprets it. He is *the King,* by way of eminence, as in Psal. xlv. 1. not only the King of the world in right of creation and preservation, in conjunction with his Father, having an equal right with him; but of saints, of the church and people of God, by the designation and constitution of his Father; hence he was promised and prophesied of as a King, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Ezek. xxxvii. 24. Hos. iii. 5. Zech. ix. 9. and he came into the world as such, though his kingdom did not appear very manifest in his state of humiliation; yet at his ascension it did, when he was made and declared Lord and Christ; and it is for the manifestation of his kingdom, and the glory of it, the psalmist here prays. For by *judgments* are meant not the statutes and laws of God, given him to be shewn, explained unto, and enforced on others, which rather belongs to his prophetic office, or as the rule of his government; nor the judgments of God to be inflicted upon wicked men, which is only one part of his kingly office; but of all power in heaven and in earth, which was given him by his Father upon his resurrection, and about the time of his ascension, Matt. xxviii. 18. and is the same with *all judgment* committed by him to his Son, John v. 22. and which explains the clause here, and is the reason why it is expressed in the plural number here; which takes in the whole of the power and authority, the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom, delivered to Christ; and which chiefly lies in the government of the church, which is on his shoulders, and is committed into his hand; exercised in enacting laws, and delivering out ordinances, to be observed by the saints, and in the protection and defence of them; and also includes his judgment of the world at the last day, to which he is ordained and appointed by his Father, and will be managed and conducted by him. *And thy righteousness unto the King's Son;* who is the same with the

[h] לשלמה ipsius Selomoh, Vatablus; Salomonis, Cocceius.
[i] De Salomone, Muis.
[k] Adv. Marcion. l. 5. c. 9.
[l] Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 78. 2, 3.
[m] In Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 112. 2.

King, as Jarchi well observes; for only one single person is afterwards spoken of, and designs the Messiah; who, as a divine Person, is the Son of the King of kings, the only begotten of the Father, the true and proper Son of God; and, as man, the Son of David the king. And so the Targum, "and thy righteousness to the "Son of David the king;" a known name of the Messiah, Matt. i. 1. and xxii. 42. And by *righteousness* is meant, not the essential righteousness of God; this Christ has by nature equally with his divine Father, and is not given or communicated to him; but the fulness of the graces of the Spirit, and perfection of virtues, which he received without measure; whereby, as Mediator, he is abundantly qualified to judge with righteousness, and reprove with equity; and not as other judges do, after the sight of the eyes, or hearing of the ears; see Isa. xi. 2, 3. Unless it can be understood of the everlasting righteousness, which Christ has wrought out, called his Father's, because appointed in council and covenant, approved of and accepted by him, and imputed to his people. To work out this righteousness was not only given to Christ in covenant, but he was sent in the fulness of time to do it; and had a power given him, as Mediator, to justify many with it, Isa. liii. 11. and which may be here prayed for. Jerom, by the *King's Son*, understands such as are regenerated, and taken into the adoption of children; and to such the righteousness of God is given. This is a truth, but not the sense of the text.

Ver. 2. *He shall judge thy people with righteousness*, &c.] Or, *so shall he judge*; or, *that he may judge*[a], as the Syriac and Arabic versions; having the judgments and righteousness of God given him, he will be thereby qualified to judge the people of God; such as are so, not by creation, but by special grace; his chosen and covenant people, the redeemed and purchased people of God, and who in effectual vocation appear to be so, and are made his willing people. These Christ judges, rules, and governs, protects and defends, in a righteous manner; pleads their cause, vindicates their right, and avenges them on their enemies, as well as justifies them with his own righteousness. *And thy poor with judgment*; justice and equity. Such who are literally poor, and are the Lord's poor, whom he has chosen, and makes rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom; and with whom Christ, when here on earth, was chiefly concerned, and now is; and not with the great men and rulers of the earth: or such who are poor in spirit, sensible of their spiritual poverty; that find themselves hungry and thirsty, and destitute of righteousness, and without money, or any thing to procure either. Or, *thine afflicted ones*[e]; such as are distressed in body or mind, with respect to things temporal or spiritual; oppressed by sin, Satan, and the world. These Christ regards, and administers justice to in his own time and way; see Isa. xi. 4.

Ver. 3. *The mountains shall bring peace to the people*, &c.] The people of God, as before. Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret this of the nations, and kings of the nations, comparable to mountains and hills, as in Micah vi. 1, 2. that should make peace with Israel in the days of Solomon, and in the days of the King Messiah. Jarchi, of the abundance of fruit the mountains and hills should bring forth; so that there would be no contention among men about gathering it; but every one would invite his neighbour to partake thereof, according to Zech. iii. 10, and so the Midrash[f]. The Targum explains it of the inhabitants of the mountains; and may be applied to the churches of Christ, comparable to the mountains for their firmness and stability, Isa. ii. 2. and xi. 9. and xxv. 6. and to the abundance of peace, holiness, and righteousness, that should be found in them in the times of Christ; or to the ministers of the Gospel, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains, publishing peace and salvation by Christ, Isa. lii. 7. *And the little hills by righteousness*; that is, shall bring peace, by or with righteousness, the righteousness of Christ; the effect of which is spiritual peace and joy, Rom. v. 1. and xiv. 17.

Ver. 4. *He shall judge the poor of the people*, &c.] Of the people of God, whether among Jews or Gentiles; see the note on ver. 2. *He shall save the children of the needy*; whose parents being needy, they are so too, in a spiritual sense, and in distressed circumstances. Such Christ saves from their sins; from the curses and condemnation of the law; from wrath to come, and out of the hands of all their enemies. *And shall break in pieces the oppressor*; the tyrant Satan, the god of this world; that has usurped a power over it; who works in the children of disobedience, and leads captive the people of God in their unregenerate state: the *calumniator*, as some render the word; the accuser of the brethren: *the defrauder*[s], as others: who beguiled our first parents, and deceives mankind. Now it was foretold of Christ that he should break his head; and he was manifested in the flesh to destroy his works, and him himself; and he has broke him and all his schemes in pieces, and spoiled all his principalities and powers. The Syriac version reads, *tyrants* or *oppressors*, in the plural number; and it may include the Jews, who were the persecutors and oppressors of the first Christians; and Rome, Pagan and Papal; antichrist, and all the antichristian states, which have been, or will be, broken to pieces by Christ; who will rule them with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces as a potter's vessel, Rev. ii. 27. and xii. 5. and xix. 15.

Ver. 5. *They shall fear thee*, &c.] The King Messiah, the Judge of the poor, and the destroyer of the oppressor: either the tyrants and oppressors themselves shall fear him, and such who have been aiding and assisting to them; see Rev. xi. 11, 13. or rather the people of God, the poor of the people, and children of the needy, judged and saved by Christ; who shall fear the Lord, both internally and externally, in the exercise of grace, and in the performance of religious worship; in all the parts of it, which are both included in the fear of the Lord; of which there will be many instances, both among Jews and Gentiles, in the latter day; see Hos. iii. 5. Isa. lx. 5. Rev. xv. 4. and this

[a] ידין ut jus dicat, Tigurine version; so Ainsworth.
[e] עניך afflictos tuos, Montanus, Vatablus, Musculus, Piscator, Gejerus, Michaelis, Tigurine version.

[f] In Yalkut Simeoni, ut supra.
[s] עושק calumniatorem, Pagninus, Tigurine version, Vatablus, Musculus; fraudatorem, Muis, Cocceius.

they shall do, *as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations*; or, *with the sun, and before the moon, generation of generations*[r]; that is, to the end of the world, till sun and moon shall be no more: so long will Christ have a seed to serve him; see Psal. lxxxix. 36, 37.

Ver. 6. *He shall come down like rain upon the mowen grass*, &c.] That is, the King and King's Son, the Messiah, whose coming is compared to rain, and showers of it; see Hos. vi. 3. and may be understood of his incarnation; when, like rain, he came down from heaven; not by an illapse of the human nature, which before was not in him; nor by local motion of his divine Person, with which that will not agree; but by assumption of human nature into union with him, as the Son of God; which was an instance of his condescending grace: like rain, he had no father as man; see Job xxxviii. 28. but was born of a virgin, through the power of the Holy Ghost; which was very marvellous, like the dew that fell on Gideon's fleece, when the earth about it was dry; which some think is here referred to. The word used signifies also a shorn fleece of wool; and so it is rendered by the Septuagint, and those versions which follow that: or, *shorn grass*, shorn by locusts, as the Targum; rather by sheep, who, as by classical writers[s], are said to sheer the grass by biting it. Or, *like rain upon the fleece*[t]; and as the rain is the gift of God to persons undeserving, in consequence of a decree, Job xxviii. 26. sometimes comes suddenly, and is very grateful and refreshing; so Christ is the free gift of God to sinners, and by a decree of his; and his coming was suddenly, into his temple, and was welcome to them that looked for him; as he still is to all sensible sinners. Or this may be interpreted of the coming of Christ into the hearts of his people, by the communications of his spirit and grace, which, like rain, came down from heaven; are dependent on the will of God, are free-grace gifts, and given in abundance; and, like rain, refresh, revive, and make fruitful. Or else this may be applied to the administration of Christ's offices; as his prophetic office, his Gospel and doctrine, being from heaven, like rain, and falling, by divine direction, sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; and like it in its effects, softening, quickening, and fructifying; and more especially it may respect the administration of his kingly office, since he is in the context spoken of as a King and Judge, and that in the latter day; whose administrations, though just and righteous, yet not cruel and severe, but mild and gentle; his commands are not grievous, nor his yoke heavy; though he will rule the wicked with a rod of iron, he holds forth the sceptre of grace and mercy to his own people; and when his kingdom shall come in all its glory, it will be times refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and his favour will be as the cloud of the latter rain; see Acts iii. 19, 21. Prov. xvi. 15. *As showers that water the earth*; signifying the same. The word זרזיף is only in this place, and is used in the Talmud[u], in the plural number, for drops of water; and this sense of showers dropping on the earth is given by the Targum. Kimchi derives it from זרף, which, in the Syriac language, signifies *to cut*; and thinks the phrase is the same with the former, *as showers on the cut grass of the earth*[w]. But perhaps the word rather designs the scissures and gaps of the earth through drought; and the sense is, that Christ's coming is like showers of rain upon the dry and parched ground, which are very acceptable to it.

Ver. 7. *In his days shall the righteous flourish*, &c.] As the grass of the field, ver. 16. the dews and rain of grace descending upon them; and as a branch, Prov. xi. 28. They being branches in Christ the vine, flourish and bring forth fruit; and as the palm-tree, Psal. xcii. 12. which the more it is pressed with weights, the more it grows; so they, the more they are afflicted, as the Israelites, the more they grow in grace and experience, and become fruitful in every good word and work; which is owing to their being planted in a good soil, in the house and courts of the Lord, where the word is preached, and ordinances administered; to their being rooted and grounded in the love of God and grace of Christ; to their being watered continually with the dews of divine favour; enjoying the bright shining of the sun of righteousness, and the refreshing gales of the divine Spirit, like the south wind upon them, causing their spices to flow out. The Targum is, "in "his days the righteous shall be multiplied;" when the forces and fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and the nation of the Jews shall be born at once: in the latter days of the Messiah, all the Lord's people shall be righteous; and none but righteous persons shall dwell in the new heavens and earth, Isa. lx. 21. 2 Pet. iii. 13. This is to be understood not of persons outwardly righteous only; nor that are so in their own conceit; nor that seek for righteousness by the works of the law, or depend on an external profession of religion; for such never flourish, nor grow in grace, who have no grace to grow in: but of such that are justified by the righteousness of Christ, have faith in him, and the seed of grace implanted in them. This is interpreted of the Messiah, by a Jewish writer[x]; who observes, that in his days the priesthood shall return, and the rod of Aaron shall flourish. *And abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth*: alluding, no doubt, to the name of Solomon, which signifies peace; and to that peace and prosperity which were enjoyed under his reign, and was a shadow of what would be in the times of Christ: universal peace, in a temporal sense, was in the times of Augustus, in which Christ was born, and in whose reign the temple of Janus was shut, a sure sign of peace[y]. Spiritual peace was made with God by his blood, and all things were reconciled by him, whether in heaven or in earth; Jew and Gentile were made both one, and reconciled in one body; and abundance of spiritual peace is enjoyed by those that believe in Christ: they are kept in perfect peace, and filled with it; and in the latter day there will be

[r] Sic Eth. Syr. Arab. Apollinarius, Vatablus, & Cocceius.

[s] Tondentes gramen oves, Ovid. de Remed. Amor. l. 1. Tondentes graminis lanigeræ pecudes, Lucret. l. 2.

[t] על גז super vellus, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus.

[u] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 87. 1.

[w] In Sepher Shorash. rad. זרזף.

[x] Baal Hatturim in Numb. fol. 169. 3.

[y] Vell. Patercul. Hist. Rom. l. 2. Aurel. Victor. de Vir. Illust. Addit. c. 2. de Cæsar. c. 1.

abundance of peace among the saints. There will be no jars nor discord among them; no envying nor vexing one another; no animosities or contentions about religious matters; for they will then see eye to eye: and they will be at peace with the men of the world; there will be no more wars in the earth, nor bloodshed, nor persecution. And this shall endure till there is no moon, till there shall be no need of one; as there will not in the New-Jerusalem state, in which there will be no night.

Ver. 8. *He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, &c.*] The same is said of the Messiah in Zech. ix. 10. where he is manifestly spoken of as here, and regards the extent of his dominion; not over the land of Israel only, as some think; but over the Gentile world, through the preaching of the Gospel in the several parts of it; and especially as it will be in the latter day, when the kingdoms of this world will be his, and he will be King over all the earth; see Rev. x. 15. Zech. xiv. 9. which cannot agree with Solomon, whose dominion reached only to the land of the Philistines, to the border of Egypt, 1 Kings iv. 21. but Christ's dominion will be, as it follows, *and from the river unto the ends of the earth:* which, as Kimchi owns, is clear, if applied to the Messiah; since his government shall be over all the world. The note of Aben Ezra on the text is worthy of regard. "If this is said concerning "Solomon, the meaning is, from the Red sea to the "sea of the Philistines; and from the river, this is "Euphrates; and the ends of the earth mean the wil-"derness; (see Exod. xxiii. 31.) and, lo, mention is "made of the length and breadth of the land of Israel: "and if of the Messiah, the sense is, from the south "sea, which is called the Idumean sea, to the northern "sea, which is the sea of the ocean; and from the "river, the river that goes out of Eden at the beginning "of the east, unto the ends of the earth, which is at "the end of the west;" though rather the sense is, from the Indian ocean, the great sea, unto the Mediterranean sea; and from the river Euphrates to the end of the world. This text is applied to the Messiah by many Jewish writers[a], ancient and modern.

Ver. 9. *They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, &c.*] In token of subjection to him, reverence and worship of him, to whom every knee shall bow, Isa. xlv. 23. The Septuagint version, and others, render the word ציים, *Ethiopians*, who dwell in a dry land, parched and burnt with the sun; and so it is a prophecy of their conversion to Christ, as in Psal. lxviii. 31. and lxxxvii. 4. of which there is an instance, Acts viii. 27. the word is used of the wild beasts of the field, in Isa. xiii. 21. to which wicked men, for the malignity of their nature, may be compared; as they are to the wild ass, to lions, leopards, and bears; and yet these are so tamed by the power of divine grace as to be made subject to Christ. Kimchi explains it as we do, of the inhabitants of the wilderness; and so the word is rendered in Psal. lxxiv. 14. Isa. xxiii. 13. and instances in the Kedarenes; and it may in particular design those that dwell in the deserts of Arabia; and in general the Gentiles, the wilderness of the people, who in Gospel times should be brought to the knowledge of Christ, and submission to him: and it fitly describes the people of God in an unregenerated state; when they are as barren and unfruitful as the dry and parched ground, and as the heath in the wilderness; are in want of provision, and have nothing but husks to feed upon; in perplexity of ways, and know not which to take, or whither they are going; and in very dangerous circumstances, destruction and misery being in all their ways: in this wilderness-state the Lord finds them, as he did Israel of old, and leads them about, and brings them to Christ; when they submit to him as a Saviour, being willing to be saved by him, and him only, and to his righteousness, as their justifying righteousness before God, and to the sceptre of his kingdom, to his laws and commands, to his Gospel, and the ordinances of it; all which they do not by constraint, but willingly. The Targum and Jarchi interpret it, the one of governors of provinces; the other of companies of princes. The Syriac version is, *the isles shall bow before him;* the inhabitants of the islands: but this is expressed in the following verse: Aben Ezra thinks masters of ships are meant. *And his enemies shall lick the dust;* of the earth; which is an instance of their great subjection to him; see Isa. xlix. 23. Mic. vii. 17. the allusion is to the custom of the eastern people, and which continues to this day with the Turks, that as soon as an ambassador sees the sultan, whether at the window, or elsewhere, he immediately falls down on his knees, and kisses the ground[a]. The Jews particularly are the enemies of Christ, who rejected him, and would not have him to reign over them; and yet some of these became obedient to the faith of Christ, and more of them, even the whole nation, will in the latter day: all that are Christ's are, before conversion, enemies to him, to his people, to his Gospel and ordinances, to him as a King, and to all his laws and commands; but when his arrows are sharp in their hearts, they fall under him, and submit to him; throw off the yoke of sin, Satan, and the world, and own him, and obey him, as their King and Lawgiver.

Ver. 10. *The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents, &c.*] Tarshish either signifies the sea, as it is sometimes rendered in the Targum; and then the sense is, the kings of the sea, that is, of the islands of the sea, as it follows, shall be subject to the kingdom of Christ; and, as a token of it, bring presents to him, as the Moabites and Syrians did to David, and as several nations and kings did to Solomon, 2 Sam. viii. 2. 1 Kings iv. 21. or it designs a large country inhabited by the Celtæ[b], and so is distinct from the islands; and then the sense is, that kings, both of the continent, and of the islands of the sea, shall do homage to the Messiah. *And the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts;* the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Ethiopic, and Arabic versions, render it, *the kings of the Arabians and Saba;* and so Apollinarius, the Arabians, and Sabæans, these being places in Arabia Felix and Petræa[c]: this will be fulfilled when the kings of the earth shall bring their honour and glory into the New Jerusalem, Rev.

[a] Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exod. fol. 40. 2. Bemidbar Rabba, s. 13. fol. 209. 4. Baal Hatturim in Numb. fol. 178. 4. R. Nachman. Disput. cum fratre Paulo, p. 41.

[a] Mandevil. Itinerar. c. 7.
[b] Hiller. Onomast. p. 944.
[c] Hiller. ibid. p. 165, 920.

xxi. 24. This, and the preceding verse, are interpreted of the Messiah by the ancient Jews[d]; who say[e], that all the gifts that Jacob their father gave to Esau, the nations of the world shall return them to the King Messiah in time to come, according to the sense of these words; where it is not written *they shall bring*; but ישיבו[f], *they shall return* presents.

Ver. 11. *Yea, all kings shall fall down before him*, &c.] Or worship him; not with a civil, but religious worship; for such worship is due to Christ, he being God equal with the Father, and so to be equally honoured; the Creator of all things, the Redeemer of his people, Head and Lord of the church, and whom the angels adore; every part of worship is to be given him; internal, which lies in the exercise of faith, hope, love, fear, &c. and external, which consists of prayer to him, praise of him, preaching in his name, and the administration of ordinances; and this worship is to be performed in the same manner as to the Father, in spirit and in truth, in righteousness and holiness, with reverence and godly fear. This is to be understood, either literally of the kings of the earth, and which will have its full accomplishment in the latter day; see Isa. xlix. 23. and lx. 3, 11, 16. or mystically of such who are made kings unto God the Father by Christ; who reign spiritually now, through the power of divine grace in their hearts; have the honour, riches, and attendance of kings, and a crown and kingdom prepared for them; and shall reign with Christ on earth, though under him, at whose feet they cast their crowns: all this shews the dignity of Christ's person and office; that he is the Prince of the kings of the earth, the first-born of God, whom he has made higher than they, and King of kings, and Lord of lords; whose princes, and all whose subjects, are altogether kings. This passage is allowed to belong to the Messiah, both by ancient and modern Jews[g]; and indeed it never was true of Solomon, nor of any other. *All nations shall serve him*; which will be in the latter day; see Isa. ii. 2. Rev. xi. 15. and xv. 4. the Jews say[h], that in the world to come, or the times of the Messiah, all the Gentiles shall be voluntary proselytes.

Ver. 12. *For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth*, &c.] Such as are not only in want, but are sensible of it, see their need of Christ and his righteousness, and salvation by him, and cry to him for the same, under a sense of their misery and danger; these he delivers out of all their troubles, and out of the hands of all their enemies, and supplies all their need. *The poor also*; the poor in spirit; who acknowledge their spiritual poverty, and apply to him for the true riches; to these he gives gold tried in the fire, that they may be rich; he gives them grace here, and glory hereafter. *And him that hath no helper*; that is in an helpless condition; can neither help himself, nor can any creature, angel or man, give him any help: but this being laid on Christ, and found in him, is given to him, whereby he is delivered out of a miserable state into a very comfortable and happy one; and such humane, kind, and tender regard to the needy, poor, and helpless, in this great King spoken of, is what engages to a cheerful subjection to him, and worship and reverence of him; more of which is expressed in the following verses, as the reason of the great esteem he should be had in.

Ver. 13. *He shall spare the poor and needy*, &c.] Pity them, have mercy and compassion on them, and sympathize with them; such an one is Christ, a merciful King, as well as High-priest, who is touched with a feeling of his people's infirmities, and who in his love and pity has redeemed them. *And shall save the souls of the needy*; not to the exclusion of their bodies, which are also his care and charge, are bought with his blood, are preserved by him, will be raised from the dead, and made like his glorious body; but souls are mentioned as being the most excellent part of man, and which having sinned, are liable to damnation and the second death; and are therefore the special objects of redemption and salvation; these are saved by him from all their sins, and from wrath to come they deserve; hence his name is called *Jesus*, a Saviour.

Ver. 14. *He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence*, &c.] From all the secret and open designs and efforts of their enemies; *from deceit*, and deceitfulness of sin and its lusts, so as that they shall not be finally hardened and destroyed by it; from the deceitfulness of the old serpent the devil, and all his cunning wiles and stratagems; and from false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive, and who would, if possible, deceive the very elect, but shall not: and from *violence*; from the violent and tyrannical power of sin, so as that it shall not have the dominion over them; from the rage and fury of the men of the world, which is overcome by him; and from Satan, the strong man armed, who is stronger than they; from him the devouring lion, who will not be able to snatch them out of Christ's hands. *And precious shall their blood be in his sight*; so that he either prevents the shedding of it, or, when shed, avenges it; and dear are such persons to him; and very acceptable is the sacrifice of their lives for his sake, who have the honour to suffer martyrdom for him; see Psal. cxvi. 15.

Ver. 15. *And he shall live*, &c.] Either the poor and needy man, saved and redeemed by Christ; he, though dead in trespasses and sins, shall live spiritually, be quickened together with Christ, and by his spirit, and live a life of faith and holiness; and though dead in law, yet, through the righteousness of Christ, shall have the justification of life, and live in the sight of God; and so shall live comfortably by faith in Christ, being filled with joy and peace in believing in him; and though he may lose his life for Christ's sake, he shall find it again, and live eternally with him: or the Messiah, the Saviour and Redeemer of the poor and needy; who, though he was to die, and by his precious blood redeem them; yet should live again, and never die more; as he now does live at the right hand of God, where he ever lives to make intercession for his people, as well as lives in their hearts, and supplies them with all grace, and keeps alive his own work on their souls. *And to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba*;

[d] Zohar in Gen. fol. 71. 1.
[e] Bereshit Rabba, s. 78. fol. 69. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, s. 13. fol. 210.
[f] Redire facient, vel reddant, Muis.

[g] Zohar in Gen. fol. 84. 4. Bemidbar Rabba, s. 13. fol. 209. 4. Midrash Megillat Esther, fol. 86. 2. R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 44.
[h] T. Avodah Zarah, fol. 24. 1.

or Arabia, as Apollinarius; either to the poor and needy, to whom is given faith, which is more precious than gold that perisheth; or the knowledge of Christ, which is preferable to gold and silver; and of the doctrines of the Gospel, which are of more value than thousands of gold and silver: also the justifying righteousness of Christ, which is the free gift, and is called clothing of wrought gold, and is signified by gold of Ophir, Psal. xlv. 9, 13. moreover, this may include all the riches of Christ, his durable and unsearchable riches; his riches of grace and glory, which he bestows upon his subjects; so that the poor and needy are not only saved and redeemed, and live through him; but are made rich by him, become rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom: or to the Messiah, who had gold presented to him, in his infancy, Matt. ii. 11. though rather it is to be understood spiritually of the exercise of faith upon him, and every other grace, which is as gold tried in the fire; and which, as it comes from Christ, it is given to him again. A truly gracious soul gives Christ the best it has: it gives him its whole self, body and soul, its heart and affections, and all its grace, and the glory of all. *Prayer also shall be made for him continually;* or *he shall pray for him*[i]; that is, either Christ shall pray for the poor and needy man; not only save and redeem, but make intercession for him, as Christ does for all he redeems: he prays for them, that they may be enriched with all the blessings of grace; that the gold he gives them may be kept; that their faith fail not; that they may be preserved from the evil of the world, and be with him, where he is, to behold his glory: or the poor and needy shall pray for Christ, for the prosperity of his church, for the increase of his interest, and the coming of his kingdom: or *prayer shall be made by him;* or *through him continually*[k]; as the Mediator between God and man, the way of access to God, through whom petitions are offered to him, and become acceptable with him. And *daily shall he be praised;* or *daily shall he bless him*[l]; either Christ shall daily bless the poor and needy, with spiritual blessings, as he stands in need of them, and even load him with his benefits: or he shall bless Christ, ascribe blessing, honour, praise, and glory to him; because of his perfections and excellencies; because of redemption and salvation by him; and on account of the various blessings of grace, and the daily supplies of it, he receives from him.

Ver. 16. *There shall be an handful of corn,* &c.] By which are not meant the people of Christ, compared to corn, or wheat, in distinction from hypocrites, said to be as chaff, Matt. ii. 12. who are but few, yet fruitful and flourishing; nor the Gospel, so called in opposition to the chaff of false doctrine, Jer. xxiii. 28. nor the blessings of grace, signified by corn, wine, and oil, Jer. xxxi. 12. but Christ, who compares himself to a corn of wheat, John xii. 24. for its choiceness and purity, and for its usefulness for food; and he may be compared to an handful of it, because of the little account he was made of here on earth, and the little that was expected from him; and on account of the small beginnings of his kingdom, which came not with observation, was like a little stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and like a grain of mustard-seed: so R. Obadiah Gaon[m] interprets these words, "*an handful of corn;* that is, the Messiah shall be at first as "an handful of corn; but afterwards a multitude of "disciples shall grow as the grass." *In the earth;* that is, sown in the earth: this denotes not Christ's being on the earth in the days of his flesh; but his death and burial, his descending into the lower parts of the earth, where he continued a while to answer the type of Jonah; and which is represented by a corn of wheat falling into the earth and dying, John xii. 24. by which is signified, that Christ's death was not accidental, but designed, as is the sowing of corn in the earth; and that it was voluntary, and not forced, and was but for a time: for as the corn dies, and lives again, and does not lie always under the clods; so Christ rose again; nor could he be held with the cords of death. It is added, *upon the top of the mountains;* where corn being sown, it is very unlikely it should come to any thing; and as little was expected by the Jews from the crucifixion and death of Christ: or else this may denote the publicness of Christ's death, it being a fact known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and many others. *The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon:* meaning either a large number of souls converted, the fruit of Christ's death, and of the Gospel ministry; of whom there was a large harvest, both in Judea and in the Gentile world, in the first times of the Gospel, immediately after Christ's death and resurrection; and there will be still a greater in the latter day: or else the blessings of grace are meant, which come by the death and resurrection of Christ; as righteousness, peace, pardon, and eternal life. The allusion is to a field of wheat when ripe, and its ears heavy, which, when the wind blows upon it, is shaken, rustles, and makes a noise[n], like the shaking of trees, and even of the cedars in Lebanon; it denotes the goodness and excellency of the fruit. *And they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth;* or *they shall flourish out of the city*[o]; which the Targum interprets of the city of Jerusalem; and so the Talmud[p], and also Jarchi; and was literally true; for the Gospel, after Christ's death, was first preached in the city of Jerusalem, and was blessed for the conversion of many there, who were fruitful in grace and good works: it may very well be understood of all the citizens of Sion; such who are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, who being planted in the house of the Lord, flourish in the court of our God, and become very fruitful in every good word and work; and flourish like grass of the earth for numbers, for quickness of growth, and for verdure and beauty: all which is owing to their being rooted in Christ, to his coming down upon them as rain, ver. 6. to the dews of his grace, and to his arising

[i] ויתפלל בעדו & orabit pro eo, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Coccelus.

[k] Per ipsum, Genebrardus; per & propter eum, Calvinus apud Michaelim.

[l] יברכנהו benedicet ei, Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Coccelus.

[m] In Viccars. in loc.

[n] Corpus ut impulsæ segetes aquilonibus horret, Ovid. Epist. 10. v. 139.

[o] מעיר de civitate, V. L. Musculus, Gejerus; so Montanus, Tigurine version, Cocceius, Michaelis.

[p] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 2.

upon them as the sun of righteousness. The ancient Jews interpreted this passage of the Messiah: "as the "first Redeemer, they say [q], caused manna to descend, "as it is said, Exod. xvi. 4. so the latter Redeemer "shall cause manna to descend, as it is said, *there* "*shall be an handful of corn in the earth.*" Jarchi says our Rabbins interpret this of the dainties in the days of the Messiah, and the whole psalm concerning the King Messiah.

Ver. 17. *His name shall endure for ever,* &c.] As a King; for he is chiefly spoken of here in his kingly office: not merely the fame of him; for so the fame of an earthly king, even of a tyrant, may continue as long as the world does; but the meaning is, that he himself should continue in his office for ever: his throne is for ever and ever; of his government there will be no end; his kingdom is an everlasting one; he shall reign over the house of Jacob, and on the throne of David, for ever and ever: he shall have no successor in this his office, any more than in the priestly office; which is an unchangeable one, or does not pass from one to another: his Gospel is his name, Acts ix. 15. and that shall endure for ever, or to the end of the world; until all his elect are gathered in, notwithstanding the violent persecutions of men, the cunning craft of false teachers, and the death of Gospel ministers and professors: as long as this is preached, Christ's name will endure, since he is the sum and substance of it; and not only is his name perpetuated in his Gospel, but also in his ordinances, those of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are administered in his name, and will be unto his second coming. *His name shall be continued as long as the sun;* or *shall be sonned* or *filiated* [r]; that is, shall be continued in his sons, in his spiritual offspring, as long as the sun lasts; as the names of parents are continued in their children; so the name of Christ is, and will be, continued in him: he has children which the Lord has given him; a seed that he shall see in all periods of time, to whom he stands in the relation of the everlasting Father; these bear his name, are called *Christians* from him, and these his seed and offspring shall endure for ever: for though sometimes their number may be few; yet there are always some in the worst of times; Christ has always had some to bear his name, and ever will have; and in the latter day they will be very numerous, even as the sand of the sea. The Jews take the word *Yinnon*, here used, for a name of the Messiah [s], and render the words, *before the sun his name was Yinnon;* and so the Targum, "before the sun was, or was created, "(as in the king's Bible,) his name was prepared;" or appointed: for they say [t], the name of the Messiah was one of the seven things created before the world was: it is certain that Christ was the Son of God, from eternity, or the eternal Son of God: he was so before his resurrection from the dead, when he was only declared, and did not then become the Son of God: he was owned by his divine Father, and believed in as the Son of God by men before that time: he was so before his incarnation, and not by that: he, the Son of God, was sent in human nature, and made manifest in it, and was known by David and Solomon, under that relation; and, as such, he was concerned in the creation of all things; and was in the day of eternity, and from all eternity, the only-begotten Son of the Father; see Psal. ii. 7. but the version and sense which Gussetius [u] gives seem best of all; *his name shall generate,* or *beget children before the sun;* that is, his name preached, as the Gospel, which is his name, Acts ix. 15. shall be the means of begetting many sons and daughters openly and publicly, in the face of the sun, and wherever that is. *And men shall be blessed in him;* men, and not angels, sinful men; such as are by nature children of wrath, and cursed by the law of works, yet blessed in Christ; even all elect men, all that are chosen in him, whether Jews or Gentiles; for he is the *seed of Abraham,* in whom *all the nations of the earth should be blessed,* Gen. xxii. 18. as they are with all spiritual blessings; with redemption, peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life: they are in him, and blessed in him; he is their head and representative, and so blessed in him; he is the fountain, cause, author, and giver of all blessings; they all come from him, through him, and for his sake, through his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. Or, *they shall be blessed in him;* that is, his children and spiritual offspring, in whom his name is perpetuated. Or, *they shall bless themselves in him* [w]; reckon themselves blessed in him, and make their boast of him, and glory in him. *All nations shall call him blessed;* as he is a divine Person; not only the Son of the Blessed, but God over all, blessed for ever; and as man, being set at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honour, and all creatures, angels and men, subject to him; and as Mediator, acknowledging him to be the fountain of all blessedness to them, and, upon that account, ascribing all blessing, honour, glory, and praise, unto him.

Ver. 18. *Blessed be the Lord God,* &c.] The Messiah, who is truly and properly God, Jehovah, Lord of all, and the Lord our righteousness; to whom such a doxology or ascription of glory and blessing properly belongs, since all good things are from him, and by him. *The God of Israel;* that brought Israel out of Egypt; went before them in the wilderness; redeemed and saved them, and bore and carried them all the days of old; and in whom all the true Israel of God are justified, and shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. *Who only doeth wondrous things;* in the creation of all things out of nothing; in the government of the world; and in the redemption and salvation of his people; which is a very marvellous thing: as that God should become man, suffer and die in the room of men, and save them from sin and ruin; this wondrous thing Christ has done alone, and there was none with him.

Ver. 19. *And blessed be his glorious name for ever,* &c.] Every name of Christ is glorious in itself, and precious to his people; *like ointment poured forth,*

[q] Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2.
[r] ינון filiabitur, Montanus, Vatablus, Michaelis.
[s] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2. Midrash Echa Rabbati, fol. 50. 2. Pirke Eliezer, c. 32. fol. 33. 2.
[t] T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 54. 1. Nedarim, fol. 39. 2. Bereshit Rabba, s. 1. fol. 1. 2.
[u] Ebr. Comment. p. 511.
[w] ויתברכו בו & benedicentes sibi in eo, Junius & Tremellius; so Cocceius, Michaelis, Ainsworth.

as his name Messiah, to which the allusion is in Cant. i. 3. his name Immanuel, God with us; Jehovah our righteousness, Jesus a Saviour; as well as what belongs to his royal dignity, King of kings, and Lord of lords; a name above every name that is named in this world, or that to come. *And let the whole earth be filled with his glory;* as it will be, when his kingdom shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; when the little stone cut out without hands shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth; when the Gospel shall be spread all over the world; and the earth be filled with the knowledge of Christ, by means of it, as the waters cover the sea; and when all nations shall come and worship before him. *Amen, and Amen;* which word added is expressive of the desires of the psalmist, that all that he had said might come to pass; and of his faith, that so it would be: and it is repeated to shew the vehemence of his desires, and the strength of his faith.

Ver. 20. *The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.*] The Septuagint version renders it, *the hymns.* This psalm is thought by some to be the last that was written by David, though put in this place; and it is certain that the psalms are not always placed in the order of time in which they were written: this being, as is supposed, made by him in his old age, when Solomon his son was appointed and set upon his throne by his order; on account of which he composed it, with a view to the Messiah, the antitype of Solomon. Or, as others, this is the last of the psalms, which were put together and digested in order by David himself; the rest that follow being collected by Hezekiah or the Levites. Aben Ezra mentions it as the sense of some of their interpreters, "then shall be fulfilled the prayers "of the son of Jesse:" that is, as R. Joseph Kimchi explains it, when those consolations are completed, then the prayers of David the son of Jesse shall be fulfilled. The sense is, when all the things spoken of in this psalm, concerning the Messiah and his kingdom, should be accomplished, then the prayers of David, and so of every good man, his hearty wishes and desires, will then be answered, and have their full effect, and not till then. This verse seems to be written not by David, for the psalm itself ends with *Amen and Amen;* but by some collector of the Psalms: it is not in the Arabic version, in the room of which is *Hallelujah;* and in the Syriac version it is, *the end of the second book.* The first book of Psalms ends with the 41st Psalm. The whole is divided into five parts by the Jews; observed by Origen[x] and Hilarius[y], and others.

[x] Apud Montfaucon. Prælim. ad Hexapla Origen. p. 73, 79.

[y] Prolog. in Psalm. p. 33.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL THE TANJORE

THE END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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